



CIH HOUSING & DEMENTIA PROGRAMME (PHASE 2) MAPPING DEMENTIA PATHWAYS: THE ROLE OF HOUSING PROFESSIONALS

Introduction

This second phase of the *CIH Housing & Dementia Programme* will build on the evidence from the phase one survey of professionals carried out in 2013. The objective of this phase is to deliver an evidence based resource that both demonstrates the value of housing's role and provides housing professionals with a valuable resource to improve practice and navigate local networks.

Identifying skill and competencies

The first round of stakeholder engagement events were held across July 2016 and focused on analysing and defining the links, relationships and pathways associated with the following interactions:

1. assisting and supporting someone to seek a diagnosis;
2. early assessment of the suitability of someone's home;
3. identifying appropriate changes to enable the person with dementia to remain at home/be returned home quickly;
4. ensuring holistic consideration of all aspects of assistance/support as dementia progresses.

As an outcome of these workshops, for each pathway, mapping outcomes defined:

- the role of the housing professional (in the context of the roles performed by professionals in health, social work and dementia services);
- the knowledge requirements associated with this role;
- the skills required to support or improve practice;
- partnership recommendations.

This document presents a summary of the first consultative part of this work from the perspective of the facilitators. The full details on the role of the housing professional in each pathway and the associated role profile, knowledge requirements and skills will be presented in the final report due in January 2017.

Workshop 1 Summary Findings: Defining the housing role, knowledge and skills required to assist and support someone to seek a diagnosis

Pathway 1 – assisting & supporting someone to seek a diagnosis

Defining the housing role in assisting & supporting early diagnosis

1. Signals & symptoms that dementia could be affecting day to day living
2. How and when to encourage action on diagnosis
3. How to communicate & build trust to encourage service engagement
4. What housing workers can and should do following diagnosis



It is NOT the role of a housing worker to spot or diagnose dementia but to recognise where changes in normal patterns of behaviour could be dementia related and to signpost customers to services that could improve well being & independent living

The role of housing practitioners:

- To help identify the various triggers or signals that suggest a dementia diagnosis may be beneficial in sustaining wellbeing;
- To help facilitate early diagnosis in circumstances where clear signals are present through signposting people who may have dementia towards those who can facilitate and undertake early diagnosis;
- To play an ongoing and proactive part as part of an integrated team seeking to maximise a person's health and wellbeing as dementia progresses.

Key knowledge requirements:

- To obtain the knowledge gained from basic dementia awareness training;
- To understand dementia pathways, the potentially preventative role of housing and the value of early intervention in maintaining wellbeing for as long as possible;
- To understand the principles and practice of the "5 Pillar of Post Diagnostic Support Model" and its importance in the first year following diagnosis;
- To obtain awareness of, and the confidence to engage with, the local service networks which might support people requiring a diagnosis of dementia, or individuals recently diagnosed with the condition;
- To understand the role and contribution of the newly established Health & Social Care Partnerships, the role of the National Dementia Strategy, and the wealth of

available learning materials in locations such as Stirling University's Dementia Centre, among others.

Key skills requirements:

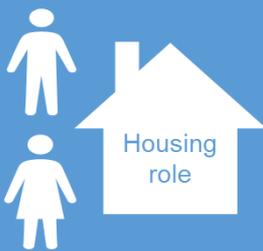
- To understand the potential signs of dementia and have the confidence to act on this in the best interests of an individual, through effective signposting where appropriate;
- To acquire the confidence and competence necessary to engage in early conversations about dementia with people affected by the disease;
- To understand the dementia pathway and the role and contribution of the key professionals involved;
- To understand and promote the role of housing in integrated protocols around early intervention in the dementia pathway (and to initiate development of such protocols where they currently do not exist);
- The confidence and skills to lobby on behalf of housing's role in dementia care, especially relating to early intervention and the benefits of preventative spending in this phase.

Workshop 2 Summary Findings: Defining the housing role, knowledge and skills required in conducting an early assessment of the suitability of someone's home

Pathway 2 – early assessment of the suitability of someone's home

Defining the housing role in early assessment of the suitability of someone's home

1. The role of housing suitability assessments: housing involvement
2. Adapting the home environment & links to care, support & the use of technology
3. Post assessment how adaptation are commissioned, funded & delivered



Housing workers should understand the importance of environment in meeting the needs of PWD & the impact of design interventions in supporting independence so that they can contribute to housing suitability assessments & manage the process for commissioning, funding & delivery

The role of housing practitioners:

- To understand the importance of housing layout and design factors in improving the wellbeing of people with dementia, and the importance of early intervention in optimising outcomes for wellbeing;
- To take responsibility for commissioning housing suitability appraisals either following a diagnosis of dementia, or in relation to other significant events such as admission to hospital and/or on consideration of hospital discharge;
- To seek expert advice on dementia appropriate design interventions when necessary and to assume responsibility for funding the necessary work;
- To provide information to the wider community on the range of dementia related housing services offered by the housing organisation or local authority concerned (hopefully tenure neutral in the latter case);
- To play a key part in an integrated dementia friendly person centred service.

Key knowledge requirements:

- Basic training in dementia awareness, to include the importance of appropriate and timely housing design interventions;

- A working understanding of how dementia affects spatial and visual awareness for those affected by the condition;
- A working understanding of the importance of dementia appropriate housing layout and design interventions in the homes of people with dementia, with a view to maximising wellbeing and subsequent capacity for people to remain at home for as long as possible;
- Knowing *what works* in housing layout and design interventions for people with dementia, and *why*;
- Knowledge of the appropriate commissioning routes for implementing design appraisals, specifying appropriate work, and subsequent procurement;
- Knowledge of the skills and expertise available in support of appropriate housing interventions, such as OTs or specialist dementia friendly designers.

Key skills requirements:

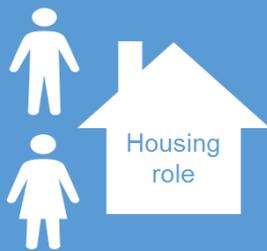
- Confidence in commissioning housing suitability and dementia friendly design assessments;
- Ability to conduct effective conversations with people with dementia and their carers and support workers to explain clearly the housing options and interventions potentially available as dementia progresses, and to help facilitate choice wherever possible.

Workshop 3 Summary Findings: Defining the housing role, knowledge and skills required in identifying appropriate changes to enable the person with dementia to remain/return home quickly

Pathway 3 – identifying appropriate changes to enable the PWD to remain/return to home quickly

Defining the housing role in identifying appropriate changes to enable the PWD to remain/return to home quickly

1. The range of housing interventions that can enable a PWD to remain at home including adaptations, technology, support & housing options advice
2. Housing's role in supporting effective admission & discharge
3. Supporting independent living and participation in community



Housing workers should understand the key housing interventions that can support PWD to live independently so that they can work with partners to deliver positive housing outcomes.

Housing workers play a supporting role in enabling effective admission & discharge processes

The role of housing practitioners:

- To ensure that the role & importance of home and environment is at the heart of decisions around people with dementia when issues about remaining at home / discharge from hospital are under consideration;
- To play a positive and supportive role in an integrated approach to dementia care with the other key professionals, family members and carers involved;
- To integrate proven dementia friendly housing design features into home improvement and new build programmes through financial and asset planning strategies;
- To participate in (and initiate where necessary) joint training in dementia with key partners, including health and social care professionals and specialist advice organisations.

Key knowledge requirements:

- To understand what living with dementia actually means through basic dementia awareness training, and how housing intervention might help, including the early signs and signals which might indicate dementia is present;
- Understanding of the principles contained in the 5 & 8 Pillars approaches to dementia, especially the concepts of “person centred” and “empowerment”;

- Understanding of key effective housing interventions (such as DSDC’s “Top 10 aids and adaptations”) and the proven benefits of assistive technology.

Key skills requirements:

- Ability to develop and maintain effective partnerships and protocols with others involved in dementia care and support, with appropriate KPI’s;
- Confidence and ability to play a supportive but proactive role in minimising time in hospital through providing “key housing circumstances” information to relevant professionals at the appropriate time to optimise choices;
- Confidence and ability to advocate if necessary on behalf of people with dementia to ensure outcomes are optimised when remaining at home, or in transitioning to another type of accommodation, including the potential adoption of a housing options approach (and possibly in a hospital setting);
- Ability to assimilate knowledge of literature, good practice and advice from specialist organisations, and operationalise this into effective organisational policy on housing and dementia, including a robust framework which can evidence outcomes over time.

Workshop 4 Summary Findings: Defining the role, knowledge and skills required in delivering holistic assistance and support as dementia progresses

Pathway 4 – ensuring holistic consideration of all aspects of assistance and support as dementia progresses

Defining the housing role in delivering holistic assistance and support as dementia progresses

1. What role should housing staff perform in an integrated approach to dementia care?
2. What learning & training opportunities can support staff to perform this role?
3. What policies, systems & processes are needed to support staff in this role?



Housing workers should understand the boundaries of their role in meeting the needs of people with dementia & build positive working relationships with partners to support PWD. To do this housing organisations should offer training, develop policies & promote dementia awareness

The role of housing practitioners:

- To develop and implement effective organisational strategy and policies thereby ensuring that housing support and intervention is part of an integrated and holistic approach to dementia care;
- To ensure that the housing contribution to dementia care is clearly defined and publicised, and outcomes well evidenced in support of the housing role, as part of effective integrated protocols for dementia care.

Key knowledge requirements:

- Sound basic awareness of dementia through basic training (Level 1 “informed” for all housing practitioners, augmented for specialised staff to Level 2 or above) including an understanding of the key principles of a person centred empowering approach to dementia which allows people with the condition to optimise choices as effectively as possible;
- Knowledge of the key principles enshrined in the 5 & 8 Pillar approaches, especially what works in the housing response to people with dementia, and of the roles and contributions of partners in an integrated approach;

- Understanding of good practice principles e.g. from: other housing organisations; Stirling DSDC publications and training materials; the National Dementia Strategy; and local Housing Contribution Statements;
- Awareness and understanding of the importance of organisational strategy and policies to support people with dementia.

Key skills requirements:

- Ability to develop coherent strategies, action plans and organisational policies to deliver an holistic approach for people with dementia (including producing or contributing to effective Housing Contribution Statements);
- Ability to assimilate knowledge of specialist literature such as DSDC, good practice and advice from housing and specialist organisations, and operationalise this into effective organisational policy on housing and dementia, including frameworks which can evidence outcomes over time;
- Leadership skills to communicate the importance of strategy and policy to colleagues thereby generating understanding and buy in from all staff;
- To ensure that the many preventative benefits of housing intervention and investment in dementia care are promoted to the new H&SC integrated joint boards as a means of generating increased resources for housing.