

MENTAL HEALTH OF OLDER PEOPLE: THE CHALLENGES AHEAD WITH A FOCUS ON DEMENTIA

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More older people: more physical and mental illness

- Dementia, but not only dementia
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Type 2 Diabetes
- Cancer
- Stroke
- Depression
- Social isolation

More older people: more services needed

More:

- health and social care professionals
- old age psychiatry and geriatric services
- collaboration between private and public sectors
- help from the voluntary sector
- care homes fit for purpose
- day care
- domiciliary care
- hospital beds
- money!

Unsustainable!

High income countries – Who provides the services now?

- Families
- Overstretched primary care
- Overstretched public services
- Variable voluntary sector
- Increasingly the underfunded private sector

Unsustainable!

Low and middle income countries – Who provides the services?

□ Families

- Primary care workers
- Very very few specialist services
- Variable voluntary sector
- Increasing interest from private providers

Unsustainable!

Dementia: How can sustainability be achieved?

1. Greater knowledge about illness prevention
2. Much greater emphasis on post-diagnostic services
3. Increase public awareness on illness recognition and its impact

Dementia: How can sustainability be achieved?

1. Illness prevention

Good for the heart: good for the brain

- Cut smoking
- Regular exercise – the cheapest drug
- Moderate alcohol intake
- Healthy diet

All will reduce risk of dementia as well as many of the other physical and mental illnesses

Dementia: How can sustainability be achieved?

2. Much greater emphasis on post-diagnostic services

Primary care centre stage

Every person and their carer with a diagnosis of dementia provided with:

- ▣ a named professional person to turn to
- ▣ a link with the Alzheimer association
- ▣ information and training
- ▣ time off / respite
- ▣ regular reviews
- ▣ practical help
- ▣ access to care homes fit for purpose

Dementia: How can sustainability be achieved?

3. Increase public awareness on illness recognition and its impact

Dementia Friends

Changing the way a nation
acts, thinks and talks about
dementia



Meeting the Dementia Challenge: Ways that Alzheimer Associations can help

- Listen to people living with dementia and their families
- Encourage development of post diagnostic services
- Publicise importance of life style factors and health for all ages
- Encourage close working relationships between the public, private, and voluntary sectors
- Make everyone a Dementia Friend

Tomorrow it could be you or yours