

Confidentiality

We will store all personal information securely and treat it with the strictest confidence. We may need to share information about you with other professionals involved in your care, but we will ask you before doing this.

Equal opportunities

We are committed to giving an open and inclusive service. The service is open to all adults over the age of 18, regardless of culture, ethnicity, religious identity, gender or sexual orientation.

Complaints

If you are not happy about something, please speak to member of our team directly. You can also contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) for help, advice and information. PALS phone: 0800 731 2864
PALS website: www.pals.slam.nhs.uk
PALS email: pals@slam.nhs.uk

If you would like to make a formal complaint, please contact the Complaints Department. Complaints Department, Maudsley Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 8AZ
Phone: 020 3228 2444/2499
Email: complaints@slam.nhs.uk

Other versions of this leaflet

If you would like a large print, Braille, audio or translated version of this leaflet, please ask us.

How to contact us

If you would like any more information about what you have read in this leaflet or have any questions about our service, you can contact us using the details below:

Southwark and Lambeth Integrated Memory Service

The Gatehouse
Ann Moss Way
Rotherhithe
London SE16 2TH

Phone: 020 3228 0570
Fax: 020 3228 0571

Other Useful Contacts:

SLaM Switchboard: 020 3228 6000
SLaM 24-hour Information Line: 0800 731 2864
SLaM website: www.slam.nhs.uk

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Southwark and Lambeth Integrated Memory Service

Looking after
someone who
has dementia

Looking after someone who has dementia

This leaflet is for people looking after someone with a diagnosis of dementia. There are different kinds of dementia. The effects of these and the way they progress varies from person to person. This leaflet gives you more information about the support available and some tips which you might find useful.

We recognise that it can be daunting when someone you care for is diagnosed with dementia. It is important to remember that you do not have to face this alone.

Who can help me?

As the carer of someone who has dementia, you have the right to have your own needs assessed. You can ask social services for this even if the person you are looking after does not receive any help. You can ask at any time and do not have to wait until things start to feel too difficult. Please speak to a member of our team if you have questions about this.

How can I help myself?

Looking after someone with dementia can be tiring, so it is important that you take time to look after yourself. You might find it helpful to share your experiences with people in a similar position and we can give you information about the support groups available. If you would rather speak to someone alone, you may be able to have counselling.

It is also important that you try to keep in touch with friends and continue to enjoy your own interests and activities. You might also be entitled to respite care to give you a break from time to time. If you are interested in this, please mention it during your carer's assessment, or ask us. There are also other forms of support which you may find useful, such as benefits checks and home care visits. We can give you information on how to apply for these.

How can I help the person I'm looking after?

You may find it frustrating that there is no cure for dementia. It is normal to feel guilt, anger and grief, especially as dementia can often cause the person to say hurtful things or behave differently. Below are some ideas that you might find useful:

- try to focus on what the person can still do, and change activities to help them to take part.
- long term memory is often less affected by dementia - use souvenirs and old photos to start conversations and encourage people to join in activities they have always enjoyed.
- have clocks and calendars on display
- give the person simple choices - avoid giving too much detail at once
- help the person keep to a routine.

We realise that looking after someone with dementia can be hard. We are committed to listening to you and supporting you during your contact with us. We welcome any comments or suggestions about our services and how we can improve and develop them.