Your guide to gifts in Wills

“Every family that needs one should have an Admiral Nurse”
“We can help carers find solutions to the challenges they face.”

Sarah Hiscocks, Admiral Nurse
A gift in your Will could help us be there in future for families facing dementia.

When someone receives a diagnosis of dementia it can have a profound effect on the whole family. People desperately need help to come to terms with what is happening, so they can deal with the complex issues they face.

Dementia UK offers families vital support through our specialist Admiral Nurses.

Admiral Nurses work across the UK offering emotional and practical support to thousands of families each year.

However, the number of people in the UK living with dementia is increasing. In future, Admiral Nurses will be needed more than ever – both in the community and through our national helpline Admiral Nursing Direct.

Please would you consider leaving a gift to Dementia UK in your Will, so that in future we can be there for every family who needs us? Gifts in Wills are vital if we are to make sure every family gets the support it needs. That’s why, as Chief Admiral Nurse, I need to ask if you could consider helping us in this most special way.

Of course your loved ones will be uppermost in your mind when making your Will. But this booklet shows how every gift we receive could make a real difference to the many families in the future who will need our help.

Dementia UK is the only charity offering specialist, clinically-trained nurses to families living with the effects of dementia. With your support, we can be there for families in the future too, helping them face dementia together.

Thank you so much for considering leaving a gift in your Will to Dementia UK.

Best wishes,

Hilda Hayo
Chief Admiral Nurse and Chief Executive
“The support my Admiral Nurse provided was vital. Families can’t do it alone.”

Stuart, pictured with Maggie in 2011.
Stuart couldn’t have looked after his wife, Maggie, without their Admiral Nurse, Helen.

When my wife, Maggie, was 48 she started repeating herself and forgetting where she was going. It wasn’t easy to convince medical professionals that the problems were more than ‘just getting older’.

But the memory problems worsened and her speech started to go too. She wasn’t eating properly and lost weight. In 2011, Maggie was finally diagnosed with vascular dementia.

Looking after Maggie was increasingly difficult. Sometimes she would say, “I’m going home now”, meaning her childhood home where she’d grown up, even though her mum had died a couple of years ago. She could be very forceful about going there. Logical arguments didn’t work. At times it felt exasperating.

Maggie had problems with balance so falling was a constant danger too.

She’d already broken her wrist and I slept with a special alarm by the bed which woke me if Maggie tried to get up in the night. Sometimes there would be a crash as Maggie got out of bed and fell.

Maggie’s dementia affected our whole family – our son, his wife, our grandchildren. We all felt we were losing the Maggie we loved.

My best support

But then someone gave me a leaflet about Admiral Nurses and I got in touch with them the same day. My Admiral Nurse, Helen, became my best support.

She helped me understand dementia and gave me practical advice and emotional support too. I’d ask her: “What should I do? What might happen in future”, and she’d be there with answers. Frustration, fear, guilt, sadness – you experience them all when you look after someone with dementia. But Helen helped me work through my feelings. I could call her whenever I needed to. I’m sure I couldn’t have coped without her.

Nothing can prepare you for how dementia turns your life upside down. The guidance and support that my Admiral Nurse gave our family was a real lifeline. Sadly, Maggie died in 2015 but I’m still in touch with Helen today. I know she’s there for me, if I need her.

A gift in your Will could help us be there in the future for more people like Stuart and Maggie.
Admiral Nursing Direct

Susan Drayton, Lead of Admiral Nursing Direct, explains how our helpline means we can be there for more families facing dementia.

Admiral Nursing Direct is a national nurse-led helpline and email service for dementia advice and support. Not everyone has an Admiral Nurse in their community, but thanks to the helpline we can be there for families wherever they live.

I’m one of a team of Admiral Nurses working on the helpline. Like all my colleagues, I’m a dementia specialist. I’ve got 33 years’ experience of nursing, mostly in dementia.

If there isn’t an Admiral Nurse in your area, Admiral Nursing Direct is like a lifeline.

Sally*, for example, called recently because she was desperately worried about her mum, who had Alzheimer’s and was refusing to get out of bed. She wouldn’t eat or attend to her hygiene and had lost a lot of weight. Sally’s dad was poorly and couldn’t cope. It was the weekend, most community services were closed, and Sally felt helpless.

I spoke with Sally on the phone for over an hour – helping her sort out emergency weekend care for her mum, and putting in place a care plan for the following weeks too. I explained how low mood and dementia can be linked, and suggested different ways she could try communicating with her mum, to make managing her behaviour easier.

Somewhere to turn

People like Sally often need emotional support the most. Someone to listen to them, someone who understands dementia and can provide expert advice – who can help them see a way past the crisis.

Without Admiral Nursing Direct, people like Sally would have nowhere to turn. At the end of the conversation, I reassured Sally that she could call me whenever she needed to. Just knowing we’re at the end of the phone gives carers more confidence.

Thank you for supporting Dementia UK. A gift in your Will could help provide more Admiral Nurses, both in the community and through our helpline, so we can be there for everyone who needs us in future.

“Just knowing we’re at the end of the phone gives carers more confidence.”

Susan Drayton, Lead Admiral Nurse

*Name has been changed.
Each Admiral Nurse on our helpline supports, on average 452 people a month.
Why I’m leaving a gift in my Will

Dick Abbott, whose wife has dementia, explains why he’s leaving a gift in his Will to Dementia UK.

When my wife, Mary, was diagnosed with dementia, I used to phone my Admiral Nurse whenever I needed to talk about issues I was experiencing. As a carer you just want someone to talk to.

A ten minute conversation is sometimes all it takes. Having been a carer myself I know how much families like mine depend on Admiral Nurses.

At home, you are often only able to deal with one situation at a time, whereas Admiral Nurses have the specialist knowledge and understanding to help resolve any issue you are facing. We need to make sure Admiral Nurses are available to every family affected by dementia. That’s why I have left a gift in my Will to Dementia UK.

Dick’s story is real, but he’s represented here by a model.
How a gift in your Will could help

In future, every family who needs one could have an Admiral Nurse.

We’re working hard to increase the number of Admiral Nurses across the UK, so that in future no one has to go through the dementia journey without the specialist help they need. A gift in your Will could:

- provide specialist practical advice and emotional support in the future for people with dementia and their families
- help people deal with their feelings and learn coping strategies
- give families a single point of contact to help them to join up different parts of the health and social care system, so their needs can be met in a co-ordinated way
- support families in the future at difficult times in their dementia journey, including when the condition progresses, or when difficult decisions need to be made, such as moving a family member into residential care
- help us meet our ultimate goal of having 800 Admiral Nurses across the UK.

A gift in your Will means Admiral Nurses can be there for families in the future, helping them face dementia together.

800
The number of Admiral Nurses needed across the UK.

£986
could pay for a full day of the Admiral Nursing Direct helpline.
Your next step in how to make your Will

Making a Will is the only way to be sure your wishes will be fully respected. It’s an important document that will ensure your savings and possessions go to the people and causes you care about.

You’ll naturally want to look after your family and friends first when making your Will, but any gift to Dementia UK, no matter how small, will have a big impact and help make sure we can be there in future for everyone who needs an Admiral Nurse.

If you decide to make a Will, you might find our ‘next steps’ guide helpful.
Where to begin

We strongly suggest you ask a solicitor or a member of the Institute of Professional Willwriters to help you make your Will. Before speaking to them, you might find it helpful to think about a few things first.

- Decide who will be named as your executors – the people who will make sure your wishes are fulfilled.
- Calculate the value of your assets; make a note of your possessions from small items such as jewellery to larger assets including property, savings and investments.
- Choose the family and friends you’d like to remember. After them, consider whether you would like to leave a gift to charity. Some people leave a percentage of their estate to Dementia UK having first looked after their loved ones.

Finding a solicitor

You can find a solicitor in your area by contacting the Law Society at lawsociety.org.uk or by calling 020 7242 1222.

You can also find a professional Will writer by contacting the Institute of Professional Willwriters at ipw.org.uk or calling 0345 257 2570.

Amending your Will

If you already have a Will but wish to amend it to include Dementia UK, simply ask a solicitor to help you complete the enclosed codicil form, so it can be stored with your Will.

Thank you for helping us be there for families in future by considering leaving a gift in your Will to Dementia UK.
Different kinds of gifts

There are several ways you can leave a gift in your Will. Your solicitor will be able to run through your options with you, but here’s a guide to the main ones, to help you decide which might be right for you.

A share of your estate (also called a residuary gift) is when you choose to leave a percentage of your estate to a loved one or a charity of your choice.

A cash gift (also called a pecuniary gift) is when you give a specific sum of money. Because of inflation, the value of this gift will reduce over time so you can choose to index link it, if you wish, so that it keeps pace with rising prices.

A specific gift is when you leave a particular item such as a valued personal possession, shares or property.

Every gift left to Dementia UK helps us be there for families in the future. Many supporters choose to leave a share of their estate (a residuary gift) for the simple reason that it keeps pace with inflation and enables you to ensure that your family and friends are cared for.

After making your Will

Many people ask their solicitor to look after a copy of their Will, but it’s a good idea to keep your own copy too in a safe place, and tell someone in your family where it’s stored.

Your next steps at a glance…

1. Decide who you want to be the executors of your Will
2. Calculate the approximate value of your assets
3. Choose the family, friends and charities you’d like to remember in your Will
4. Visit a solicitor to have your Will drawn up
5. Keep your Will in a safe place and let someone close to you know where it is
6. If you wish, you can share your intentions with us using the enclosed reply form

Please share your intentions with us using the enclosed reply form, so we can thank you properly.
“I help families live positively with dementia and am proud to make a real difference to their quality of life.”

Carol Anderson, Admiral Nurse
“Every family that goes through the dementia journey should have an Admiral Nurse.”

Vanessa, whose husband Stan died from dementia.

A gift in your Will could make sure more families like Vanessa’s have the Admiral Nurse they need.
Dementia and making a Will

Having dementia can raise particular issues when it comes to writing a Will. If you or your family member has dementia, you might also find the following information helpful.

Capacity to make a decision

Having dementia need not stop you making a Will, providing you have what is called ‘mental capacity’. This means you:

- understand information given to you
- are able to retain that information long enough to be able to make a decision
- can weigh up the information available to make a decision
- and can communicate the decision.

A Lasting Power of Attorney

A Lasting Power of Attorney lets you appoint someone to manage your affairs if, in future, you are no longer able to make decisions for yourself. It can cover either ‘health and welfare’ or ‘property and financial affairs’, or both, and must be registered with the Office of the Public Guardian online.

If you would like more information on capacity to make a decision or lasting power of attorney then please visit www.gov.uk/government/collections/mental-capacity-act-making-decisions or contact your solicitor or your GP.

“Thank you so much for considering leaving a gift in your Will to Dementia UK.”

Hilda Hayo, Chief Admiral Nurse and Chief Executive
If you are considering leaving a gift to Dementia UK in your Will, or have already done so, you might like to let us know your intentions using the enclosed form.

Please return it to the Gifts in Wills Manager, Dementia UK, 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA.

With your support we can be there in future for families facing dementia. Thank you.