

Improving Dementia Diagnosis rates

A few tips to aid primary care

Benefits of early diagnosis

- Receiving diagnosis can be daunting, but 91% of people affected by dementia think it's better to know (source Alzheimer's Society)
- Enables receiving relevant information, resources and support
- Research suggests early diagnosis helps the individual to explain better to loved ones the changes occurring in their life
- Opportunity to consider financial aspects/Lasting Power of Attorney
- Possible Council Tax exemption and other benefits
- Medication slows progression for a proportion of patients

Diagnosis Rates

- NHSE set national target: aim to diagnose 66.7% of predicted dementia prevalence rates (based on CFAS study)
- National rate currently 62%
- Devon rate currently 55%
- South Devon rate currently 54%
- Huge range for individual practices, from 27.5 to 80.6% (April 2022)

How and when to diagnose

- Primary care will screen using a variety of tools, including:
- Chronic Disease Management template - memory question(s)
- GPCOG
- MMS
- 6-CIT
- DiADeM tool for 'barn-door' diagnosis eg: care home residents

Recommendations to Improve Dementia Diagnosis Rates

- 1) Encourage full use of Chronic Disease Management templates to screen for memory problems at all scheduled reviews
- 2) Work with Social Prescribers, Community Nurses, Local Pharmacies and VCSE to ensure dementia aware and know how to direct people for help/diagnosis
- 3) If no dedicated Care Home Visiting Service, send the DeAR GP pack to local Care Homes
- 4) Code any dementia screening carried out, even if negative (aids future clinical contacts)
- 5) Use the DiADeM tool to diagnose 'barn door' dementia
- 6) Use the Dementia Advisor Service to support ongoing care/concerns of patient/loved ones

2 more tips for Primary Care

- For a practice of 10,000 patients, each patient with dementia is worth £143 of QoF payment if targets achieved (source - Ardens 2022). This covers 2 QoF indicators - Maintaining a Dementia Register and Carrying out an annual face to face care plan review
- SnoMed CT Coding terms: 'Dementia assessment' and 'Dementia screening questionnaire completed' - use these whenever appropriate

Resources

- Dementia Symptoms Checklist for patients to complete before going to their GP
- DeAR GP pack
- DiADeM tool
- Dementia Advisor Service referral form (Torbay version)
- Dementia Post-Diagnostic Services (Torbay and South Devon)