



## **Unit 15: Caring for Individuals with Dementia**

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### **Delivery guidance**

#### **Approaching the unit**

The focus of this unit is to encourage learners to understand the causes, symptoms and support needs of individuals with dementia. The emphasis is on the provision of person-centred care and promoting best practice within the sector.

Learners will benefit from visits to care provision facilities and from listening to guest speakers, from healthcare professionals to charities, involved in the provision of care. This will ensure that they develop not only an overview of holistic care but also an appreciation of the different care needs of individuals with this progressive degenerative disorder.

A diagnosis of dementia can be a challenging experience for individuals and their relatives. However, learners should appreciate by the end of this unit the importance of maintaining independence and dignity.

#### **Delivering the learning aims**

##### **Learning aim A**

It is important that learners develop an understanding of the different types of dementia, the different causes and how the symptoms can vary from day to day and from individual to individual. Learners will need to utilise effective research skills and reference their work appropriately as they explore this disease.

##### **Learning aim B**

Learners will need to explore the impact of this progressive degenerative disease on the mental and physical health of individuals, with an emphasis on the changing care needs of individuals as the disease progresses. Learners will also need to explore the potential effects of the disease on the quality of life of individuals and the issues associated with maintaining independence.

The use of case studies and learner reflection on relevant work or placement experience should be encouraged in order to place learners' research of the theory within the context of care. Discussions of real-life experiences must be anonymised to maintain confidentiality.



### Learning aim C

Learners will need to explore the care package provision for individuals with dementia and consider the necessity of ensuring that the provision is both person-centred and regularly reviewed to make sure that it is appropriate. Learners should also consider the problems associated with providing needs-led care for this degenerative disease, including safeguarding, protection and safety. It would be beneficial for learners to have a guest speaker to discuss the provision of care. This could be a Registered Mental Health Nurse (RMN) for information on care in hospital, or a homecare provider or relative for individuals with dementia still living in their own homes.

### Assessment model

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
<b>A</b> Examine the types, causes and symptoms of dementia	<b>A1</b> Types and causes of dementia <b>A2</b> Symptoms of dementia	A report that examines the types, causes and symptoms of dementia, and the progressive effects on mental and physical health, quality of life and wellbeing of people who have the condition.
<b>B</b> Examine the effects of dementia on people who have the condition	<b>B1</b> Effects of dementia on mental and physical health <b>B2</b> Effects of dementia on quality of life and wellbeing	
<b>C</b> Investigate the concept of person-centred care for people who have dementia to maintain quality of life and wellbeing	<b>C1</b> Principles of person-centred care <b>C2</b> Safeguarding people who have dementia	A report based on a case study of an individual who has dementia that justifies the

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	<p><b>C3</b> Assessment of needs, protection and safety</p> <p><b>C4</b> Health and wellbeing</p> <p><b>C5</b> Responsive and flexible care provision to maintain quality of life and wellbeing</p>	<p>impact and benefits of person-centred care on the individual and evaluates how current practice in dementia care meets the individual's needs.</p>
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### Assessment guidance

This unit is internally assessed. There is a maximum of two summative assignments for this unit. Tutors should refer to the assessment guidance in the specification for specific detail, particularly in relation to the requirements for Pass, Merit and Distinction grades.

This recommended assessment approach for this unit requires the development of two reports. The first report (covering learning aims A and B) is concerned with the causes, signs, symptoms and prognosis for an individual who has been diagnosed with dementia. The purpose of the assessment is to give learners an insight into the different types of dementia: the assessment is a compare and contrast exercise designed to allow learners to display awareness of the different facets of the disease. The report may therefore include tables and charts, anonymised accounts, case histories and interviews. The importance of maintaining confidentiality is paramount. This assignment also needs to cover the effect on a person's health and wellbeing.

The second assignment (covering learning aim C) is also a report and is concerned with the provision of person-centred care: it can be based on either a case study or an anonymised service user (case studies for this unit are available on the Pearson website). The emphasis should be on maintaining dignity and independence and accessing the appropriate resources. The care planning cycle should be examined closely in its application to the provision of care, with a view to evaluating the degree to which current-practice dementia care meets the individual's needs.



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To support learners in their report writing, they should be encouraged to use headings, subheadings and annotated pictures or diagrams to illustrate the points they are making.

This assessment gives learners clear opportunities to move between grade boundaries by building on their research and experience and reflecting on their practice.



## Getting started

**This gives you a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.**

### Introduction

Introduce this unit by encouraging learners to develop an understanding of what the signs, symptoms, diagnosis and prognosis of dementia mean for an individual with the condition. The emphasis is on the process of person-centred care and the benefits of this holistic and empowering approach.

### Learning aim A: Examine the types, causes and symptoms of dementia

For A1, you could start with a tutor-led session in which you introduce learners to the four main types of dementia and the causes: Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, dementia with Lewy bodies (LBD) and frontotemporal dementia (FTD).

- Learners could complete a paired research task where they investigate the types and causes of dementia. They could produce a presentation which they could deliver to the class. This collaborative exercise will also encourage learners to develop their speaking and listening skills. It is important that learners are guided in their research and that there is an emphasis on appropriate referencing techniques.
- You could create a quiz to test learners' knowledge of dementia and review their learning.

For A2, you need to ensure that learners can recognise the range of symptoms of dementia resulting from damage to the brain and the effect that these symptoms have on the individual's quality of life.

- A tutor-led introduction to the range of symptoms highlighted in the specification should lead into paired guided research to promote cognitive and collaborative skills in learners. This information could then be presented as a display for future reference as part of the underpinning knowledge for the assignment task. Your group should be divided so that within the group all of the four types of dementia covered in this unit are researched in detail and form part of the display.
- Learners will benefit from a guest speaker to give valuable vocational insight into living with the symptoms of the disorder. Ideally, this person will be a carer for an individual with any of the four types of dementia listed above.

The emphasis for this section should be on the impact on the confidence and independence of the individual with the disorder.

### **Learning aim B: Examine the effects of dementia on people who have the condition**

For B1, learners will benefit from informed accounts of the impact of the disorder on individuals with dementia. You should encourage learners to share anonymised accounts of their experiences on placement or in the workplace. Case studies would be a useful tool for learners to consider the impact of the disorder, not only on the physical and emotional capacities of the individual but also on their self-esteem and quality of life. They should include the following:

- Reasoning and communication: learners need to be aware of the impact of lapses and gaps, for example understanding why individuals with the condition do things like persevering with habitual tasks or searching for someone or something from the past. Learners may also consider the impact for individuals with the condition who are struggling to find words to express themselves.
- Information processing: learners need to investigate the impact of dementia on information processing as the condition progresses.
- Sleeplessness and restlessness: learners should investigate why individuals with dementia suffer from sleeplessness or restlessness and what can be done to support them with this aspect of the disorder.
- Behaviour: changes in behaviour in people with dementia are common, for example showing aggression or the need to use up energy. Learners need an insight into the reasons for these changes and what can be done to support individuals with the condition.
- Movement: people with dementia often experience changes in their patterns of movement, for example becoming restless, bored or feeling the need to relieve pain. Learners should investigate this and the ways in which healthcare professionals can give support.
- Anxiety, fear and depression: dealing with emotions for someone with impaired cognitive ability can be very challenging and learners should consider how the support that is given may need to be different from that given to people without the condition.

For B2, you will need to ensure learners are aware of the impact of dementia on the quality of life of both the individual with the disorder and their family

and friends. A tutor-led session to introduce them to the topic may be beneficial.

- Learners could complete a small group research task in which they investigate the effects of dementia, such as loss of dignity and privacy, increasing difficulty in managing routine and personal care.
- Learners should also investigate local facilities for social interaction and consider the impact of the availability (or lack of) these resources on the quality of life of individuals with dementia with regard to self-esteem, exclusion and loss of status.
- Learners would benefit from visits to day centres in order to investigate how the issue of loss of skills is tackled and the impact this may have on the independence of individuals with dementia.

A whole-group discussion will then help to consolidate understanding.

Useful information on this section can be found in Roper, Logan and Tierney and on the [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk) website (see the Resources section below for further information).

### **Learning aim C: Investigate the concept of person-centred care for people who have dementia to maintain quality of life and wellbeing**

You must ensure that learners grasp the principles of care that recognise the uniqueness and individuality of people who have dementia. For C1, you need to ensure that learners are familiar with these principles. A tutor-led session encompassing dignity, privacy and respect, independence, rights and empowerment, recognition of cultural and religious differences and requirements, and entitlement to advocacy will help learners to appreciate the importance of holistic care.

- Care planning models are an excellent starting point for generating discussion. Learners could work in pairs to research the different models and then consider the implications of applying them to a case study of an individual with dementia.

For C2, it would be good to review learners' prior knowledge of safeguarding, what it means and key terminology.

- A session where learners research the rights of people with dementia would be a good starting point. Learners should consider the vulnerability and safety needs of people who have dementia and include research into the principles of protection versus independence and rights (e.g. targeted staff training, technologies that alert staff but respect a person's dignity and privacy).

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- A taught session on risk assessment with a practical exercise on identifying hazards will enable learners to appreciate the importance of creating and maintaining safe, enabling/empowering environments, e.g. safe flooring and grab rails, adequate lighting. The Health and Safety Executive has published some useful guidance in this area.
- You need to ensure that learners appreciate the importance of cultural and religious differences. This can be achieved through case studies and group discussion.

For C3, learners need to understand how health and social care professionals can help individuals to manage their care after diagnosis.

- A guest speaker, such as a care worker or a social worker, could talk to learners about the assessment tools and review processes used for an individual with dementia.
- Learners will benefit from a research task to identify the types of aids and adaptations that can be made to the environment of an individual with dementia in order to help them maximise their independence. This individual research task could be consolidated through the production of an equipment catalogue to include items such as aids and assistive technologies, e.g. practical aids, pagers/alarms, management of medication – pill boxes, medication alarms.

For C4, you need to ensure that learners understand that a holistic approach to care giving is vital but can also be challenging. A variety of issues needs to be considered and a tutor-led session to introduce the topic would be beneficial.

- A tutor-led session to ensure that learners are aware of the composition of a balanced diet may be followed by a practical activity where pairs of learners attempt to feed each other as part of a structured role play. Consideration should be given to diet and nutrition, e.g. fluid intake, availability of healthy snacks and portion control (the Alzheimer's Society website has some useful information on this area (See Resources section for further information).
- Learners should be introduced to the benefits of multi-sensory stimulation as a means of promoting health and wellbeing, as well as the benefits of complementary therapies (e.g. massage, aromatherapy) and sensory stimulation (e.g. music, light strings), plus activities and exercise (e.g. reminiscence work). This could be explored through a visit to a dementia support group.

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- The safe handling of medication is critical for individuals with reduced mental capacity and the guidelines, policies and procedures should be investigated and explored with a guest speaker such as a pharmacist.

For C5, learners need to be made aware of the need for patient care reviews and their importance in providing needs-led care. Health and social care workers must continuously reflect on and review support so that relevant care is maintained and happiness and enjoyment in life are preserved for a person who has dementia.

- A guest speaker such as a dementia specialist nurse, RMN or support worker should be invited in to speak about the process of the care planning cycle, including regular reviews and forward planning to address fluctuating abilities and changing needs. This will help learners to place the theory of the care planning process within the vocational context.
- Learners may benefit from an exercise where they plan the care for an individual in a case study with the emphasis on the client having involvement of person in their own care planning, focusing on individualised activities and exercise, e.g. sensory stimulation, dance, reminiscence activities. This should be alongside the involvement of family and friends in the care planning. Learners could then discuss the problems which may arise from a conflict of interest as part of a whole-group discussion.

### **Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications**

This unit links to:

- Unit 1: Human Lifespan Development
- Unit 5: Principles of Safe Practice in Health and Social Care

This unit may be delivered alongside:

- Unit 3: Enquiries into Current Research in Health and Social Care
- Unit 8: Sociological Perspectives
- Unit 9: Psychological Perspectives
- Unit 10: Supporting Individuals with Additional Needs
- Unit 17: Nutritional Health
- Unit 18: Understanding Mental Wellbeing.



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## **Resources**

### **Textbooks**

Brydon, C – *Who Will I Be When I Die?* (Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2012)  
ISBN 9781849053129

May, H, Edwards, P and Brooker, D – *Enriched Care Planning for People with Dementia*  
(Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2009) ISBN 9781843104056

Roper, N, Logan, W W and Tierney, A J – *The Roper-Logan-Tierney Model of Nursing: Based on Activities of Living* (Elsevier Health Sciences, 2000) ISBN 9780443063732

### **Websites**

Alzheimer's Research UK  
[www.alzheimersresearchuk.org](http://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org)

The Alzheimer's Research UK's website contains useful information on the types of dementia covered in this unit, including facts, stats, myth-busters and information on different kinds of research being carried out.

The Alzheimer's Society  
[www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

The Alzheimer's Society website offers useful information on the disease (symptoms and prognosis) and the types of support available.

Alzheimer's Disease International  
<https://www.alzint.org/>

This website has useful information on the disease. It is a global organisation working on raising awareness, challenging stigma and trying to make Alzheimer's a global health priority.



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Dementia Alliance International

<https://www.dementiaallianceinternational.org/>

This website contains useful information on the disease. It is a global organisation which educates people living with the disease and those supporting them.

Dementia UK

<https://www.dementiauk.org/understanding-dementia>

The website has useful information on the disease (symptoms and prognosis) and the types of support available.

*Pearson is not responsible for the content of any external internet sites. It is essential for tutors to preview each website before using it in class so as to ensure that the URL is still accurate, relevant and appropriate. We suggest that tutors bookmark useful websites and consider enabling students to access them through the school/college intranet.*