

## **LGA Call for Evidence on how Local Authorities should prepare for an ageing population**

### **Dementia Friendly Crawley**

**“best example of a dementia friendly town that he had come across” – quote from Professor Alistair Burns - National Clinical director for Dementia, NHS England, during his visit to Crawley**

### **Background**

In response to the Prime Minister’s challenge to Health Services, Local Authorities and other organisations to work together to enhance services for those affected by dementia, Crawley submitted detailed bids to the Dementia Challenge Fund (DCF) in September 2012 for funding to develop six streams of work;

1. To develop a Dementia Friendly Crawley
2. To give those affected by dementia a ‘voice’
3. To create a Dementia Innovation Fund
4. To create a Crawley Dementia Alliance
5. To create a Happy Safe Out and About Buddy scheme
6. To develop a scheme to encourage those with dementia to live more meaningful lives (Joyful Moments)

Despite huge pressures on the Dementia Challenge Fund, Crawley was exceptionally awarded funding of £125,000 to support the ambition to make Crawley a Dementia Friendly town and to introduce a dementia voice project. Although the other streams could not be individually funded, Crawley has worked to identify synergies whereby these projects might also be developed.

### **Achievements to date**

- We have created a Crawley Dementia Alliance bringing together all the statutory authorities and voluntary services to promote closer working relationships and provide seamless co-

ordinated services for those suffering from dementia. At a stakeholder event in November 2013 this resulted in over 120 people attending from over 50 different organisations – this included schools, businesses, clinical, statutory and volunteer organisations.

- The work in Crawley has attracted interest nationally and internationally and has included visits from Professor Alistair Burns (National Clinical Director for Dementia – NHS England) and Duncan Selbie ( Chief Executive – Public Health England).
- Winners of the National Dementia Friendly Communities Award (Local Initiative)

Jeremy Hughes (Chief Executive – Alzheimer’s Society) will be visiting Crawley in April 2014.

In addition, Crawley Dementia Alliance was featured in an article for the Japanese Kyodo News around the G8 Summit on dementia – December 2013.

- Members of the Alliance are regularly being asked to speak at events to share the work that is taking place across Crawley; West Sussex Dementia Strategy event, Kent, Surrey and Sussex Academic Health Science Network Event, LGA Events, The College of Medicine and the NHS Alliance National Conference. Sharing the learning is a key focus in developing the dementia friendly movement.
- Development of local health and wellbeing services to better support people living with dementia and their carers;
  - Forget Me Not Club – for carers and their cared for
  - Men In Sheds (work in progress) – dementia friendly shed project for isolated males and those living with dementia
  - Dementia friendly ladies group (work in progress) – aimed at BME community
  - Dementia friendly haven (work in progress) – weekly drop in session for people with early stage dementia, so that carers can attend to jobs in the town centre; post office, bank, opticians or respite knowing their cared for are in a safe environment
  - Intergenerational work – school visits
  - Forward Thinking group – peer support lead by Alzheimer’s Society
  - Dementia Friendly Carol Concert arranged by the Forward Thinking Group
  - Dementia Voice project – digital story telling of people living with dementia
- The Dementia Friendly Crawley Stakeholders event attracted over 120 organisations including many businesses at a special breakfast briefing. This event resulted in many pledges from business leaders, public and voluntary organisations across the town to make Crawley more dementia friendly.

Dementia Friendly Crawley continues to develop. Throughout 2013 activities have included, a day of Dementia Friends information session running throughout the day with 9 back-to-back sessions with the aim of creating over 150 Dementia Friends in 1 day, and over 100 of these being employees of Crawley Borough Council as well as Henry Smith MP, The Mayor of Crawley and many local councilors. We now have over 800 Dementia friends in Crawley.

The focus will continue be to ensure that existing services, retailers, transport and leisure services are able to consider themselves dementia friendly.

We are working with Proactive care multi-disciplinary teams in all 13 Crawley GP Practices. This is the new way we are supporting people with long-term health conditions or complex health and social care needs who are at risk of their condition worsening. The dedicated team works directly with the person, involving NHS and social care professionals including nurses, physiotherapists, social workers, occupational therapists and mental health professionals. The teams are already making a significant difference to those they have worked with.

We have encouraged patients and their families to become involved in shared decision making so that they can have a better understanding of treatment options, can ask questions, discuss the pros and cons and reach decisions on the best treatment options.

We have developed mechanisms to give patients a greater say in their own affairs and encourage them to live their lives as normally as possible e.g. peer support groups, luncheon clubs, creating opportunities for those with dementia to express their views etc

We have improved dementia training for GPs and have enhanced basic checks such as improved memory assessment services. This has supported early diagnosis of the disease, which has already risen from 37% to 62% of predicted prevalence and is likely to rise still further. This will allow for earlier intervention to assist those affected.

We have widely consulted with patients and have worked with Health Service and other professionals to create enhanced End of Life care pathways, which lessen anxiety for patients and enable them to stay out of hospital for longer.

We are exploring opportunities of engaging in the global phase 3 clinical trials of a new drug treatment for Alzheimer's Disease.

We have raised greater awareness amongst the public of what they can do to help those with dementia. Such work has included public information events, talking to focus groups, raising awareness in colleges and schools, speaking at Neighbourhood Forums, encouraging intergenerational and multi-racial groups.

We have raised greater media awareness to stimulate an open conversation in the community about dementia and the challenges both for those with dementia, their families and carers.