

How to contact us:

- of day the medication should be taken
- Monitoring the food in the fridge ensuring it is fresh and in date
- Avoiding making any changes to furniture
- Having familiar items and photographs in the home
- Considering if the person is still able to use the cooker safely
- Preventing falls by:
 - ensuring the house is well lit
 - removing clutter
 - having hand rails installed.

There are a range of assistive technologies available to enhance the person's safety within their home environment. If there are particular concerns or risks, an Occupational Therapist can assess the person's home and provide advice on the most appropriate assistive technologies to use. An Occupational Therapist will also be able to assess the person and their home for a range of aids and equipment which may support them with tasks such as cooking, washing, mobility. The person's GP or any other healthcare professional working with the person can make a referral to an Occupational Therapist.

Money

A person living with dementia may experience difficulty with calculating money or remembering to pay bills. It is important to consider if help is required with such tasks. Direct debits can be useful to address the payment of regular bills. There are several legal processes available if management of money has become difficult.

Please contact the Community Mental Health Team for Older People for further information or advice on any of the information contained within this leaflet.



Community Mental Health Team for Older People Tel: (028) 9504 0346

operates from Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

We also offer an extended telephone advice and support service for people living with DEMENTIA and their carers operating:
Monday to Friday until 8pm
Saturday to Sunday 10am to 2pm

If you need to speak to someone outside these hours please contact:
Regional Emergency Social Work Service
(028) 9504 9999

www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/services/CommunityMentalHealthTeams

What can help on a practical basis when living with dementia?



It is important to help the person living with dementia to continue to do things for themselves and remain as independent as possible. Following diagnosis the person should be encouraged to continue to do the things they have always enjoyed doing and to maintain their daily routine. On a day to day basis the person may experience some difficulty with daily living tasks. As the person adjusts to such changes there are a number of practical things they and their relative can do to reduce the impact of such changes, to build their confidence and assist and support them to continue living safely and comfortably in their home.

How a person is affected by dementia will depend upon:

- The stage of their dementia
- The type of dementia
- The symptoms they are experiencing.

To support the person to live well with dementia it is important to encourage them to do as much as they can for themselves and to keep as active as possible.

Routine

To support the person to remain as independent as possible having a daily routine can be helpful in the early stages of dementia. Encourage the person to:

- Have a regular routine in place
- Keep their routine straight forward
- Break all activities into a series of simple steps
- Avoid rushing
- Ask questions
- Store items they use regularly in an identified place: house key, hand bags etc.
- Have regular contact with family and friends.

Memory aids

A memory aid is anything that prompts you to recall information that is important. Examples of memory aids that a person may find helpful include having a:

- Notebook to write down important information
- Calendar for recording appointments
- Note pad by the telephone for recording important names and numbers
- Whiteboard for reminder messages

- Clearly visible, easy to read clock, which also identifies the day and date can be helpful
- Card in their handbag or wallet with the name and contact number of a relative or friend. This can be useful for a person living with dementia to carry at all times in case a difficult situation arises.

Daily tasks

As a person progresses in their journey through their dementia their ability to undertake some daily tasks can become more difficult. Tasks such as washing, dressing or cooking can become a challenge. It may be helpful to support the person with these tasks by:

- Taking things at their pace. Don't rush
- Encouraging them to have as much choice and control as possible
- Helping them break each task into simple steps
- Avoid telling them what to do
- Sensitively prompting them when they are experiencing difficulty
- Writing the steps down
- Laying clothing out in the order in which the person will put it on
- Being patient and sensitive to the feelings of the person

- Trying not to be critical or point out mistakes
- Putting labels on cupboard doors
- Leaving reminder notes to prompt the person
- Encouraging them to concentrate on one thing at a time
- Limiting distractions
- Ensuring glasses are worn and hearing aids are working properly
- Keeping all information and guidance simple and repeating it as often as required.

Safety at home

It is important to consider how the person's symptoms may affect their safety within the home environment. Factors to consider to enhance the person's safety may include:

- Ensuring there are working smoke alarms in the house
- Reviewing the person's night – time routine and considering if they need prompted to lock up prior to going to bed
- Using timer switches for plugs, lights and heating
- Asking the pharmacist to put medication in a disposable dosette box which indicates the days of the week and time