

A woman with curly hair, wearing a purple coat, is smiling and talking to an elderly person. The woman is gesturing with her hands as she speaks. The background is blurred, showing greenery and bokeh lights.

# Dementia Action Week

*Communications Toolkit*



# Toolkit to include:

At NHS Somerset, we have been working with our VCSE partners to put together this communications toolkit ahead of Dementia Action Week (15-21 May) to help keep our messaging around dementia consistent across Somerset.

In this toolkit, you will find:

- Outline of Dementia Action Week and why it exists
- Breakdown of key themes
- Social media copy
- Images
- Copy for partner websites and newsletters

You can find more information at:

- [Somerset Dementia Wellbeing Service](#)
- [ICS website](#)
- [NHS website](#)
- [Alzheimer's Society website](#)

# What is Dementia Action Week?

Dementia Action Week (15-21 May) is an awareness raising campaign.

Each year, The Alzheimer's Society works with individuals and organisations across the UK to encourage people to 'act on dementia'.

## What will be the focus for 2023?

Increasing diagnosis rates is such an important issue that is being focused on it again this year.

Following a sustained drop in dementia diagnosis rates for the first time ever, the Alzheimer's Society undertook research to understand the key barriers and benefits to getting a diagnosis.

As well as the misconception around memory loss just being part of getting old, their research found being in denial, and referral times to specialists, are big barriers for those experiencing symptoms to seek a diagnosis.

Getting a diagnosis can be daunting, but we believe it's better to know. And so do 91% of people affected by dementia.

This week also gives us an opportunity to promote the remaining Dementia Roadshow events (Tuesday 16th May – The Bennett Community Centre, Frome - Monday 22nd May – Wells Town Hall - Friday 2nd June – Cheddar Village Hall)

# Content pillars

01

PREVENTION

02

MYTH BUSTING  
& LIVING WELL  
WITH DEMENTIA

03

GETTING A  
DIAGNOSIS &  
LOCAL SUPPORT

04

PEOPLE WITH  
LIVED  
EXPERIENCE

# Target audiences

1

Somerset residents who are concerned that a friend/loved one may have dementia

2

Somerset residents who have received a dementia diagnosis

3

Somerset residents who are concerned that they may have dementia

4

Somerset residents with a friend/loved one that has received a dementia diagnosis

5

Somerset residents who want to remain in good health

6

Carers of those with dementia (formal and informal)

7

Voluntary and system partners supporting those with dementia

# Key Messages - Prevention

By modifying the risk factors we are able to change, our risk of dementia could be reduced by around a third.

Experts agree that what's good for your heart is also good for your brain. This means you can help reduce your risk of dementia by:

- eating a healthy, balanced diet
- maintaining a healthy weight
- exercising regularly
- keeping alcohol within recommended limits
- stopping smoking
- keeping your blood pressure at a healthy level

This presents a good opportunity to share some Public Health focussed messaging to encourage the population to consider their behaviours, and be mindful of the long-term effects of behaviours.

For this pillar, we will feature a **talking head video from Rachel Handley**, Public Health Consultant at Somerset County Council. She will talk about ways in which the risk of dementia can be reduced and the positive changes to behaviours that people can make.

# Key Messages:

## Getting a diagnosis & local support

As well as the misconception around memory loss just being part of getting old, research by the Alzheimer's Society found being in denial, and referral times to specialists, are big barriers for those experiencing symptoms to seek a diagnosis.

We will talk to **Dr Peter Bagshaw**, Clinical Lead for Dementia at NHS Somerset about the steps people need to take in order to get a diagnosis, and what this might mean in terms of changes to their life. Dr Peter Bagshaw can also talk about the Dementia Wellbeing Service.

This will aim to destigmatise dementia, and reassure people that dementia does not mean the end of their life, as well as breaking down barriers for those who need to obtain a dementia diagnosis.

# Key Messages:

## Myth busting & living well

Many people are fearful about what may happen to them once they receive a dementia diagnosis, with lots assuming it means the end of life as they know it.

We will share messaging that dispels myths around having dementia, including whether people are still able to drive, what happens after they're diagnosed, and so on.

We will also highlight the support available across Somerset for those who have been diagnosed, including the Somerset Dementia Wellbeing Service.

We will film a talking head with **Teresa Mason, Local Services Manager** at The Alzheimer's Society on their 'memory cafes'. These informal activity groups give you or someone you know that is affected by dementia the opportunity to take part in a variety of activities, which focus on socialising and getting to know the others in the group.



# Key Messages: Lived experience

It is widely known that people stories from those with lived experience of conditions are a valuable and effective means of communicating to the public.

We will produce content around those in Somerset who have lived experience to share positive stories of their dementia experience in Somerset so far.

This will include written, photo and video content to capture powerful stories on behalf of those with lived experience, and reassure people who are yet to begin their journey, of the support available within Somerset.

# Social media copy

On the next few slides, we have put together some draft messaging for your social media copy set around the four key themes mentioned earlier.

Please use the **#OurSomersetDementiaStories**

**Please tag:**

**Facebook:**

@NHSSomerset

@FFMFSomerset

@SomersetCouncil

**Instagram:**

@ffmfsomerset

@SomersetCouncil

Additionally, we are asking people to share their own dementia stories, and a Microsoft Form has been set up to support this.

You can find the form at:

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=sITDN7CF9Ueylge0jXdO48i-H-5FJSVDjjVkJRu1mDJBUN0JWSjdCV0NEMFRXNkc1RFdaSVJOU1JBOS4u)

[id=sITDN7CF9Ueylge0jXdO48i-H-](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=sITDN7CF9Ueylge0jXdO48i-H-5FJSVDjjVkJRu1mDJBUN0JWSjdCV0NEMFRXNkc1RFdaSVJOU1JBOS4u)

[5FJSVDjjVkJRu1mDJBUN0JWSjdCV0NEMFRXNkc1RFdaSVJOU1JBOS4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=sITDN7CF9Ueylge0jXdO48i-H-5FJSVDjjVkJRu1mDJBUN0JWSjdCV0NEMFRXNkc1RFdaSVJOU1JBOS4u)

Prevention	<p>There's no certain way to prevent all types of dementia, however, there's good evidence that a healthy lifestyle can help reduce your risk of developing dementia when you're older.</p> <p>Research shows that what is good for your heart is also good for your brain. This means you can help reduce your risk of developing dementia by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Eating a healthy, balanced diet</li> <li>•Maintaining a healthy weight</li> <li>•Exercising regularly</li> <li>•Keeping alcohol within recommended limits</li> <li>•Stopping smoking</li> <li>•Keeping your blood pressure at a healthy level</li> </ul> <p>Find out more at <a href="https://somersestdementia.org/">https://somersestdementia.org/</a></p>
Prevention	<p>Did you know that being overweight or obese can increase your blood pressure and the risk of type 2 diabetes, both of which are linked to a higher risk of Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia?</p> <p>If you are overweight or obese, even losing 5% to 10% of the excess weight can help reduce your risk of dementia.</p> <p>Find out more about how to lose weight at <a href="http://www.nhs.uk/better-health/lose-weight/">www.nhs.uk/better-health/lose-weight/</a></p>
Prevention	<p>Whilst getting older is the biggest risk factor for dementia, research suggests that up to one in three cases of dementia are preventable.</p> <p>Some of these risk factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>high alcohol intake</li> <li>lack of exercise</li> <li>obesity</li> <li>poor physical health</li> <li>smoking</li> </ul> <p>If you are aged 40-74 without a pre-existing condition, you are entitled to a free NHS Health Check. These can check your circulatory and vascular health, as well as what your risk of getting a disabling vascular disease is.</p> <p>Find out more at <a href="https://somersestdementia.org/">https://somersestdementia.org/</a></p>

<p>Myth busting</p>	<p>Myth: If you are diagnosed with dementia, you must stop driving.</p> <p>Truth: A diagnosis of dementia is not in itself a reason to stop driving. One in three people with dementia still drives. The most important thing is whether the person can still drive safely. Dementia may affect their ability to do this over time.</p> <p>Find out more about how dementia may affect driving at <a href="http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/staying-independent/driving-dementia?gclid=CjwKCAjw3ueiBhBmEiwA4BhspOF-oj7yCNy0izLQE5BaTzAdsx2oMhvPYhEaynXaCCvxVw_w2NweRxoCNf0QAvD_BwE&amp;gclid=aw.ds">www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/staying-independent/driving-dementia?gclid=CjwKCAjw3ueiBhBmEiwA4BhspOF-oj7yCNy0izLQE5BaTzAdsx2oMhvPYhEaynXaCCvxVw_w2NweRxoCNf0QAvD_BwE&amp;gclid=aw.ds</a></p>
<p>Myth busting</p>	<p>Myth: Dementia is just a part of getting older.</p> <p>Reality: Whilst dementia disproportionately affects those over 65 years old, it is not a natural part of aging, and most people do not develop dementia as they age.</p> <p>Whilst what exactly causes dementia remains unknown, we do know that certain risk factors and underlying medical conditions (such as diabetes and stroke) can increase the risk of dementia.</p> <p>Find out more at <a href="https://somersestdementia.org/">https://somersestdementia.org/</a></p>
<p>Myth busting</p>	<p>Myth: If I'm diagnosed with dementia, it means my life is over.</p> <p>Reality: You can live with dementia and, at the same time, live meaningfully and actively for many years.</p> <p>Getting a diagnosis means you can get the practical advice and emotional support you need. You can plan for the future and feel the relief of knowing your next steps.</p> <p>Find out more at <a href="https://somersestdementia.org/">https://somersestdementia.org/</a></p>
<p>Living well</p>	<p>If you have been diagnosed with dementia, it's important to remember that: you're still you, even though you have problems with memory, concentration and planning everyone experiences dementia differently focusing on the things you can still do and enjoy will help you to stay positive.</p> <p>With the right help and support when you need it, many people can, and do, live well with dementia for several years.</p> <p>Find out more about staying independent with dementia at <a href="http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/staying-independent-with-dementia/">www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/staying-independent-with-dementia/</a></p>

<p>Diagnosis</p>	<p>If you're worried about your memory, it's well worth talking to a GP. They may be able to reassure you that you don't have dementia.</p> <p>But if you do have dementia, an early diagnosis can help you get the right treatment and support in place in good time.</p> <p>With treatment and support from healthcare professionals, family, and friends, many people can lead active, fulfilling lives with dementia.</p> <p>Find out more at <a href="https://somersestdementia.org/">https://somersestdementia.org/</a></p>
<p>Diagnosis</p>	<p>If you're worried about your memory, or think you may have dementia, it's a good idea to see your GP.</p> <p>Getting a diagnosis can be daunting, but we believe it's better to know – and so do 91% of people affected by dementia.</p> <p>Find out more at <a href="https://somersestdementia.org/">https://somersestdementia.org/</a></p>
<p>Local support</p>	<p>The Somerset Dementia Wellbeing Service is hosting a series of free roadshows to provide advice and support for those living with dementia and their carers.</p> <p>The Service has been developed by those with lived experience of dementia and their carers, the voluntary sector, NHS Somerset, Somerset County Council and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust.</p> <p>Find out more at <a href="http://www.somersetics.org.uk/somerset-dementia-service/">www.somersetics.org.uk/somerset-dementia-service/</a></p>



# Imagery



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# Newsletter copy

Please can you share our story below through your intranet, internal and external newsletters and websites.

## **Find out more about Somerset's Dementia Wellbeing Service during Dementia Action Week 15 -21 May**

This year, during Dementia Action Week (15-21 May), the Alzheimer's Society will be focussing on increasing diagnosis rates for people with dementia so people living with dementia can get the support they need.

In Somerset, our Somerset Dementia Wellbeing Service; a partnership led by the voluntary sector in partnership with NHS Somerset and Somerset Council, is being rolled out to provide support to those living with dementia and their carers. This includes :-

- A roadshow with events around the county to showcase options available to support people with dementia and their carers, and to give people an opportunity to experience a free mobile dementia simulator experience on the Somerset Dementia Bus
- Doubling the number of Dementia Support Workers (provided by the Alzheimer's Society and funded by NHS Somerset), in Somerset so that every person diagnosed with dementia can be connected with support in the community and guided through their next steps
- A localised version of the Dementia Connect phonenumber, 01458 251541, to connect people directly with the Dementia Support Workers team who can offer information and practical guidance to help people understand the condition, cope with day-to-day challenges and prepare for the future.
- A new website to connect people with local dementia services and resources.

### **Get Involved**

During Dementia Action Week we will be posting content on our website and our social media channels to encourage people living with dementia and their carers to share their stories. We will also have NHS Somerset's clinical lead on dementia GP Peter Bagshaw and the Alzheimer's Society providing advice on support available through your GPs and the Alzheimer's Society.

You can share your story with us HERE.

### **How to get a diagnosis**

Following a sustained drop in dementia diagnosis rates for the first time ever, the Alzheimer's Society undertook research to understand the key barriers and benefits to getting a diagnosis.

As well as the misconception around memory loss just being part of getting old, it's research found being in denial, and referral times to specialists, are big barriers for those experiencing symptoms to seek a diagnosis.

Getting a diagnosis can be daunting, but we believe it's better to know. If you think you or someone you care for may have dementia, please contact your GP to see if it's appropriate for you/them to be referred into a Memory Clinic.

### **Where can I find more information on memory loss and diagnosis?**

You can find more about memory loss and diagnosis here, using the Alzheimer's Society symptoms checklist to help describe symptoms to you.

- [Download landscape logo](#)
- [Download portrait logo](#)
- [Download accompanying image](#)