

# Information for Lewisham Memory Service patients admitted to University Hospital Lewisham



Lewisham Memory Service  
1A Churchdown, Downham,  
Bromley, BR1 5PS  
Tel: 020 3228 0939

Lewisham Memory Clinic,  
Waterloo Block, University  
Hospital Lewisham, SE13 6LH  
Tel: 0208 333 3000 ext 8177

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Sometimes people with dementia need to go into hospital, either as part of a planned procedure or following an accident such as a fall or if they simply become unwell.

Hospital environments can be disorientating and frightening for a person with dementia and may cause them to be more confused than usual. They might find the ward loud and unfamiliar and may not be able to understand why they are there.

At Lewisham Hospital, dementia care staff will make every effort to ensure a patient feels comfortable in their new environment. This leaflet covers some of the issues that family, friends and carers may want to consider when admission to hospital has to happen, and looks at the support available to both patients and carers during a hospital stay.

## How you can help with a hospital admission

It is important that hospital staff are made aware of a dementia diagnosis during a hospital admission.



Any further personal information that you can add is valuable as it helps us to better understand the person's needs and provide the best care possible, responding to the person as an individual.

Every patient will have a named nurse who will be responsible for the coordination of care, and this is the best person to speak to. As some hospital

admissions are not always planned, it can be helpful for important facts to be written down so they can be given to the named nurse on or as soon after admission as possible.

If you want to discuss more complex issues surrounding treatment plans or diagnosis please make an appointment to see the ward doctor or consultant.

The Alzheimer's Society has produced a leaflet called 'This is me' which can be completed to provide information about a person as an individual; their needs and preferences, likes and dislikes, and interests.

The leaflet can be downloaded from the Alzheimer's disease website: [alzheimers.org.uk/thisisme](http://alzheimers.org.uk/thisisme), or ordered from Xcalibre by calling **016 2852 9240**.

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If you would prefer to write your own information, important things to include are:

- ◆ The name by which the patient likes to be known as well as names of close family members and friends
- ◆ Brief details of the patient's normal routines including whether they need reminders or support with daily tasks
- ◆ The patient's sleeping patterns, especially if they are used to sleeping at times during the day or being awake during certain times at night
- ◆ Any information about foods that they particularly like or dislike or if they have any difficulties with eating and drinking
- ◆ Any illness or pain that might bother them and also how they are likely to communicate if they are in pain
- ◆ Any cultural or religious needs that staff should be aware of
- ◆ The patient's living situation and whether or not they have any pets
- ◆ If there is an advanced decision or a personal welfare LPA
- ◆ Whether the patient likes to be active – for example, if they like to walk about during the day – especially if preventing them from walking around may make them feel threatened or upset.
- ◆ Information about what could help to calm the patient down if they become agitated
- ◆ You may also want to include other important information for ward staff, for example: *Mrs X gets upset if people try to feed her – she can feed herself with a spoon if the food is cut up for her.*

## How you can help with a hospital stay

It is important to ensure that the patient's glasses/ hearing aids/ dentures follow them into hospital as soon as possible.

Under certain circumstances and if you would like to be involved you may be able to come in and help with mealtime prompts or feeding as required. You are also welcome to bring in food supplements if there are any problems with nutritional intake during a hospital stay.

Under special circumstances, and with prior arrangement, visiting hours and meal times can be more flexible. Please discuss with the named nurses in the first instance.

## Other staff that are here to help you

If a person has difficulty with swallowing they will be assessed by the Speech and Language Therapist and a change of diet may be implemented. Dieticians can also be involved when people are not eating and drinking well and they may suggest additional dietary supplements.

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There are two Dementia Nurse Specialists who work at Lewisham Hospital. The nurse specialist from the Lewisham Memory Service provides support and a point of contact and will go and visit any patient from the Lewisham Memory Service who is admitted to University Hospital Lewisham if you let her know they have come in. She can check that all the medications are correct and liaise between the hospital ward, the memory clinic staff and yourself as necessary.

Another nurse provides regular drop in sessions for people caring for someone with dementia who is currently in the hospital. The daytime drop-in takes place on the second Monday of each month from 3pm–5pm. The evening drop-in takes place on the last Wednesday of each month from 6pm to 8pm. Both sessions are held on the sixth floor of the Riverside Building.

Both nurses can be contacted via either of the two Memory Service numbers:

- ◆ At Lewisham Hospital: **0208 333 3000** ext **8177**
- ◆ At Churchdown: **0203 228 0939**

## What to do if you are unhappy or notice a problem with the care being provided

The staff at Lewisham Hospital will do all they can to ensure each patient receives the best possible care. However, if you have any problems with aspects of your own, or a family member or friend's, care or treatment, it is best to discuss these first with the named nurse. If the problems are not resolved you can speak to the Ward Manager or make an appointment to speak to the Consultant.

You could also contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service – PALS which is based at the hospital. PALS will act on behalf of patients and families and liaise with hospital staff to help resolve problems and concerns quickly.

The Dementia Nurse Specialist may also be able to help and can be contacted via the Lewisham Memory Service.

If you would like this information in another language or format including Braille, large print, audio tape or computer disc, please contact PALS on **020 8333 3355** or e-mail **pals.lewisham@nhs.net**

### Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.