

# An Evaluation of the Admiral Nurse Dementia Helpline

An overview of the methodology and findings from a 1-year evaluation

## Background

The Admiral Nurse Dementia Helpline offers support to people who are caring for somebody with dementia including family, friends and professionals, as well as those living with dementia themselves. The Helpline is fully staffed by Admiral Nurses, who are clinicians experienced in supporting families living with dementia and is open 7 days a week.

## Methodology

The Helpline was evaluated using a 'Mixed Methods' approach. Quantitative (activity) data was extracted from two data sources. Qualitative and quantitative data was gathered by means of a carer experience survey\*, which was sent to a sample of those who had made contact with the Helpline and who had given consent to be contacted.

## Evaluation Objective

To deepen our understanding of the reach of the Admiral Nurse Dementia Helpline and the experience of those accessing support by collating and analysing routinely collected service activity data from two sources - and triangulating this with quantitative and qualitative data from a carer experience survey.

"True understanding of the condition. Specialist experience came across on the call."

"I was helped to understand where we are as a family and how to access the help that we need now to avoid admission to hospital and care breakdown."

"[The Admiral Nurse] gave me the confidence to ask for what my mum is entitled to."

## Findings

During 2017-18 the Helpline has seen an increasing demand for our service as evidenced by the volume of calls and contacts with our service. This has been accompanied by very positive feedback from those accessing the Helpline on the support they received and the positive difference this has made.

**17,016** contacts were recorded by the Admiral Nurses working on the Helpline during 2017-18, almost all were:

- From within the UK (99%)
- By telephone (72%)
- From a carer (86%) who is a close family relative (67% were from daughters and sons)

## Improved quality of life...

Admiral Nurses have improved the quality of life for the majority of respondents to our survey by making a difference to key areas of their lives:

**91%** said they made a difference to their ability to take better care of the person they look after

**89%** said they made a difference to their confidence in their ability to cope

**92%** said they made a difference to their ability to make important decisions

**88%** said they made a difference to their ability to communicate with the person they look after

## Delaying and reducing the need for care and support...

We asked carers what would have happened if they didn't have access to an Admiral Nurse...

**59%**

... would have struggled on their own

**19%**

... would have seen a GP more for the needs of the person they look after

## Why do people contact the Helpline?

31 different reasons were recorded, with the most common reasons being:

Wants an Admiral Nurse

General Information

Behaviour

Accessing support

Over a quarter (29%) of cases were re-opened at some point during the year, indicating a large number of people contacting the Helpline more than once.

## A positive experience...

**100%**

... of respondents said that the Admiral Nurse was helpful in sharing information and explaining the impact of dementia

**97%**

... of respondents said that the Admiral Nurse was helpful in providing ways of responding to and coping with changes in behaviour

**94%**

... of respondents said that the Admiral Nurse was helpful in providing them with emotional support

**96%**

of carers said they would be 'extremely likely' or 'likely' to recommend our Helpline to someone who needs similar support and advice

\*A total of 158 carers completed our survey. Response rate to each question varied depending on whether carers felt it was applicable to them.