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Contact Information

If a person with dementia lives in your area it is helpful that some neighbours have contact details for a relative or next-of-kin. While it is important to respect a person's privacy, the person with dementia may feel reassured if their friends and trusted neighbours have contact numbers. If you do not have this information, in an emergency the Gardaí can help.

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Be a good neighbour

Neighbours with dementia, particularly if they live on their own, might forget to do everyday tasks like putting the bin out. A simple reminder can really help, or offer to do it for them.

Some people may no longer be able to drive and this can cause isolation. Offering to take a neighbour with you, or picking up a few things when you do your shopping, can really help.

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Staying connected

A diagnosis of dementia does not mean that a person should withdraw from everyday life. Someone who has always been active in the resident's association, choir or sports club can continue to participate with the help of supportive friends and an understanding community.

If the person with dementia is no longer able to, or does not wish to, participate, try to call in for a short visit. If they are able, offer to accompany them on a short walk. Exercise is very important for people with dementia. Don't be upset if they forget your name or what you talked about the last time you met.

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Whose reality

Past memories can often be stronger than present reality. The person may be confused and say something that does not make sense to you. Avoid making that person feel embarrassed or foolish by contradicting them. Be sensitive, and try to diffuse the situation if tension builds.

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Supporting the carer

If the person with dementia lives with a family carer, a visit can often give the carer a little time to themselves. Carers may be reluctant to ask for help and may refuse if you make a

general offer. However, if you make a specific suggestion e.g. "Shall I call in for an hour so you can go get your hair done", they may more readily accept.

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Every day can be different

Dementia can be unpredictable and the abilities and needs of a person with dementia may change from day to day. Look out for signs and offer to help when needed, bearing in mind the privacy of the person. Do not be offended if they do not want the assistance you offer.

For more information, please call 01 706 0100

Living Well with Dementia

Stillorgan - Blackrock

Web: www.livingwellwithdementia.ie

Email: info@livingwellwithdementia.ie

Living Well with Dementia

is a local community project to raise awareness, reduce stigma and provide support for people living with dementia.

It is jointly funded by Atlantic Philanthropies and the HSE.