



DementiaUK
Helping families face dementia

Admiral Nurses in primary care

Professional and carer survey evidence report

This short evidence summary looks at outcomes associated with Admiral Nurses working within primary care networks, as reported by carers and professionals. The data is from service evaluations conducted by Dementia UK and includes survey responses* from 83 professionals (relating to nine primary care Admiral Nurse services) and 105 carers (relating to 18 primary care Admiral Nurse services).

* NB: no questions in the surveys were mandatory so response rates to questions vary.

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Outcomes for families

Professionals felt that Admiral Nurse services were making a difference to people's lives and improving care. All professionals responding said the Admiral Nurse had:

- improved quality of life for families (n=64)
- improved person-centred care for families (n=63)

Carers told us how Admiral Nurse services had helped them to continue caring, with all or almost all saying the service had made a positive difference to their:

- ability to continue caring for the person with dementia (98%)
- ability to cope (98%)
- ability to take better care of the person with dementia (100%)

Admiral Nurse services also had an impact on empowering carers when making decisions about the care of the person with dementia and planning for the future:

- all professionals said the service had enabled the inclusion of families in decisions about care (n=64)
- almost all carers (99%) said the Admiral Nurse had made a difference to their ability to make decisions about the care of the person with dementia
- all carers told us that the Admiral Nurse was 'excellent', 'very good' or 'good' at making a plan of action with them, including discussing options and involving them in decisions
- almost all professionals told us that the service had introduced the concept of advance care planning to families (45/46)

Overall experience of the Admiral Nurse service for carers

On the NHS Friends and Family Test question, "Overall, how was your experience of the service?", **carers rated the service highly** with 97% rating it as 'very good' (the highest rating), 2% 'good', and 1% 'don't know' (n=105).

All professionals (n=60) said Admiral Nurse services had improved case management or coordination and three-quarters of carers said they had improved the coordination of support from other health and social care professionals.

"The Admiral Nurse has liaised with [the] GP/mental health team/ physios/social services/virtual ward/district nurses/SALT [speech and language therapy] team and Mum's carers. Mum now has equipment in place to help her stay at home. [The] nurse was able to advise carers on how to give Mum better personal care/calming techniques [and] advice on foods too. [The] nurse has liaised with other agencies to get Mum's medication changed.

"My Admiral Nurse has helped me cope when I felt alone on this journey of care. When I needed someone to give me advice and help about Mum's anger, inadequate personal care, weight loss, mobility, food and meds, the Admiral Nurse was at the end of the phone."

- Carer

Use of other health and social care resources

Professionals felt Admiral Nurse services were contributing to improved utilisation of health and social care resource by having an impact on:

- avoiding crisis points for families affected by dementia (58/60)
- delaying long-term care home placement of the person with dementia (45/47)
- reducing unplanned hospital admissions (44/46)

"[The Admiral Nurse has] reduced hospital admissions and crisis points for several patients by providing advice and support, regular contact [and] referral to appropriate services."

- **GP**

"[The Admiral Nurse is] typically a 'first port of call' for issues, reducing burden on primary care services [and] addressing issues in a very timely manner so as to reduce secondary care impact/admissions."

- **GP Partner**

Carers also told us about the impact Admiral Nurse services were having on their use of other services, saying their Admiral Nurse:

- helped avoid A&E visits for the person with dementia (25%)
- helped delay the person with dementia moving into a care or nursing home (31%)

Impact on GP practices

Professionals working in GP practices said Admiral Nurse services were having a positive impact on their time by:

- reducing their contact time with families affected by dementia (26/29)
- reducing their service's contact time with families affected by dementia (28/31)

Around a third of carers told us Admiral Nurse services had reduced the amount of GP appointments that the person with dementia attends (35%) or that they attend for their own needs (32%).

"Having an Admiral Nurse working in the PCN has really helped to improve our practices' service to [...] families dealing with dementia. There has been really positive feedback from families and the service has been invaluable. We have seen much fewer crisis contacts from families since this service was introduced."

- **GP**

"[The Admiral Nurse] has worked with our doctors to identify families with [a] dementia diagnosis, and by advanced care planning has managed to improve care, removing in some cases the necessity for hospital admission. She has worked with carers [...] to remove some of the everyday hurdles and avoid crisis points, thus alleviating GP time for our surgery and wider PCN."

- **Practice Manager**

"It is invaluable to have [an Admiral Nurse] which a patient/carer can turn to for help. It is very forward thinking of the practice to sponsor this position as there are many people with dementia. Experts in dementia are required within the practice portfolio."

- **Carer**

Case study

One carer described the impact of the Admiral Nurse on them and their family:

“The Admiral Nurse has provided invaluable support to myself and my mum in dealing with my dad. My mum hit a point of crisis and without the support of [the Admiral Nurse] I am not sure how we would have coped. In my work life I was a senior manager in the NHS so have some knowledge of how the system works but even with this we would have struggled to get the right support and help without [the Admiral Nurse].

“She acted as a focal point for us, working between different agencies and keeping us informed of what was happening and chasing information for us. She was the person in the system who I felt I could rely on to do what she said she would do; she always acted promptly and informed me of what was happening, even if this meant phoning me late into the evening.

“She provided emotional support to my mum and myself at a time when we were struggling to come to terms with my dad needing to go into long-term care. She arranged to attend case conference meetings to ensure that our wishes and views were accurately reflected. She has subsequently visited my dad at his new residential home.

“[The Admiral Nurse] has been invaluable to our family and I am sure to many others. In my past life I had to make many decisions about commissioning and funding services which are never easy with stretched resources, however, I would strongly support and recommend that local commissioners should continue to fund this service, and where possible, to extend and grow it. We are all aware of the growing numbers of people with various types of dementia; the support this service offers to [people with dementia] and their families is invaluable.”

- Carer