



# How people with dementia are supported by health and social care services

May 2025



Easy read version of 'Health and social care support for people with dementia: Dementia Strategy: a review of the experiences of people with dementia in England and how health and care services are responding'



We are the Care Quality Commission (CQC). We check how good health and social care services are in places like

- hospitals
- GP surgeries
- care homes
- care in your home



Dementia is an illness that affects people's memory, thinking and being able to do everyday things.



Most people with dementia are over 65, but it can also affect younger people.



Around half of people will be affected by dementia in their lives – either because they have dementia or because they care for someone in their family with dementia.



More and more people are being affected by dementia – partly because people are living longer.



We have written most of this report based on what people with dementia and their families tell us in surveys and when they give feedback about healthcare (like hospitals and GPs) and social care (like care homes and homecare).



We also include what services tell us they are doing to improve care for people with dementia.



## Understanding people's needs



People told us that hospital and social care staff do not always understand the care needs of people with dementia.



This includes support to eat and drink enough to keep healthy.



People also said that hospitals can feel busy and confusing for people with dementia.



Some hospitals and care homes have made special spaces for people with dementia, like quiet areas or gardens.

Good services think about what people are interested in, or what made a big difference in their lives, like the job or hobby they used to do, and bring that into their care and support.





## Talking to people and their families



We heard that hospital staff were not always good at talking to people with dementia and their families or keeping in touch with them.



Hospital and social care staff that talked to people with dementia well thought about what changes they needed to make to help them understand.



## Keeping active

It is important that people with dementia can keep active – both in their body and mind.

Some people said that hospitals and care homes did not support this, with people being told to stay in bed or in their rooms.

Good care homes kept people in touch with their local areas, with special trips to the theatre or cafes or visits from local schools.

## Staff and training



People told us they were worried that a shortage of care staff could put people with dementia in more danger – for example of falling.



It is important that people with dementia can see the same staff if possible, but sometimes this was difficult because staff change jobs a lot.



More health and social care staff should be given training, so they have a better understanding of how to support people with dementia.





## Family and carers

Family, friends and other unpaid carers are often very important in supporting people with dementia to carry on living in their own homes and receiving health and social care.



The difficulties of caring for someone with dementia, on top of other duties like work or looking after children, can make carers feel under pressure or ill themselves.



Good health and social care services can help take this pressure off family and carers – for example by making sure they know their relative with dementia is happy and getting the best care.

# Inequalities



When some people are treated less well than most people because of who they are, like people from an ethnic minority, this is called 'inequality'.



People with dementia already face inequalities in health and social care support.



But it can be even harder for people with dementia who may also face inequalities for other reasons – like their ethnic background or because they have another disability.



Not a lot of health and care services seemed to be thinking about people who may be affected this way. But we did hear of a few, which included health and care staff:



- Learning to say some words in people's preferred language, like Welsh or Polish
- Helping people to carry on practicing their religion if they want to, even if they find it difficult to remember parts of it.