

Dementia Action Alliance

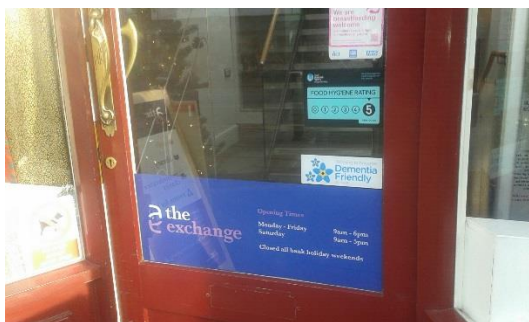
Lewisham

December 2016

3rd Lewisham DAA Newsletter

First of all, a very warm welcome to all our new Lewisham DAA members. We are delighted to have you working with us to become a more dementia-friendly community. Your actions are very exciting, reaching from awareness raising to offering group activities as well as reviewing your local environments to make these more dementia-friendly. This is much appreciated by all our local residents living with dementia and their carers. It really enables them to feel much more confident when accessing our local community.

Over the last few months we have started to hand-out our 'Dementia Friendly' window stickers to organisations that are actively working on becoming dementia friendly. As you are travelling through Lewisham, you will find more and more of these signs in shop windows which makes it easier for you to spot businesses that are dementia friendly.



Our members have continued to work very hard to support our residents living with dementia and some of the highlights are outlined in this Newsletter.

South London and Maudsley (SLaM) NHS Foundation Trust, Mental Health of Older Adults Clinical Academic Group "If Only I'd Known" – Dementia Carers Workshop

This workshop has been co-produced and facilitated by current/former carers of people with dementia along with staff from SLaM's Mental Health of Older Adults and Dementia staff.

The carers wanted to share their experiences: good, bad or indifferent. They want to support other carers coping with the dementia of their relatives by preventing them from having to fight battles in lonely isolation, as most of them have done. There is support out there in the local community but exhausted carers have difficulty in sorting out the maze of services and benefits that are available.

These workshops are for carers of people who have already received a

diagnosis of dementia or people who think someone they care about may have dementia. For those carers who have already received a diagnosis of dementia it is a useful way to find out more information about what the diagnosis means and what they might expect along the way. It is also a chance for carers to meet others with similar experiences, and will hopefully provide a friendly space to share experiences and offer support to one another.

Topics include:

1. Talking about Dementia
2. Dealing with Social Care
3. Health of the Person with Dementia – Physical
4. Health of the Person with Dementia – Emotional
5. Care for the Carer
6. The Legal Side of Things
7. Assistive Technology

Earlier this year in September and October these workshops were run at Granville Park supported by 2 former carers, SLaM staff and volunteers. Over the course of 7 weeks, 11 carers participated in the workshop and were caring for a spouse or parent. Every week the sessions were supported by different health professionals from SLaM, including Occupational Therapists, Nurses, Speech and Language Therapists. Staff from Carers Lewisham, MindCare and Royd's Solicitors joined us to offer support, information and advice to carers. If you are interested in attending the workshops or would like to refer someone to the workshops, please contact Nirusha Nicholas at

Nirusha.Nicholas@slam.nhs.uk or phone 0203 228 1625.



Carers Dementia Training

A new training opportunity has just started for families and friends caring for someone living with dementia. This course is all about understanding dementia as well as strategies for caring for someone with the illness. The first course is underway and is being well received by the attendees. Each course is three sessions long and the next course will run in March.

Lewisham MindCare are delivering the sessions with the support of Carers Lewisham. Further details can be obtained from either organisation.



Dementia at the Heart of Catford South

People in Catford are embracing the neighbourhood becoming a dementia friendly with work underway to raise awareness of dementia in the area and discussions on the Corbett Residents Association Facebook page which has over 1000 members.

Lesley Allen and Barbara Gray are Dementia Friends Champions with Jenny Owens, a Catford South resident, recently completing the training. Lesley has been working hard delivering Dementia Friends Sessions. Jenny is planning to create a film bringing together stories from carers/families/friends identifying when they first noticed a change in the person living with dementia. Barbara continues to raise awareness in the area and inspire and support people to come up and deliver ideas and dementia action plans.

Three new Dementia Action Alliance Action plans have been agreed for the Community Library, the Corbett Residents Association and Good Food Catford. The actions include raising awareness, offering group activities, reviewing the environment to make it more dementia friendly and many more.

It is hoped to work with a local primary school to become more dementia friendly in the spring. Initial conversations are being had at the moment.

The recent Dementia Champions Refresher session in Catford provided a helpful update of the material and exercises and an opportunity to learn from each other's experiences. It was lovely to meet other local Champions and rewarding to see that 3 of us were active in Catford South representing the Catholic Church, Community Connections and local community.

Finally, a request has been put into the Alzheimer Society for their roadshow bus to come to us next year during Dementia Awareness Week. Our Alzheimer's Society Representative has promised to put that request in for us personally so that it isn't lost. Fingers crossed.

It has been a busy year in this part of Lewisham and work well underway to put dementia awareness at the heart of the area, the way it thinks and does things.



The Catford South Assembly are continuing to work hard to help develop a Dementia Friendly community in the area.

This year the local assembly were proud to fund 4 projects relating to older people and people with Dementia in the community.

Firstly, the Assembly gave £2500 to Age Exchange to develop their 'We

are Catford South' Project. The project is focussed on providing opportunities for older people to be engaged in their community, making connections and having their history and contribution valued. The project will work towards addressing the fact that so many older people live in isolation and feel detached and undervalued by wider society. The outcome of the project would be to create a book telling the lives of older people in the ward through reminiscence sessions.

The Assembly also funded £2445 to Lewisham MindCare to deliver their Dance for Dementia project in the local Healthy Lifestyle Centre. 'Dance for Dementia' aims to reduce isolation for both people living with dementia and also their family carers and support older people to remain active and healthy and most of all a part of their community. Dance for Dementia groups will be based on a model which uses dance, music, and cultural activities to create structured groups for older adults in the community.

Local Dementia Friend Champion, Lesley Allen was funded £2100 towards 'Holidays from Home' a project to provide opportunities for older people to attend a holiday scheme over the Easter and Christmas period. Carers and family will benefit from knowing their loved ones are having an enjoyable experience, aiding well-being and allowing them some possible much-needed respite for a few days.

Finally, we are thrilled that the Archibald Corbett Society and the Corbett Residents Association have

taken over the management of the New Torridon Road Community Library. They were funded £2500 to set up the new library as a dementia friendly centre providing a full programme of activities throughout the week for people with Dementia and advice sessions for carers.

In all over two-thirds of the local community fund available went on project supporting becoming a dementia friendly community.

We are so grateful to the people of Catford South for unanimously voting for all of these projects to receive funding this year and for the continued support of the whole community in working towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Community.



Lewisham Resident living with dementia speaking to NHS staff in Bart's Health Trust:

Lewisham MindCare Advocacy Group member Sheila recently spoke at a dementia care leadership course for NHS staff in Bart's Health Trust delivered by renowned dementia expert Buz Loveday. Sheila talked about her experience of living with Alzheimer's disease and accessing hospital services. She is in the early stages of her dementia diagnosis but

is keen to speak up for others who may be unable to make their voice heard.

She talked about the importance of a positive attitude from hospital staff and said the thing that is most important to her in the care she receives is that there is a smiling face helping her. She also talked about a need for more flexible visiting times in hospitals which would help keep people occupied and feel more at ease in the unfamiliar environment of the hospital.

A Senior Sister said "Sheila was totally amazing and inspirational, what a woman!!"

Buz Loveday said that she found Sheila's insight and willingness to speak so openly about her dementia particularly valuable – especially when she admitted she finds it difficult to speak to strangers. She also said she felt Sheila challenged the stereotype many hold about people with dementia as "passive, dependent and 'suffering'" – adding that "clearly Sheila is absolutely none of those things and I'm sure she will have prompted participants to rethink their views."

Well done Sheila and keep up the good work!

Fusion Leisure Centres becoming Dementia Friendly

Our local residents living with dementia have frequently mentioned that they would be really interested in being able to access more exercise classes but worried about going to the

local leisure centre. The Lewisham Dementia Action Alliance made contacts with our local Fusion Leisure Centres to speak about becoming dementia friendly. Fusion Leisure Centres are really enthusiastic to be working with the DAA to become more dementia-friendly. Since then Fusion Leisure Centres have joined the DAA and are working on plans on how to become more dementia-friendly. They already have an exciting exercise program for over 50s as well as for people with disabilities that welcomes anyone living with dementia. For further information please visit:

https://www.fusion-lifestyle.com/contracts/Lewisham_Leisure_Centres/Activities

Other News and Reminders:

Appeal to Carers:

The Lewisham DAA-Steering Group is currently looking for a volunteer who is able to represent Lewisham carers for people with dementia in the Lewisham DAA. Should you be interested or know of someone who might be interested please contact Karin Barthel: karin.barthel@nhs.net

Action plans:

We'd like to remind all members to update their action plans on a regular basis but at least once a year. If you have any questions with regards to your action plans, please contact Karin Barthel: karin.barthel@nhs.net