

Supporting customers who have dementia

TRAINING SESSION GUIDE

This Training Session was developed by Jackie Pool Associates Ltd for Andover Mind and Hampshire County Council for Dementia Friendly Communities in Hampshire. It is now available as a free resource for use by members of the National Dementia Action Alliance and the wider community

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Training Session Preparation

This 2 hour Training Session can be delivered to a group of staff or to individuals.

You will need to show the PowerPoint™ presentation either through a projector or by showing it on a computer or tablet screen.

You will need to print:

a Fact Sheet for each learner

a First Drama Script and a Second Drama Script that is appropriate for your service.

Choose from: Retail, Transport, Financial or General and have enough copies for each Learner

Programme

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 10 minutes | Welcome and domestic information |
| 15 minutes | Why it is important to know how to support people with dementia in the community |
| 30 minutes | What dementia is |
| 20 minutes | Recognising when someone may have dementia |
| 30 minutes | Supporting a person with dementia |
| 15 minutes | Your job and the person with dementia |

LESSON PLAN

10 minutes Welcome and domestic information

- **Show Slide 1.** Title slide and welcome participant(s).
- Explain the domestic arrangements (timing of programme is 2 hours, toilets, fire alarm procedure)
- Explain that this Training Session aims to support customer facing staff to provide their services to people who have dementia

15 minutes Why it is important to know how to support people with dementia in the community

- **Show slide 2** and discuss the facts – 47% of people with dementia is approx. 375,000 people who don't feel part of the community. These are your customers.
- **Show slide 3** and highlight the barriers that customer with dementia might face
- Ask participants if they know anyone who has dementia
- Ask participants to offer ideas for why being able to support someone with dementia is good for:
 - The person (possible answers will be because the person will feel more comfortable and confident; because the person will be able to complete their transaction; because the person is likely to come out more and not be at risk of isolation and loneliness)
 - The other customers (possible answers will be because they can see good customer support in action and so feel more confident in the customer service; because they will be able to complete their own transaction more easily; because they are likely to benefit from the additional customer-relationship skills of the staff too)
 - The staff (possible answers will be because staff will feel more comfortable and confident if they have additional knowledge and skills to support customers with dementia; because staff will be able to support customers to complete their transaction)
 - The Company (possible answers will be because the Company can be seen to be supporting their local community; because customers who have a successful customer experience are more likely to return)

30 minutes What dementia is

- **Show slide 4** and explain that the word 'dementia' is an 'umbrella' term for the conditions that cause it and the difficulties that people have.
- Use this physical example to illustrate:
Physical disability can have many causes and will affect people differently depending on what the cause is, where the injury is and what the injured site does.
- Use a knee injury as an example and ask for ideas of what can cause this – ideas may include
 - arthritis
 - damaged bone (perhaps from a fall)
 - damaged cartilage (perhaps from over use such as jogging)
 - damaged ligament (perhaps from twisting during playing football or skiing)
- Now discuss how this damage impairs the function of the knee. Begin with what the knee does and how the injury affects that:
 - it is as a joint that allows the leg to be flexible so there will be less flexibility for movement and balance
 - it is a shock absorber so any movement on uneven or hard ground will be restricted
 - it allows the leg to be stable and supports the person's balance when standing still

In addition, it will be painful so the person with a knee injury is less likely to want to move or bear weight on it.
- Finally discuss how impairment of the knee function can disable a person. Ideas may include
 - Driving
 - Walking
 - Going up and down steps
 - Getting in and out of the bath
- Point out that there are many conditions that can cause dementia and that the most common causes (on the umbrella spokes) are Alzheimer's disease, vascular disease and Lewy body disease. These conditions damage different parts of the brain and cause those parts to not work so well
- **Show slide 5** and discuss how much more complex the brain is, with many more functions than the knee.

Some of those functions help us to engage with other people and other functions help us to make sense of our surroundings.

Ask participants to decide which are which. These should be:

- **Engage with others** – word finding, understanding speech, recognising people , perception, maths, judgement, reasoning
- **Engage with surroundings** – reading, way finding, recognising objects, recognising places, perception, judgement, reasoning
- Finish with **slide 6** and reinforce that dementia is the disability (difficulty in doing things) caused by the impairments of brain function combined with other circumstances.

Discuss the two circumstances and how customer facing staff can have an impact on these:

- The way that **others** engage with an individual can be either supportive or disabling
- The physical surroundings of the **place** the person is in can be either supportive or disabling

This is true for people who do not have brain impairments but more so for those that do.

20 minutes **Recognising when someone may have dementia**

- Ask participants if they have been in a situation at work where they have needed to support a person with dementia. How did they know that the person had this disability?
Ideas may include – the way the person behaved: confused, indecisive, slow, lost
Or the way they spoke: muddled, slow, repeating things, using the wrong words
- Explain that dementia is not an inevitable part of getting old and that the majority of older people do not have this disability
- Explain that although it is more common in old age, there are approx 18,000 people in the UK who are younger than 65, some as young as 40 years old

- Use the First Drama Script that is most appropriate to the work environment of the participants in order to enact a scenario that might arise for a person with dementia.
One participant can be the Person with Dementia (PWD) and another participant can be the Customer Facing Staff (CFS).
You can either have the group do this activity in pairs or have one pair and the rest observe.
If you are leading this training session with an individual, you should take the role of the CFS

- Explain that this mini drama is to explore the negative experience that a person with dementia and a member of staff may have. Later, you will be looking at a more positive experience

- Discuss afterwards how each participant felt their character would feel in this situation. Were there similar feelings for each character? Did the feelings affect the way the character spoke or behaved?

- Reinforce the key learning point that unsupportive interactions can undermine the person and add to their disability

- Discuss how it is important not to assume that a person has dementia just because they are acting in these ways. It is better to recognise the difficulties that the person is having and to provide the appropriate support.

30 minutes Supporting a person with dementia

- **Show slide 7** and discuss each point for supporting a person with dementia through good communication skills.
- Discuss how the physical environment can disable a person because of their cognitive difficulties:
 - Way finding (**Show slide 8**)
 - if signs are not clearly written and have appropriate pictures the customer may get lost or have an 'accident'
 - Sitting down
 - If the seat is not clearly visible against the background the customer can fall (**Show slide 9**). This is relevant to all seating, including those at customer services areas.
 - Walking safely (**Show slide 10**).
 - if floors have lines on they can appear as cracks or barriers and the customer may not be able to cross
 - if floors are shiny they can appear wet and the customer may fall or become immobile
 - Completing a transaction (**Show slide 11**)
 - If there is a lot of 'clutter' the customer may get distracted or muddled
- Explain that some organisations are changing their environment to be more helpful and less bewildering. Emphasise that participants may not be able to change the environment but they will be better able to recognize when the environment is disabling to the person and therefore they will be able to support the person over the difficulty.
- Use the Second Drama Script that is most appropriate to the work environment of the participants in order to enact a more helpful scenario that might arise for a person with dementia.
- Discuss how they may need to adapt their responses in order to meet the ways of working of their organisation and within their own role.
- Discuss afterwards how each participant felt their character would feel in this situation. Were there similar feelings for each character? Did the feelings affect the way the character spoke or behaved? Reinforce the key learning point that supportive interactions can reduce the disability of the person with dementia.

15 minutes Your job and the person with dementia

- Show a film from this series that was made in Australia by Alzheimer's Australia. Choose the film most closely relating to your participants roles but you are encouraged to view other films in this series as there may be similarities in the way other services experience these situations:

Transport services

- Bus case study - <http://isitdementia.com.au/transport.html#2>
- Rail case study - <http://isitdementia.com.au/transport.html#3>
- Taxi case study - <http://isitdementia.com.au/transport.html#4>

This Facilitator Guide will support you to guide discussion after watching the short film

http://isitdementia.com.au/downloads/Transport_Services_Facilitator_Guide.pdf

Retail services

- The queue jumper - <http://isitdementia.com.au/retail.html#2>
- The confused customer – <http://isitdementia.com.au/retail.html#3>

This Facilitator Guide will support you to guide discussion after watching the short film http://isitdementia.com.au/downloads/Retail_Services_Facilitator_Guide.pdf

Banking

- The bank cheque - <http://isitdementia.com.au/banking.html#2>

This Facilitator Guide will support you to guide discussion after watching the short film http://isitdementia.com.au/downloads/Banking_Services_Facilitator_Guide.pdf

- Finish by **showing slide 12**, give out a Fact Sheet to each participant and reinforce the key points. Thank participants for their contributions to the learning.