

Access to information about you

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust is registered under the Data Protection Act 1998 to store and use personal information. We ask for information about you so you can receive proper care and treatment. We keep this information together with details of your care, because it may be needed if we see you again.

Everyone working in the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential. You can request the personal information we hold about you. To access your personal information, write to the Data Protection Privacy Officer, Information Governance Department, Lanchester Road Hospital, Durham City, DH1 5RD

Compliments, comments, concerns and complaints

We welcome compliments, comments, concerns and complaints in order to ensure we continue to provide high quality care to you. You can highlight any comments or complaints with the professional delivering your care, or alternatively by contacting our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Monday to Friday between 9am and 4pm by:

Freephone: 0800 052 0219

mobile: 07775 518086

e-mail: tewv.pals@nhs.net

If you have any concerns you may prefer to put them in writing to the Complaints team at Flatts Lane Centre, Flatts Lane, Normanby, Middlesbrough, TS6 0SZ.

Our website

Find out about mental health conditions, treatments and local and national organisations offering support at:

www.tewv.nhs.uk/patientscarers

For information about medication, see:

www.tewv.nhs.uk/medication

Information in other languages and formats

If you would like this leaflet in another language, large print, audio or Braille, please ask a member of staff.

L587v3 09/13, review date 09/15



Memory Services

It's normal to forget, but sometimes it's important to look deeper

Information for service users and carers

making a

difference

together

It's normal to forget, but sometimes it's important to look deeper

When is it normal to forget?

We all forget. Our memories are remarkable – faster than the most advanced computer – but we still forget things.

Usually, things we don't really need to remember, like what we were doing at exactly this time last year, last month or last week. Unless it was a very special occasion, it is unlikely we would remember.

We often forget the date or day of the week, birthdays, appointments or sometimes what we are doing.

Most of us have spent frustrating minutes (or hours) searching for keys, a purse or wallet, documents or a vital tool. It is inconvenient, but we usually sort out the problems eventually and carry on.

This is all normal.

Local helpful contacts:

--

National helpful contacts:

Alzheimer's Society	
National Dementia Helpline:	0845 300 0336
www.alzheimers.org.uk	
Carers UK	
Carers Line	0808 808 7777
www.carersuk.org	
Mental Health Matters (5pm – 9am weekdays) 24hrs weekend and bank holidays)	
Telephone:	0191 516 3500
www.mentalhealthmatters.com	
Royal College of Psychiatrists	
Telephone:	0113 394 4107
www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfo/olderpeople.aspx	
NHS Direct	
Telephone:	111
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk	

A member of staff will be allocated to you to:

- make sure you, your family or carers are given information you need
- tell you about support available

Very occasionally, people are admitted to hospital for assessment, but for most people it happens as we have said.

By the end of the assessment period we hope to:

- make a diagnosis
- offer advice on any treatment if needed
- offer advice on activities and services that may be helpful to you.

What if it is dementia?

It can be a shock for people and their families initially, and our staff can provide support during this time. But it can also be a relief to know the actual cause.

When dementia is diagnosed in the early stages, research shows that with good support, information, medication (where appropriate), and other treatment, people with dementia, their family and carers can take control and plan their future years ahead.

Forgetting becomes a problem when you notice one or more of the following:

- you forget or lose things much more than before
- you lose the thread of conversations, or forget common words, or names of people you know well
- you get lost in familiar places, like where you live or work
- you get muddled or distressed more easily
- your concentration is not good
- your mood or personality changes – you worry more or feel depressed
- your sleep pattern changes
- you feel physically unwell a lot of the time

It can be embarrassing, and often people try to cover it up. It is not uncommon for relatives, friends or people at work to notice first. This can be frustrating and upsetting for you and them, especially when they urge you to see a doctor.

You may be worrying if this could be the start of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease and what that might mean for the future.

This does not automatically mean you have dementia.

What most people don't know is there are many conditions that can **mimic** dementia, including Alzheimer's disease. For example, anaemia, depression, thyroid problems, infections, stress. Even lifestyle changes like retirement, bereavement, moving job or home.

This is why your GP has referred you to us so we can consider all the possibilities and find out the cause of your symptoms, and offer treatment if needed.

We are a specialist service and are experts in this field. We use a step by step process called a 'dementia pathway' to do this.

This does not automatically mean you have dementia. The cause could be any of the conditions mentioned earlier.

It can be a worrying time for you and your family, but you may be surprised to know:

- 1 in 4 of the population is affected by mental ill health at some time in their lifetime.
- 1 in 20 people over the age of 65 will be affected by some form of dementia.
- 1 in 5 people over the age of 80 will be affected by some form of dementia,
- In rare cases, dementia can occur in people under 65 years.

What can I expect?

We contact you to arrange an appointment to see you either at home, in a clinic or at a hospital. You may like a relative, friend or carer to accompany you. A series of appointments is often arranged and spread over several weeks.

During this time we assess your physical and mental health. This involves staff talking with you about how your symptoms or problems affect you and the people closest to you.

Sometimes a physical examination, blood tests, or scans may be needed. We always explain everything beforehand and ask for your consent.

During the assessment period you may see a range of staff; for example a doctor, nurse or social worker.

You are sure to have lots of questions or concerns at this time; we urge you to discuss them with the staff. It helps you to worry less, and is better for everyone.