

Your Shed and Dementia

- Brief re-cap on dementia
- Dementia in Mens Sheds
- Current member with dementia
- Social prescribing
- New member with dementia
- Partnership
- Communication and inclusivity
- Tools and aids for disabled



What is Dementia?

Dementia is the term that is used to describe a collection of symptoms. Dementia affects thinking, behaviour and the ability to perform everyday tasks enough to interfere with a person's normal, social or working life.

Everybody's experience of living with dementia is different and their support and needs will vary over time.

Ageing, memory changes and dementia

Dementia can happen to anybody. Although the risk of getting dementia increases with age, the majority of older people do not get dementia. Dementia is not a normal part of ageing. However, dementia is more common after the age of 65 years. When people younger than 65 develop dementia, it is called "young-onset dementia".

Memory changes are a common experience of ageing, but these normal memory changes do not interfere with everyday life in a dramatic way.

Common Forms of Dementia

Alzheimer's disease - flaws in the brain (plaques and tangles) that stop communication between nerve cells and cause them to die.

Vascular dementia - cognitive impairment caused by damage to the blood vessels in the brain. It can be caused by a single stroke or series of mini strokes.

Lewy body disease - presence of Lewy bodies inside nerve cells in specific areas of the brain - cause changes in movement, thinking and behaviour.

Frontotemporal dementia - progressive damage to the frontal and/or temporal lobes of the brain. Symptoms often begin when people are in their 50s and 60s and sometimes earlier.

Events	May forget part or all of an event	Memory may sometimes be vague
Words or names for things or objects	Progressively forgets	Sometimes may forget words or names are on the tip of the tongue
Written & verbal directions	Increasingly unable to follow	Able to follow
Stories on TV, in movies or books	Progressively loses ability to follow	Able to follow
Stored knowledge	Over time loses known information such as historical or information	Although recall may be slower, information is essentially retained
Everyday skills such as dressing & cooking	Progressively loses capacity to perform tasks	Retains ability, unless physically impaired

Sheds and men with dementia

The number of people with dementia in England is expected to more than double by 2045. Over half have mild or early form.

Social prescribing has meant that more sheds are now being actively encouraged to take on people with dementia.

A major objective of Men's Sheds is to advance the wellness and health of male members by increasing social engagement.

Men with early stage dementia can and should be welcomed by Men's Sheds ***where conditions allow.***

Many men with early-stage dementia who are members of Men's Sheds are active participants.

There is evidence that involvement in meaningful activities that include social engagement can slow down the progression of dementia.



How to ensure the shed is as safe as possible

Most importantly, provide designated, competent supervision

- Clear labelling – don't write words in all caps as it's harder to read
- Ensure good lighting.
- Look out for each other.
- Give simple instructions, focus on one thing at a time
- Clear benches before session, avoid clutter and obstacles in gangways
- Match activity to the person's abilities.
- **Control noise levels**

Decisions for the Shed Committee team

Practical considerations

Two situations you may encounter are:

1. A fellow Shed member who has a diagnosis of dementia.
2. A person with dementia who is interested in becoming a member of your Shed.

Things to consider if a person with early stage dementia is interested in joining the shed:-

- It is worth remembering that men with early stage dementia can be valuable members of your shed.
- Most sheds are set up for independent participation and socialisation by members
- It is up to each Shed to make the rules and set the boundaries of its membership that is appropriate to the capacity and circumstance of each individual Shed and its members.

Decisions for the Shed Committee team

How do you accommodate dementia shedders?

- 1. Welcome early stage client within shed**
- 2. Welcome client and carer within shed**
- 3. Provide separate shed session manned by the shed, with carers as necessary**
- 4. Create partnership and run shed session as day club with partner carer and shed volunteers**

Social Prescribing

- The Wellbeing of Shedders in the primary focus of Men's Sheds
- Sheds are not obliged to engage with Social Prescribing and UKMSA fully support their decision should they not wish to
- Shed members will have come to the Shed for their own personal needs.
- Shed members are often both volunteers delivering a service and the beneficiaries of the service too
- Peer support is central to the Shed experience but Shed members are not trained health or mental health professionals.
- Each shed is unique in resource and capacity

Introducing New Members with Dementia



Shed Management Issues:-

- Do you have members trained to support a member with dementia?
- Are your members happy with such arrangements?
- Can you accommodate client plus carer in your normal sessions?
- How do you assess potential clients
- How do you assess and introduce carers?
- Do you have sufficient referrals from social prescribing to create need for separate sessions?

Separate Dementia Sessions

What carers should know

If a member needs to bring a carer to assist their participation at the Shed, there are a few things they need to know.:-

They are at the shed to help the member they are caring for to participate.

- Their role is to help that member they are caring for to participate.
- They are the sole carer of the member at the Shed.
- The carer is not at the shed as a member themselves. However, membership may be required; for example, carers may need to become members for insurance purposes.
- Paid carers should have existing insurance that covers them for attendance at the shed.

Separate Dementia Sessions

Each shed is unique in resource and capacity

If your workshop is small, it may not be possible to take new members who come with carers

It may also be considered undesirable to change the character of the shed by this move.

Can you consider a separate dementia session?

- Is shed access is available?
- Is demand from social prescribing sufficient?
- Are there potential volunteers amongst shed members?
- Is appropriate expertise available?
- Insurance considerations

Separate Dementia Sessions

A number of sheds have members who are dementia trained carers, or have relevant experience in the care industry, and have chosen to run separate sessions.

Example:-

Allan Clark from The Lion's Den shed in Keithley has extensive experience in dementia care, and runs a separate, Wednesday afternoon session for 2-3 dementia shedders with or without carers as their condition requires

There are other sheds which run similar sessions, with the required dementia expertise provided by shed members.



Memory Shed Partnership

There may well be members of the shed who wish to contribute to the well-being of the local community and act as workshop volunteers in a memory shed session.

One way of using this potential is to find a partner organisation which can provide the missing resources.

Look for a local dementia partner or initiative

An example from Wiltshire is the county-wide Alzheimers Support, a charity with centres in four towns providing day-care sessions as well as a wide range of activities for dementia clients.

A partnership with such an organisation could well bring in other shed opportunities in building links with the day centres and other groups.

This partnership can take the form of a day-centre activity but based in a shed



Memory Shed Partnership

Partner shed provides:-

- Member volunteers to work with dementia clients
- Workshop facilities and tools
- Materials and designs

Partner organisation provides:-

- Assistance with recruitment and selection
- Insurance as organisation activity
- Fully qualified dementia carer for each session
- Management of deteriorating client plus follow-on opportunities in day-centres



Memory Shed Partnership

Is this divisive, potentially separating dementia shedders into a separate session?

Not necessarily.....

- 1) There is no reason why early stage dementia shedders can't participate and continue in the main shed as well
- 2) A typical memory shed mix consists of, say, 5 clients and 5 shedders and resolves problems for later stage dementia where a carer would otherwise be required.
- 3) This structure allows a client to work closely with a shedder, and jointly achieve things beyond their individual capabilities, just as they could in a main shed

Talk to the Client, Family, Carer

Health and safety at the Sheds is a key consideration so it is important to be frank about the extent of your abilities and medical condition

Men attending Men's Sheds need to have a level of independence and if they are not independent, need a carer.

Things to consider and talk to the spouse, family or carer about during an assessment session:-

- What activities will be safe and what activities will be difficult
- Mobility and independence
- Is a carer needed, if so are they suitable?
- What does the carer need to know when they come to the Shed?
- What are the carer's responsibilities when they are at the Shed supporting you as a shed member?

Communication Tips

Communication is as important for people with dementia, as it is for anyone else.

Our attitudes and approach are vital to assisting people with dementia. Communication and social interactions of people with dementia can improve when communication is encouraged.

Any way you can find to help members with dementia communicate and connect socially will make a big difference to their day and quality of life.

It is important to help clients maintain their dignity and self-esteem.

It is helpful to remember all of us rely more on body language and tone of voice than on words to communicate with one another.

Talking, Body language

- Stay calm, smile, establish eye contact.
- Use touch where appropriate; (e.g. a handshake, a pat on the shoulder).
- Speak slowly, calmly and clearly
- Talk in a quiet place where possible.
- Sit face-to-face where possible.
- Use a calm tone which conveys warmth.
- Use their name so they know you are speaking to them.
- Show you are listening by your body language, paraphrasing what they have said and by asking questions.

Making inclusion effective

Break down instructions. Focus on one thing at a time.

Help ensure time is as structured and predictable as possible

Encourage joining in and having a sense of belonging in the group.

Be a friend – Even saying “hello” and “goodbye” can make a big difference

Encourage freedom of movement through a safe environment.

Understand that men’s ability may fluctuate from day to day

Learn more about dementia so you can understand more about what the men are experiencing

Tools and Facilities for Dementia and Disability

Japanese pull-saws

Torx screws and drivers

Modified bench hooks

Fixtures for batches, easily applied clamps

Preparation of pre-cut parts and kits for assembly

Management of bench heights

Provision of safety equipment and coats/overalls

Quiet area for conversation and discussion

Noise control/management



Tools and Facilities for Dementia and Disability



Japanese Pull-saw



Clamps

Modified Bench Hooks



Pocket Hole Jig



Cutting Templates and Jigs

Be a friend – supporting your fellow shedder

After a diagnosis of dementia many people experience loss of friends and reduced social contact which can leave them feeling isolated.

Maintaining social connections and meaning in life through existing and new friendships and meaningful activities can make a big difference to the quality of life and happiness of a person with early stage dementia.

There are lots of ways you can support members who have dementia by helping them feel comfortable and safe when participating in the group

Although a person with dementia may sometimes appear not to understand what is being said, they retain the same feelings and emotions as everyone else, so things like tone and body language are important.

If a member is no longer able to safely attend the shed, encourage them to drop in for tea-breaks, and participate in social events.

Listening to relatives and partners of clients with dementia

- There is no proper or right thing to say to a carer.
- Be willing to listen.
- Ask them "Are you okay?" or "How is your wife/partner?" and then listen. It can really help them to give them the chance to talk things through.
- It is also important to remember they may not want to talk about their 'caring role' and may prefer to have time out from talking about it at the Shed.
- Listen carefully, rather than jumping in with suggestions. You may find the support they need is not what you had expected
- It can be tempting to offer practical solutions, but often people just need a chance to say how they feel.
- Try to be supportive and accepting, and not judgmental.
- Listen for issues such as carer stress or loneliness.
- Be open to helping them locate assistance in the community.