

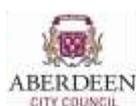
What are Dementia Friendly Communities?

The Alzheimer's Society lists 10 key areas for communities to address if they are attempting to become dementia friendly. All can be useful to organisations striving to be dementia friendly and to provide leadership to their communities on new ways of providing hospitality and inclusion to persons living with dementia.

- 1) **Involvement of people with dementia.** The disability rights movement has long embraced the slogan "Nothing about us without us." Organisations seeking to become dementia-friendly should always insure that people with this diagnosis and their care partners are included in discussions of how to achieve that goal.
- 2) **Challenge stigma and build understanding.** Organisations have many forums in which they can do this: through training, audits, educational programmes for all ages, and the areas where they link to or become, part of the community.
- 3) **Accessible community activities.** Is there anything structural or programmatic about the organisation that excludes persons with dementia, especially those who are less mobile? Can they hear and see when they attend activities? Because most persons with dementia are 65 and older, what organisations do to improve accessibility for older people should benefit those with dementia.
- 4) **Acknowledge potential.** Persons with dementia can make positive contributions to their communities. Certain adaptations may be needed. For example, an individual might be able to read aloud during an event if an assistant points to the lines.
- 5) **Ensure an early diagnosis.** Countries around the world are emphasizing the importance of early diagnosis but this can only be beneficial if there are accessible, appropriate programmes and support services in place. Many community organisations particularly faith groups can offer reassurance in the face of people's fears of rejection over a dementia diagnosis and they can advocate for better, more compassionate approaches to diagnosis and follow-up care.
- 6) **Practical support to enable engagement in community life.** This kind of support benefits both the person with dementia and the care partner. For example, through befriending programmes, trained volunteers can take people with dementia to events in the wider community.
- 7) **Community-based solutions.** The Alzheimer's Society frames this key area in terms of supporting people with dementia living in environments ranging from private homes to specialised facilities.

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8) **Consistent and reliable travel options.** Many groups face the challenges arising when people can no longer drive and public transportation is unavailable. Safe, reliable, respectful options are needed.

9) **Easy-to-navigate environments.** Are toilets accessible? Can older people easily get to rooms located in different parts of a building? Is there a place where people can be safely dropped off near the entrance? Are walks kept clear of ice? Can people with walkers and wheelchairs navigate to find comfortable seats when they get inside?

10) **Respectful and responsive businesses and services.** The Purple Angel program is an international effort to train people working in retail stores, restaurants, and public venues in offering hospitality to people with memory loss and confusion. For example: Churches can display 'Dementia Friends' signs indicating that their staff and members (including volunteers) are "dementia-aware" and they can encourage others to receive the brief training to do likewise.