



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**RAISING AWARENESS OF DEMENTIA ACROSS RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES**

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**1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee of the plans to increase the number of Dementia Friends living and working in our communities so that people living with dementia in Rhondda Cynon Taf are better supported.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee:-

- 2.1 Scrutinise the content of the report and in particular the proposal to increase the number of Dementia Friends living and working in our communities;
- 2.2 Agree and support the roll out of an e-learning module in relation to Dementia Friends to local authority staff and any other relevant groups.

**3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Dementia describes a set of symptoms that may include memory loss and difficulties with thinking, problem solving or language. These changes are often small to start with, but for someone with dementia they have become severe enough to affect daily life. Dementia is caused when the brain is damaged by diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease or a series of strokes. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, but not the only one. Other common types of dementia include Vascular dementia, Dementia with Lewy bodies, Frontotemporal dementia.
- 3.2 Each person is unique and will experience dementia in their own way. The different types of dementia also tend to affect people differently, especially in the early stages. Other factors that will affect how well someone can live with dementia include how

other people respond to them and the environment around them. A person with dementia will have cognitive symptoms and will often have problems which may include day to day memory, concentrating, planning or organising, language, visuospatial skills, orientation, and so on.

- 3.3 A person with dementia will also often have changes in their mood. For example, they may become frustrated or irritable, apathetic or withdrawn, anxious, easily upset or unusually sad. Dementia is progressive, which means the symptoms gradually get worse over time. How quickly this happens varies greatly from person to person. As dementia progresses, a person may develop behaviours that seem unusual or out of character and may include repeating questions, pacing, restlessness or agitation. They can be distressing or challenging for the person and those close to them.
- 3.4 There are currently around 850,000 people in the UK with dementia. It mainly affects people over the age of 65 (one in 14 people in this age group have dementia), and the likelihood of developing dementia increases significantly with age. Dementia can also affect younger people and there are more than 42,000 people in the UK under 65 with dementia.
- 3.5 In 2018 we had more than 71,000 people aged over 65 living in Rhondda Cynon Taf, with over 25,000 of them being aged 75 or older. By 2030 the number of people over 65 years is expected to increase by 18.7%, the number of people over 75 is expected to increase by 38.1% and the number of people over 85 years is expected to increase by 60.1%.
- 3.6 We expect dementia to be an issue of increasing significance for older people in the future. The Cwm Taf Population Assessment that was required by the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 informed us that the number of people aged over 65 living with dementia is expected to increase from 3,463 to 5,325 (a 53.7% increase) and for people aged 75 or older, from 2,903 to 4,676 (a 61% increase). The Assessment also highlighted that Older People need and value supportive communities and family networks as well as personal independence.

#### **4. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

- 4.1 The Health and Wellbeing Improvement Manager and Health and Wellbeing Improvement Officer (Older People) of the Public Health, Protection and Community Services department attended a Dementia Friends Champion Induction in 2019. A Dementia Friends Champion is a trained volunteer who runs Information Sessions for friends, family, colleagues and the wider community. The Information Sessions cover key messages so that those attending know about dementia, and help people to think what they could do to help. Attending the Dementia Friends Champion Induction allows them to deliver Dementia Friends Information sessions.
- 4.2 As a result, a Dementia Friends Information session was delivered for Elected Members in October 2019. Other Dementia Friends Information sessions have been delivered to a small number of frontline local authority staff and in the wider community to date.

- 4.3 A meeting was held with representatives from Cardiff Council and the Alzheimer's Society in 2019. Cardiff Council are working towards Dementia Friendly City status and have developed an e-learning module for all members of staff to complete. The delivery method provides an effective way to track the number of Dementia Friends and to raise awareness of Dementia across the workforce. Cardiff Council gave permission for Rhondda Cynon Taf council to utilise the e-learning resources that they have developed. Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Members are requested to support the roll out of the e-learning module to local authority staff as a mandatory requirement from 2020-2021.
- 4.4 Face to face Dementia Friends Information sessions will continue to be delivered where appropriate and where requested by Members, staff, organisations and the wider community.

## **5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The vision, in line with the Cwm Taf Ageing Well in Wales Plan, is for all people in Rhondda Cynon Taf living with dementia to have the opportunity to live well so that they can continue to do the things that are important to them. This vision is promoted irrespective of age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, etc.
- 5.2 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising from this report and no Equality Impact Assessment is deemed necessary for the purposes of this report.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The considerations and comments of the Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet Member and Elected Member were sought during the Dementia Friends Information session for Elected Members in October 2019 in respect of the recommendations of this report and they were supportive of the proposal to extend the training.

## **7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

## **8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

## **9 LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

- 9.1 The Dementia work integrates with other existing priorities and plans, including the Council's Corporate Plan 2016-2020 and the Cwm Taf Wellbeing Plan 2018-2023.
- 9.2 Our work will align with the People priority in the Corporate Plan, in order to promote independence and positive lives for everyone.
- 9.3 Our work will link to the Healthy People objective of the Cwm Taf Wellbeing Plan, to help people live long and healthy lives and overcome any challenges.
- 9.4 Due regard has been made to the five ways of working, as contained within the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015. The following information demonstrates how the proposals to raise awareness of Dementia across Rhondda Cynon Taf has considered the five ways of working approach.
- 9.5 **Long term:** The proposals have a long term focus to raise awareness of dementia and to increase the number of Dementia Friends living and working in our communities and to roll out information sessions and the e-learning module to local authority staff. We intend to continually review and develop our proposals as priorities and policy context evolve.
- 9.6 **Prevention:** Our vision is for all people with dementia to live as well as possible and for as long as possible, and that they continue to do the things that are important to them. The promotion of wellbeing now prevents health related problems in the future and reduces demand on public services.
- 9.7 **Integration:** To be effective in delivering positive outcomes these proposals cannot stand alone and have sought to link in with other plans and strategies including the Council's Corporate Plan 2016-2020, the Cwm Taf Wellbeing Plan 2018-2023, The Cwm Taf Regional Plan 2018-2023, the Joint Commissioning Statement for Older People 2015-2025, the Cwm Taf Ageing Well in Wales Plan, the Dementia Action Plan for Wales 2018-2022 and the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Dementia Action Plan.
- 9.8 **Collaboration:** In developing our proposals we have collaborated with Cardiff Council and the Alzheimer's Society to share best practice and learn from their work. We will also collaborate internally with Council departments to develop our plans.
- 9.9 **Involvement:** We will engage with other local authority services, community groups and the public to raise awareness of dementia and to realise our plans.
- 9.10 The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 requires public services to undertake a Population Assessment. The Cwm Taf Regional Plan published in May 2018 is informed by this assessment, responding to the needs of people for care and support. Reference is made to supporting people to continue to live fulfilled lives as they grow older, and when they need it, to help them tackle life problems. Outcomes include older people living longer, healthier and happier lives, older people living life to the full and are enabled to maintain their independence for as long as possible, and so on. Our proposals in relation to dementia support the outcomes contained in the Regional Plan.

9.11 The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Dementia Action Plan contains many themes, including 'Raising Awareness and Understanding of Dementia in Our Communities'. Our proposals directly link with this theme so that people living with dementia are better supported. We will continue to consider this Action Plan to inform our work.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

10.1 Our population is living longer and this is something to celebrate, however, we want people to live well and to be healthy as they age. By seeking to increase the number of Dementia Friends living and working in our communities and by rolling out an e-learning module to local authority staff, we aim to raise the awareness of dementia and to ensure that people living with dementia in Rhondda Cynon Taf are better supported and are able to live well.