

**Media Information** Issued 18 June 2008 Embargoed until 00.01am 19 June 2008

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**Uniting Carers for dementia** responds to the publication of the  
*National Dementia Strategy Consultation*

**‘EXPERTISE, FRIENDSHIP AND COMPASSION – THAT’S WHAT WE NEED’  
SAY THOSE CARING FOR LOVED ONES WITH DEMENTIA**

“Provision of information and being ‘signposted’ to local services is important - of course it is – but that’s not all we need and we hope that is not all we are getting with the revised Strategy,” says Jim Swift of Bolton carer of his wife Jan. “To help us continue to care and keep our loved ones at home – where they want and need to be for as long as possible – we need ‘expert friends’ who can provide emotional and clinical support as well as practical advice.

My Admiral Nurse, with her nursing background, specialist knowledge and experience of practical matters – compiling a memory book, claiming the right benefits, encouraging me to look after my own health – is that ‘expert friend’.”

“My Admiral Nurse has given me the confidence and courage to continue to care for my mother who has dementia, whilst also caring for my father and my teenage daughter,” says Gillian Lasocki from London. “Without that personal and flexible support I would not be able to cope. She has also enabled me to trust others to look after my mother whilst driving her to the day centre, for example, and the courage to let go for a brief respite break.”

“My father was an outdoor person. He loved gardening and walking so any support to enable him to stay at home should have been flexible enough to match his lifestyle,” says Jean Tottie of Bradford who worked for 35 years in health and social care. “I was able to provide that support at weekends but nothing was available during the week.

**The new Dementia Strategy needs to ensure that services are available that fit the needs and lifestyle of the person with dementia and not the other way around!**

**My Admiral Nurse was wonderful in helping me shape the services as much as we could and this enabled me to survive and support my father particularly in the latter stages of dementia.”**

**“Most people with dementia want to stay at home for the duration of the disease – that’s certainly what Nigel and I want but it has been a constant battle for over 8 years,” says Wendy Bude of Sutton Ashfield near Nottingham, carer of her husband of 50 who is in the late stages of dementia. “I know most people give up that fight – they are too exhausted to continue. And that’s bad for the person with dementia but also for the carer as they feel they are letting their loved one down.**

**Choice and flexibility is what is required. I hope that the National Dementia Strategy will provide not only that practical framework but also the expertise, friendship and compassion that must accompany it, such as that provided by Admiral Nurses.”**

**ENDS/**

**Notes**

**Carers Jim Swift, Gillian Lasocki, Jean Tottie and Wendy Bude plus other carers and Admiral Nurses from various locations across the UK are available for interview. Call 01264-710428 / 07887-714957 / 07553-821525 to arrange.**

The mission of **for dementia** is to improve the quality of life of people with dementia by promoting and developing **Admiral Nursing**, providing high quality **training** and promoting best practice for professionals working with older people, carers and people with dementia. Professional and family carers can call the dedicated **Admiral Nursing DIRECT** phone line 0845 257 9406 on Tuesday daytime 10 am- 4 pm, and Tuesday and Thursday evenings between 6pm and 9pm, or email questions to [direct@fordementia.org.uk](mailto:direct@fordementia.org.uk). The charity also supports the **Uniting Carers for dementia Network**. For more information log on to [www.fordementia.org.uk](http://www.fordementia.org.uk).