

Hidden Disabilities

# Dementia



#PauseChangeShare

## What is Dementia?

The term 'dementia' is used to describe a set of symptoms that occur when the brain is damaged by specific diseases and conditions.

Dementia is not a natural part of the ageing process. It mainly affects people over the age of 65 but it affects younger people as well. All dementias are progressive which means that the symptoms will gradually get worse.

## Types of Dementia

There are many diseases that result in dementia. The most common types of dementia are: Alzheimer's disease – This is the most common cause of dementia. Brain cells are surrounded by an abnormal protein and their internal structure is also damaged. In time, chemical connections between brain cells are lost and some cells die.

Vascular dementia – If the oxygen supply to the brain is reduced because of narrowing or blockage of blood vessels, some brain cells become damaged or die.

Mixed dementia – This is when someone has more than one type of dementia, and a mixture of symptoms. It is common for someone to have Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia together.

## Resources

### Guernsey Alzheimer's Association

info@alzheimers.gg

www.alzheimers.gg

### Dementia Friendly

01481 245121

info@dementiafriendly.org.gg

### Alzheimer's Society Guernsey

01481 233700 Helpline

Michael.Nicholls@alzheimers.org.uk

www.alzheimers.org.uk/guernsey

Our **Hidden Disabilities campaign** aims to to promote positive attitudes towards people living with a disability which isn't immediately obvious. To find out more visit:



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We all Matter, Eh! in partnership with the Guernsey Disability Alliance (GDA).

## Symptom of Dementia?

Symptoms often include problems with some of the following:

- memory (especially short-term) – forgetting names, places, conversations and appointments
- carrying out everyday tasks such as handling money or finding the right bus
- language – difficulties following a conversation or finding the right word for something
- visual perception – the different ways people interpret what they see.
- orientation – losing track of the day or date or becoming confused about where they are.

## Top Tips

Top tips for the community interacting with someone with dementia

1. Asking 'Can I help you?' with a friendly smile goes a long way to putting people at ease.
2. Be patient – listen carefully and give people time to reply.
3. Be clear – communicate clearly, maintain eye contact and use body language and props to help, find a quiet place to go.
4. Don't make assumptions about what someone may want or need – be guided by the individual.
5. Offer support – help the person retain their independence by doing things with them, not for them.
6. Consider feelings – someone with dementia will often remember how they felt more than what you said.

## Watch the video

[www.matter.gg/hidden-disabilities/](http://www.matter.gg/hidden-disabilities/)



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