

## **Practical guide to getting the best out of GP and other health appointments**



## Practical guide to getting the best out of GP and other health appointments

A diagnosis of dementia can be a big shock – for the person with the condition, and their family. It can be difficult to know what to do, what decisions need to be made, who to tell, what support is available and what happens next.

Dementia UK provides specialist dementia support for families through our Admiral Nurse service. Admiral Nurses give families the compassionate one-to-one support, expert guidance and practical solutions they need to face dementia with more confidence.

This leaflet aims to help both the person with the diagnosis of dementia, and the family and friends who help them, to get the most out of your GP and other health appointments. Here we will suggest the questions you might want to ask, and the follow up support you are entitled to request.

### What happens next

After a diagnosis of dementia, you may have questions about what happens next, ie, what support services are available? At what point do different health professionals become involved?

Your GP and the local Memory Services will be your main sources of information at this time. Here is some space for you to record the details of your follow up appointments, as well as some helpful questions to consider asking and space to record the answers.

## Details of appointments

Who is the main health contact? (Name, job title)

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How often will you see or speak to them? When is your next appointment?

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What are their contact details?

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## Helpful questions to ask your GP or specialist

What type of dementia does the person have?

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What symptoms/changes in behaviour could we anticipate with this type of dementia?

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What treatments, if any, are available? Record here medication offered and prescription information

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Will there be a schedule for follow up appointments? With who (the GP? A specialist nurse? The Memory Service?) When will these take place? Who will schedule this? (ie, will the family be notified or should they request these appointments)

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Which local services might be available for families to discuss financial and legal matters? (The Admiral Nurse Dementia Helpline can advise if local services are limited or not available. Please see Sources of support at the end of this leaflet for details)

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## Other appointment notes

Type of appointment

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Name of health contact

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Date

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Type of appointment

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Name of health contact

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Date

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Type of appointment

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Name of health contact

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## Helpful information for your GP

When you see your GP for a review in the future, it will be helpful for them to know the following information:

- any concerns or worries you have
- any new symptoms you may be experiencing
- any hearing, visual or balance problems
- whether you have a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) for health and welfare in place (please see Sources of support for the Dementia UK leaflet on applying for an LPA)
- relative's details, even if they live at a distance

It is also useful to give your GP consent to speak to other people about you, if this is appropriate. Let them know if you give them:

- consent to speak to your next of kin about your health care
- consent to share your health care information with other health professionals (on a need to know basis)

You can appoint someone to be your medical proxy, which means they can speak to your GP on your behalf. Please see the Dementia UK leaflet on GP online services for information about this and about managing your health affairs online (please see Sources of support).

## Sources of support

### **GP online services**

[www.dementiauk.org/gp-online-services](http://www.dementiauk.org/gp-online-services)

### **Next steps after a diagnosis: emotional impact**

[www.dementiauk.org/emotional-impact](http://www.dementiauk.org/emotional-impact)

### **Next steps after a diagnosis: changing roles and relationships**

[www.dementiauk.org/changing-roles-and-relationships](http://www.dementiauk.org/changing-roles-and-relationships)

### **Next steps after a diagnosis: understanding and dealing with stigma**

[www.dementiauk.org/dealing-with-stigma](http://www.dementiauk.org/dealing-with-stigma)

### **Next steps after a diagnosis: staying healthy**

[www.dementiauk.org/staying-healthy](http://www.dementiauk.org/staying-healthy)

### **Next steps after a diagnosis: driving**

[www.dementiauk.org/driving](http://www.dementiauk.org/driving)

### **Next steps checklist**

[www.dementiauk.org/next-steps-checklist](http://www.dementiauk.org/next-steps-checklist)

### **How to get the most out of remote consultations**

[www.dementiauk.org/remote-consultations](http://www.dementiauk.org/remote-consultations)

### **Sources of support and advice**

[www.dementiauk.org/sources-of-support-for-families](http://www.dementiauk.org/sources-of-support-for-families)

The information in this booklet is written and reviewed by dementia specialist Admiral Nurses.

We are always looking to improve our resources, to provide the most relevant support for families living with dementia. If you have feedback about any of our leaflets, please email

[feedback@dementiauk.org](mailto:feedback@dementiauk.org)

**We receive no government funding and rely on voluntary donations, including gifts in Wills.**

For more information on how to support Dementia UK, please visit [www.dementiauk.org/donate](http://www.dementiauk.org/donate) or call **0300 365 5500**.

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If you're caring for someone with dementia or if you have any other concerns or questions, call or email our Admiral Nurses for specialist support and advice.

Call **0800 888 6678** or email [helpline@dementiauk.org](mailto:helpline@dementiauk.org)

Open Monday – Friday, 9am – 9pm  
Saturday and Sunday, 9am – 5pm



[www.dementiauk.org](http://www.dementiauk.org) • [info@dementiauk.org](mailto:info@dementiauk.org)

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Dementia UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1039404) and Scotland (SC047429).