

SCN DIG Meeting

We again enjoyed an excellent turnout for this month's DIG meeting in Taunton. A wide range of stakeholder organisations was represented with great enthusiasm and stimulating discussion. Most importantly we welcomed back Hilary Doxford (living with dementia) and of course Derek Dominey.

Diagnosis rates

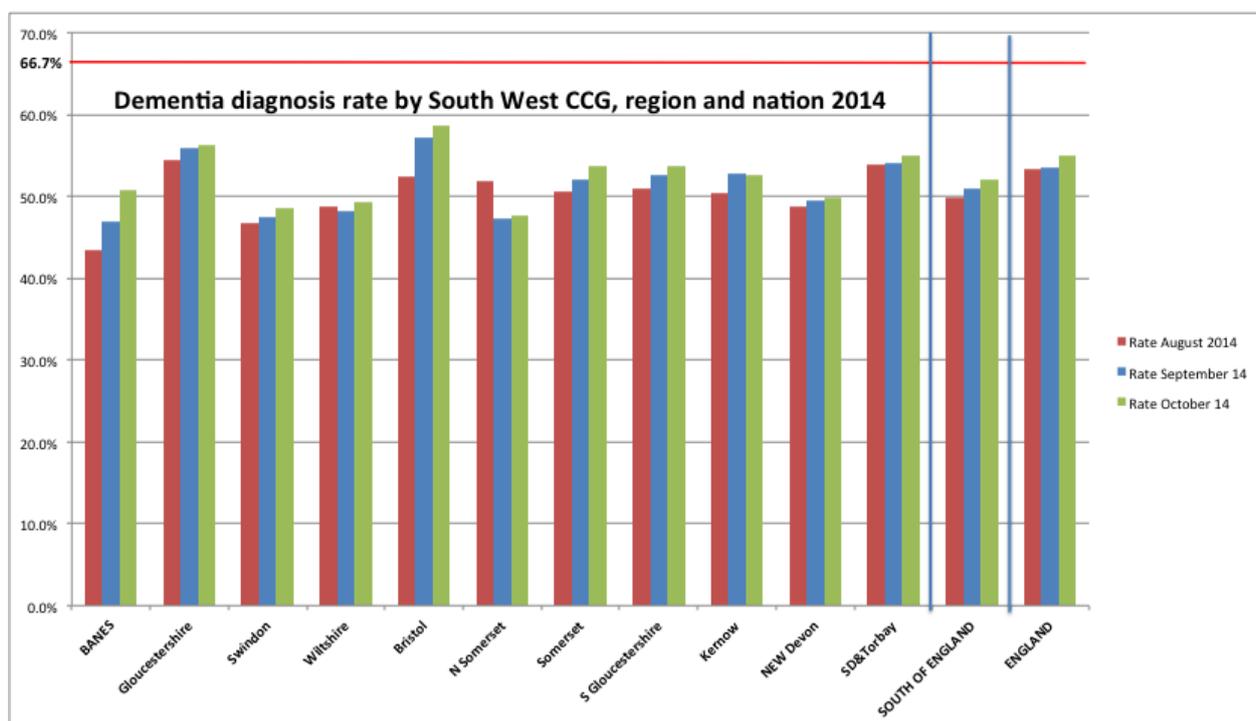
CCGs in the South West continue to work hard with GP and Area Teams to improve diagnosis rates and monthly data shows rates are increasing, with particular credit to NHS Bristol who now take top spot in the region. Nevertheless there is still some

way to go and the monthly trajectory as it stands won't be enough to reach the national target by next April (see graph).

CCGs are now requesting that they are trusted to continue the work they have started without excessive monitoring or requests for data or information. The SCN will feed this back to NHSE.

DIG members also expressed concern that the intense pressure on diagnosis rates is now putting the good working relationship between CCGs and GPs at risk, CCGs tending now to avoid yet more communication with GPs for fear of engendering resentment.

Whilst the new Dementia Identification Enhanced Service for GPs received such



bad press and was widely criticised by the GP community, Practice sign-up in the South West has been very good. Nick Cartmell reported that sign-up plans submitted to Area Teams by Practices in general were very positive and could provide an opportunity for targeted offers of support to Practices by CCGs. Whilst comparison graphs can be useful motivators for low performing Practices they don't account for factors beyond their control like care home numbers and deprivation levels.

Finally it was noted that for the national average diagnosis rate to be 66% there would need to be some CCGs and Practices with diagnosis rates above that figure and some would never reach that figure so it is equally valid to expect all Practices and CCGs to increase by a small amount than to target lowest performing areas.

Working Groups

Further progress was made at the DIG on the form and function of three new working groups for 2015-16:

- Young Onset Dementias (including HD)
- Dementia Risk Reduction
- Mental Health inpatient length of stay

Each was felt to be a useful and important area for the SCN to lead focus on. Members were identified, meeting dates for early 2015 considered, expected outputs narrowed down, and important factors detailed. These will be collated by Anna Bilham at the SCN and circulated to members and published online (see below).

Anyone interested in joining a group should please contact Anna by email, giving details of their current role and why they have a particular enthusiasm for the Group's remit.

Intergenerational dementia project

Ian Bainbridge from DH updated the DIG on the ongoing success of the schools' dementia project begun in 2012 with 22 'pioneer' schools across England. This has now expanded to a self-sustaining network of over 250 schools who are actively signed up to the scheme. Several Local Authorities are now setting the project as a default standard for all local schools.

Benefits of the project include:

- Great enthusiasm from students in developing and running their own projects.
- Improved community awareness as a whole.
- Enhances of the existing curriculum through focus on local community challenges.
- Specifically and positively mentioned by Ofsted in school inspection reports.
- Encourages acceptance of, and support for, young carers who attend the school.
- A suite of resources for teachers to minimise any impact on their workload.

Ian asked that everyone helps to influence and encourage more sign-up by local schools, raise health and social care leaders' awareness of the project.

Everyone interested in championing this very worthwhile and effective cause, or wanting the resources, should contact Katherine Hirst at Alzheimer's Society who is now co-ordinating it.

User Involvement

Hilary Doxford, Derek Dominey, Debbie Donnison and Anne Rellings gave a practical presentation about Making Involvement Count. This resource pack, developed by the old SW SHA and Alzheimer's Society with great input from people with dementia and their carers, was published in 2011 but remains extremely relevant to anyone wishing to engage with people living with dementia. Packs are still available from Alzheimer's Society offices or online (see below).

Examples of where engagement is particularly important and effective include:

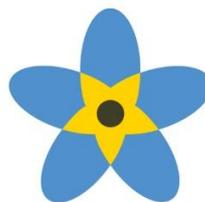
- Supporting research funded projects to maximise outcomes.
- Evaluating bids for dementia-specific funding streams (e.g. the SHA Challenge Fund).
- Providing proposals and feedback to commissioners on plans for service improvements.

People with dementia and carers who are supported to get involved can benefit in many ways, including:

- Feeling listened to.
- Feeling a sense of purpose, worth, hope.
- The 'feel good' factor.
- Greater confidence in speaking out in various settings including the media.
- Greater opportunities for involvement in research.

Dementia Friends

Camilla Alfred provided the DIG with a Dementia Friends education session including dementia bingo! By the end of the group all members had signed up to be Friends and pledged an action to support people living with dementia.



Dementia Friends is a social action movement that can enhance interactions between all people in a community, whether they have dementia or not. To date 600,000 people are Dementia Friends and the Alzheimer's Society have set an aspiration to reach 1 million by next year.

In the South West Camilla has trained a large number of Dementia Friend Champions, all of whom are able to deliver education sessions. For further information on how to become a Friend (including an online education session), and how to train to be a Champion, please go to www.dementiafriends.org.uk or contact Camilla on camilla.alfred@alzheimers.org.uk.

Next DIG meeting

19th February 2015, **South West House**, Taunton, with a focus on diagnosis rates as the deadline looms.

Proposals for other agenda items, please, to Nick Cartmell.

Thereafter next year meetings will return to quarterly.

Further Information

For up to date information about all things related to dementia please go to www.dementiapartnerships.com

To publicise any examples of positive practice in the South West, or to offer feedback on any technical or accuracy aspects of the content of this website

please send an email to

rowan@dementiapartnerships.com

For information about the South West SCN
please go to

www.swscn.org.uk

To discuss any aspects of the work of the
SCN and Dementia Implementation Group,
please contact one of the team:

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Justine Faulkner justine.faulkner@nhs.net

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Glossary

SCN	Strategic Clinical Network
DIG	Dementia Implementation Group
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
LA	Local Authority
NHSE	NHS England
SHA	NHS Strategic Health Authority
HD	Huntingdon's Disease