



LOTHIAN DEMENTIA PROJECT

Facing Dementia Together: Post Diagnostic Support

September 2009 Report

The early emphasis of the project was on raising awareness through the promotion of staff education. The fundamental aim is to improve care for people with a diagnosis of dementia, and the work goes on from the level of raising awareness of health and social care staff, so that they can signpost people with dementia towards services.

This education is working in tandem with active support for the Mental Health Collaborative team in increasing the numbers of people with dementia on the QOF register. The project continues to support the Dementia Core Group for the Lothian mental health collaborative in communications with GPs and Care Homes. Professor Andrews continued her meetings with Dr Gordon the clinical lead for the collaborative, and accompanied him to visit GPs and other staff from two Edinburgh practices, providing information and support around diagnosis and case finding. The DSDC team is responding to calls for help from care homes or GP practices who are interested as a result of the letter from the collaborative, but at present numbers are still very small. The DSDC this month published "Ten tips for Carers" booklet which gives advice for carers on managing aggression, wandering, agitation and other common problems and how to create a relaxing environment for people with dementia. This has been welcomed by the clinical lead Dr Gordon and will be provided to GPs via the collaborative. It partly answers the question which is posed about what one can do for the carer or the person with dementia at the point of diagnosis. Helen Hayes from Alzheimer Scotland is going to provide material for distribution to GPs, and Professor Andrews is summarising the local service guide for a "quick list" for GPs.

Professor Andrews met around 25 care home providers in Edinburgh and explained the importance of case finding dementia cases. The care homes had already received the information letter in many cases, and welcomed discussion about what support is available for them.

Liberton Hospital medical staff held a seminar addressed by Professor Andrews with around ten doctors and some medical students. The medical staff have requested a return visit. A planned visit to Ward one at Liberton had to be postponed due to sickness.

Twenty physiotherapy staff met Professor Andrews at Liberton Hospital had a lecture on the project and on dementia basics. Written materials were either provided on the day or sent on later.

Andrew Don, a Church of Scotland minister is being given support to set up a group for carers and people with dementia in Midlothian. Written materials have been sent and dates are being set up.

Two staff from Royal Victoria Hospital visited the centre to receive mentoring for a project to reduce hospital re-admission. They were provided with publications and will receive ongoing support.

12 staff from Edinburgh Council visited the centre for a workshop on improving support for people at home, with particular reference to nutrition. During the visit they toured the Iris Murdoch Building and received a number of publications. Martin Rothero and the team leading the consultation on the national dementia strategy have visited DSDC to find out about the Lothian Dementia Project.

A number of Lothian staff (12) attended the international dementia conference at York, and either gave papers, or were delegates, or had posters, they included community psychiatric nurses, physiotherapists, clinical services development manager and a dementia care coordinator.

June Andrews

30th September 2009