

New Memory Support Service

Guidance for Health and Social Care Professionals

Who we can support

Dementia Oxfordshire is now able to offer tailored support to:

- People with memory concerns (excluding age-related concerns)
- People who have an MCI diagnosis and may be in the prodromal stages of dementia

The referral process is quick and simple and can be completed easily online. Please note, we only take referrals from Health and Social Care Professionals.

<https://dementiacare.oxfordtogether.org/public/referrals>

Note: We will accept people on the referral pathway to Memory Clinics, but only from GP practices. Referring people before a diagnosis has been made could create risks which GPs are asked to take into account as outlined on the reverse of this leaflet.

How we can help

Our Memory Advisers can provide information and support around a broad range of topics and will make referrals to other organisations where required. The following examples are just a portion of the advice and support available:

- Explaining how Memory Clinic appointments work and encouraging people to come forward for a diagnosis
- Making healthy lifestyle choices
- Memory-related coping strategies
- Keeping safe and well
- The importance of cognitive and social stimulation and the benefits of joining groups and taking part in activities
- Support available from health, social care & other local services
- Assistive technology and using aids around the home
- Getting a benefits check and how to claim benefits they are entitled to
- Planning ahead, including discussions around Power of Attorney / Advanced Decisions

Please turn over

We will also create a Support Plan for the client which will identify their needs and goals and how these can be reached. Support and advice will be provided through a task and finish approach, cases will be closed once support has been provided, however, people can reconnect with the service through our support line number if necessary.

The aim of this support is to:

- Reduce people's worries and concerns
- Encourage people to accept a referral to the Memory Clinic and raise awareness of the support available post diagnosis
- Encourage healthy lifestyle choices and the use of coping strategies
- Equip people with skills to enable them to better manage their difficulties with memory or other cognitive problems

Possible risks

Risks have been identified when referring people whilst on the diagnostic pathway, these are:

- The person's fear around a dementia diagnosis leading to suicidal ideation, intent or self-harm
- Likelihood that a diagnosis other than dementia might be made
- Talking to a non-clinical professional may not significantly benefit either the patient or the people supporting them before a diagnosis is made
- Patients and their families may not understand where they have been referred to, confusing the Memory Support service with the Memory Clinic service

Our Advisers are trained to manage these risks. However, we are asking GPs to consider these risks on a case-by-case basis and determine whether it's appropriate to refer a patient.

For more information, contact us on our Support Line: 01865 410 210
Visit our website: www.dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk/memory-support
Email us: memorysupport@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

