



Sign up to our Monthly Newsletter

Hello and welcome to our September 2024 newsletter from Deepness Dementia Media, I hope you all enjoyed the summer break. I am Anne Scott the Newsletter Editor, and I hope you enjoy reading our latest news.

The Deepness Newsletter is now 3 Years Old!

Please share this newsletter with your friends, family and colleagues.

Please send your feedback about the newsletter, whether you liked it or how it could be better. If you want to contribute to the newsletter, please get in touch with me at - scottanne@live.co.uk



Check out below a list of what is coming up in this newsletter.
You can click on the links below and skip straight to that article, or you can keep scrolling down.

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DEMENTIA



The Musical



'Dementia The Musical'

'Dementia The Musical'

Successfully Awarded Grant From Creative Scotland

We are delighted to announce that 'Dementia the Musical' has successfully been awarded a Creative Scotland grant.

Dementia the Musical or the 'ballad of Dementia Activists', tells a story of Agnes, James and Nancy who are on trial for the crime of having dementia and not doing what they're told. Can they beat the Rigid System and reclaim their lives and dignity?

Dementia the Musical is based on the campaigning work of three of Scotland's longest serving dementia activists James McKillop, Nancy McAdam & Agnes Houston and the fight they have led to ensure people with dementia have a voice in what happens in their lives.

The Musical is set in the not-too-distant future where the 'British Bill of Rights' has replaced the 'European Convention on Human Rights' and is being used by organisations and care home owners to deny residents their rights to a family life by allowing the system to control what individuals with dementia can do, where they live, who can visit and when they can visit. The backdrop to the musical sees the three activists being brought to a care home in Dundee to face a tribunal that is accusing them of both not having capacity and of being troublemakers.

A funny and moving production, it tells the history of dementia activism with the voices of real people with dementia shaping its story.



Deepness Dementia is one of 14 theatre and dance projects who have received this new funding to enable tours to communities across Scotland. The National Lottery funding through Creative Scotland's 'Touring Fund for Theatre and Dance' will enable the wide range of new and award-winning productions - modern, physical theatre and spoken word performances for children, young people, adults and families, to visit small, mid and large-scale venues across 2024-2025.

Dementia the Musical Tour Dates Announced

As you might know last year Ron Coleman finished writing a new Musical, It is a musical called Dementia the Musical. The musical has been funded for full production and has a professional and brilliant cast & crew it is going to tour Scotland, starting on October the 12th 2024 in Edinburgh & finishing in Paisley on the 9th of November 2024.

Dementia the Musical Tour Dates

October 12th, 2024, Capital Theatres Studio Theatre performances 2pm Matinee, 7.15pm evening

October 16th An Lanntair Stornoway 7.30pm

October 18th Dundee Rep 7.30pm

October 22nd The Byre Theatre St Andrews 7.30pm

October 23rd The Lemon Tree Studio Aberdeen 7.30pm

October 25th Mareel Arts centre Shetland Isles 8pm

October 30th Macrobert Main house Stirling 7.30pm

October 31st Cumbernauld at Lanterhouse 7.30pm

November 3rd The Barn Arts Banchory 7.30p

November 5th Eden Court Inverness 7.30pm

November 7th Universal Hall Findhorn 7.30pm

November 9th Paisley Arts Centre 7.30pm

About the Musical

Dementia the Musical! is a radical new musical theatre production by Ron Coleman, Scottish poet and writer living with dementia, in collaboration with renowned director Magdalena Schamberger and one of Britain's top jazz musicians Sophie Bancroft as composer and musical director. Additional music is by esteemed songwriter Andrew Eaton-Lewis and designed by Karen Tennent.

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Alzheimer's drug Lecanemab, approved for use in the UK, but not on the NHS. The MHRA have approved lecanemab for some people with early-stage Alzheimer's disease. However NICE does not recommend use on the NHS for any patients. Fiona Carragher, Chief Policy and Research Officer at Alzheimer's Society, responds to the announcements:

Today's MHRA approval of the first safe and effective Alzheimer's disease treatment, shown to slow progression, is a defining moment for people with early-stage Alzheimer's disease in the UK and a significant step towards a more hopeful future.

While we welcome the MHRA approval, it is disappointing that NICE has not recommended approving lecanemab for use on the NHS at this stage. The news that lecanemab will be restricted to certain groups of patients will also lead to uncertainty for many people with Alzheimer's disease and their loved ones.

We respect the decisions regulators have made, however we know these announcements will bring a mix of emotions for those who have been waiting a long time since the promising trial results were first announced.

Addressing challenges in diagnosis

The NICE recommendation reflects the urgent challenges which must be addressed regarding how we diagnose and treat people with dementia. A third of people affected by dementia have not received a diagnosis, and for those who have been diagnosed, it's often not early or accurate enough for a person to be eligible for new treatments. A dementia diagnosis not only opens up the potential for treatment. It is also the single most effective route to the care, support and information we know is so important for everyone living with dementia and their loved ones.

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Walking the Talk for Dementia Fundraiser

Meeting Centres Scotland – Walking the Talk for Dementia Fundraiser 2024

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/walkingthetalkfordementia24>

Join Us in Walking the Talk for Dementia

Help Meeting Centres Scotland Raise Funds for a Life-Changing Journey

At Meeting Centres Scotland, we are dedicated to providing support, care, and community for those living with dementia and their families. This year, we have an extraordinary opportunity to raise awareness and funds for our cause by participating in the Walking the Talk for Dementia conference. This unique event includes a 40km walk along the historic Camino de Santiago de Compostela pilgrimage route.

About the Walk

Walking the Talk for Dementia is not just a path but a journey of personal and collective significance. It symbolises the strength, resilience, and hope of those living with dementia and their loved ones. Four courageous individuals from Meeting Centres Scotland, including two people living with dementia, will be taking part in this journey. Their participation is a testament to the fact that life does not stop with a diagnosis—it continues to be lived fully and meaningfully.

Why We Need Your Support

This journey is more than a walk; it's a powerful statement of solidarity, hope, and awareness. To make this trip possible, we need to raise £10,000. These funds will cover travel expenses, accommodation, support resources, and equipment necessary for our team to participate safely and effectively in the walk.

The Impact of Your Donation

By supporting us, you are contributing to a broader movement of dementia awareness and advocacy. Your donation helps us demonstrate that with the right support, people living with dementia can continue to lead active, fulfilling lives. The visibility and awareness generated by our participation in Walking the Talk for Dementia will ripple outwards, inspiring others and reinforcing the importance of community and support.

Follow Our Journey

We invite you to follow our journey on social media and through our website. We will share updates, stories, and photos from the walk, highlighting our team's experiences and milestones. Your support means you are part of this journey, walking alongside us every step of the way.

Meeting Centres are community-based centres that offer a welcoming and supportive environment for people living with dementia. They provide a range of services and activities tailored to the needs and interests of individuals with dementia and support for their families and care partners.

Meeting Centres Scotland is fundraising for the Walking the Talk for Dementia conference, where a team, including two individuals living with dementia, will participate in a 40km walk along the Camino de Santiago de Compostela.



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Donate Now and help us Walk the Talk for Dementia. Together, we can make a difference!

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Be a fundraiser

Create your own fundraising page and help support this cause.

Start fundraising

Thank you for your generosity and support. Warm regards,

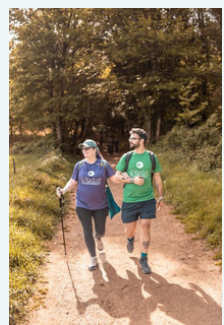
The Meeting Centres Scotland Team

Thank you for your generosity and support.

Link to donation page:

[https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/walkingthetalkfordementia24?](https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/walkingthetalkfordementia24?fbclid=IwY2xjawErDOFleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHb6yxBLJIAOmPUyvo4sbbi14CKQTnVAfF3xelos7d9jAREc7IYblxlPw_aem_kyIWQilnEzm28MlqyxogSQ)

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Beauty of the sky ...Gail Gregory



I have even been known to make figures and shapes, seeing the odd dog and crocodile float on by

The clouds dance and shift, creating a mesmerizing display of beauty

Looking up at the sky and clouds can give you a sense of peace
The sky and clouds can also connect us to nature and the universe

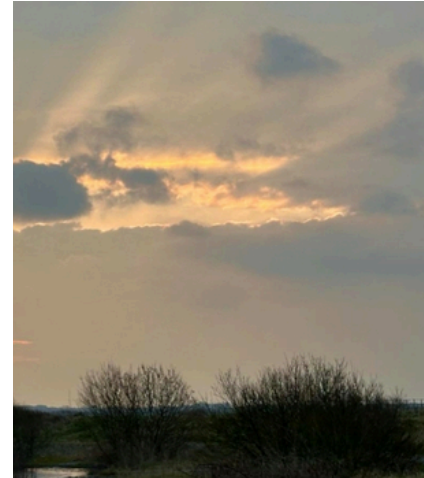
Next time you find yourself outdoors, take a moment to look up at the sky. Let the beauty of the clouds fill you with a sense of calm. Clouds are an ever-changing piece of artwork that hovers above.
So let it inspire you to appreciate the beauty that surrounds us every day. Don't forget to look up!

The Beauty of the Sky
An ever-changing canvas that never fails to captivate me
Never forget to look up at the enchanting elements of the sky and clouds.
These fluffy formations that float effortlessly, like cotton candy floss.

They come in various shapes and sizes, from wispy clouds to towering formations.
Cant remember all the names for the clouds now, but does that matter, It certainly doesn't detract from its beauty.

I have even been known to make figures and shapes, seeing the odd dog and crocodile float on by

The clouds dance and shift, creating a mesmerizing display of beauty



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Rights and Howard Gordon UK's largest health research programme opens new clinics in June 2024, including in Scotland



Let's prevent disease together

Our Future Health, the UK's largest health research programme, opens appointments in 17 new locations in June 2024, with 194 clinics overall across the UK.

The programme is launching its first ever clinics in Scotland, within Boots store pharmacies in Ayr, East Kilbride, Glasgow Fort, Greenock, The Gyle, with more clinics will open in the coming months. – giving even more people the opportunity to take part in the programme.

The Our Future Health project aims to transform the prevention, detection and treatment of conditions such as dementia, cancer, diabetes, heart disease and stroke and it will offer about 276,500 appointments across 45 clinic locations over the next year.

Our Future Health aims to transform the prevention, detection and treatment of conditions such as dementia, cancer, diabetes, heart disease and stroke. With up to five million volunteers right across the UK, the goal is to create one of the most detailed pictures ever of people's health.

The programme is sending invitations to people who live near the new clinics. Anyone over the age of 18 can join by signing up online at ourfuturehealth.org.uk, completing an online health questionnaire, and booking a short clinic appointment.

At their clinic appointment, as well as having a blood sample and some physical measurements taken, volunteers will be offered information about their own health, including their blood pressure and cholesterol levels. In the future, volunteers will also be given the option to receive feedback about their risk of some diseases and have the opportunity to take part in cutting-edge research studies.

In the future, volunteers will also be given the option to receive feedback about their risk of some diseases and have the opportunity to take part in research studies.

Our Future Health is rolling out on a region-by-region basis to invite adults across the UK to join the programme. Volunteers who don't live near a location where Our Future Health appointments are currently available can join now at ourfuturehealth.org.uk and be notified when new appointment locations become available. Many people across Scotland have previously registered and can now attend an appointment.

New locations will be announced on the Our Future Health website and social media channels.

Our Future Health is an ambitious collaboration between the public sector, life sciences companies and leading UK health charities including: Action Against Age-related Macular Degeneration, Alzheimer's Society, Asthma + Lung UK, Blood Cancer UK, Brain Tumour Research, Breast Cancer Now, British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research UK, DEBRA, Diabetes UK, Fight for Sight, Kidney Research UK, LifeArc, Macular Society, Pancreatic Cancer UK, Parkinson's UK, Prostate Cancer Research, Prostate Cancer UK, Royal Osteoporosis Society, Stroke Association, and Versus Arthritis.

It has been estimated that by 2043, two thirds of the increased burden of disease in Scotland will be due to increases in cancers, cardiovascular disease, and neurological conditions.

Volunteer Henry Phillips, 26, from Manchester, shared his reasons for taking part: “I’ve never taken part in health research before; I think purely because I didn’t seek it out. The letter inviting me to join was what made me do it this time. There was nothing holding me back in the past, apart from simply being unaware of the programmes going on. The more people who join Our Future Health, the more people the data will serve in the future. It takes very little from each person but will add a lot to the world as a whole.”

Dr Raghiv Ali, Chief Executive and Chief Medical Officer of Our Future Health, said: “I’m thrilled to see the programme opening more clinics around the UK, which will allow for even more representation of people across the UK in our programme.

What we’re offering is the opportunity to contribute to the biggest picture we’ve ever had of people’s health, which researchers will use to make new discoveries about diseases. We need all kinds of people to join Our Future Health, so health research can benefit all kinds of person.” He said the programme would give volunteers the opportunity to learn more about their own health, help to improve the health of everyone in Scotland and reduce inequalities.

Cormac Hamilton, General Manager at Eldon Square, Newcastle, commented: “We are thrilled to welcome the Our Future Health clinic to Eldon Square. The exciting initiative marks a significant step forward in health research, providing our visitors with the opportunity to gain valuable insights into their own health, whilst helping to create one of the most comprehensive health databases in the world. From blood pressure to cholesterol level checks, book an appointment at Eldon Square to get first-hand knowledge of your health.”

About one and a half million volunteers have already signed up across the UK. Linda Bauld, professor of public health at the University of Edinburgh, said: “We’re delighted to welcome the Our Future Health programme to Scotland.

"We know the burden of disease in Scotland is projected to rise by 21% by 2043, which means it is increasingly important that we have access to data that can help inform efforts to address this.

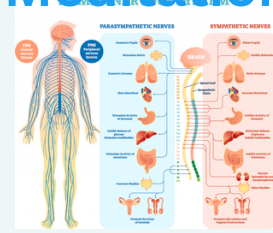
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Michael Chueng

Our Nervous system and Meditation



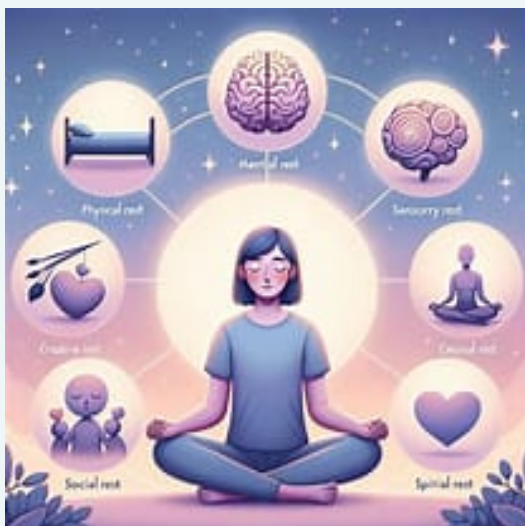
“My advice to people today is as follows: if you take the game of life seriously, if you take your nervous system seriously, if you take your sense organs seriously, if you take the energy process seriously, you must turn on, tune in, and drop out.” ~ Timothy Leary (was an American psychologist and author known for his strong advocacy of psychedelic drugs).

over the past few years, there has been a lot of talk about the nervous system, different activities that can regulate your nervous system, and the impact on your health and vitality resulting from nervous system dysregulation. As we experience the ups and downs of life, we often experience nervous system dysregulation throughout the days. The good news is, there is many things that can help regulate the nervous system, including mindfulness and meditation.

Can Meditation help Dementia and mindfulness?

Some cross-sectional studies reported ‘positive effects’ of meditation on the brain areas related to attention and executive function in the healthy elderly population. However, the effects of long-term regular meditation in persons with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and Alzheimer’s disease dementia (AD) have rarely been studied.

What is nervous system dysregulation? In order to understand the dysregulation of the nervous system, we need to understand the autonomic nervous system (ANS) and how it works. The autonomic nervous system is just as it sounds, it is an autonomic response to our environment, both internal and external.



It is responsible for things like our respiration and heartbeat. Because it is autonomic, it does not require thinking. So, for example, if we go up a set of stairs, the ANS is responsible for the upregulation of heartbeat and breathing rate to accommodate the additional ‘energy’ necessary to move up the stairs. Luckily, we do not have to “instruct” our bodies to inhale more oxygen, the ANS manages this. What we can and do perceive is the effect of the autonomic response. In this example, we should notice our breathing rate increase. Dysregulation refers to a stimulus that has shifted our parasympathetic mode to the sympathetic mode and not allowing us to shift back to the parasympathetic.

The two branches of the autonomic nervous system parasympathetic state can be thought of as “rest and digest” and the sympathetic state as “flight or fight.”

The parasympathetic branch is the safe mode. This is the state when we feel safe for recovery and tissue rejuvenation; this is essential for healing. The second branch is sympathetic and is essential to survival. Down regulating our sympathetic nervous system response is the key to transition from survival mode back to the safety mode of parasympathetic regulation. This is when meditation can really help. Over the millennia, meditation and mindfulness practices have helped to regulate our nervous systems for health, vitality, and longevity. The value of meditation is in developing the ability to focus the mind with volition when we want and need to do so. There are many ways to do this. Some people use movement and somatic sensing, others like mantra, music, or focusing on the flame of a candle.

The common entry point to these meditation practices is breathing. Breath and breathing have a unique and important relationship to the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous system. This relationship starts with the organ response of our heart. Our heart is a puma, it is wrapped in tissue called the pericardium. The pericardium is the engine of the pump. The thoracic diaphragm, another key muscle in respiration, influences heart rate and nervous system regulation. When we inhale, the thoracic diaphragm is moving downward. This movement puts stress on the pericardium and increases heart rate. In turn stimulates the sympathetic nervous system. Conversely, when we exhale, the thoracic diaphragm is moving upward. This creates compression on the pericardium and our heart rate decreases, restoring the perception of safety.

In other words, the exhalation down-regulates the sympathetic response of the inhalation and restores parasympathetic to a state of rest, sleep, or tranquillity. When we are given the instruction to take long slow complete breaths, the most benefit comes from placing our attention on the exhalation phase. This is also why the truly mediocre instruction to “take a deep breath” isn’t always the appropriate thing to do! With time and practice, meditation and other practices like Yoga, Spirit can help us manage our nervous system so that we may live a healthy and a more productive life.

Can mindfulness prevent dementia? (youtube.com)

On a personal note, I have taken up activities like Meditation, Yin Yoga and Spirit; I found that these type of activities really help.

It is useful to learn how to effectively use meditation etc to help regulate our nervous system.

There are many videos of these on YouTube..





Michael Cheung...Recipe of the month: Mango Lassi

Lassi is an ancient drink originating from the Punjab region (Northern India and Eastern Pakistan). This is a blended drink with yogurt, water, spices and sometimes fruit. Lassi come in all kinds of flavours, some are salty, some are sweet, some have mint, some have fruit. The mango lassi we had a yogurt-based mango milkshake or smoothie.

Ingredients

1 cup chopped very ripe mango, frozen chopped mango, or canned mango pulp.

1 cup plain yogurt

1/2 cup milk

4 teaspoons honey or sugar, more or less to taste.

Dash ground cardamom, optional

Ice, optional.

Method

Add the ingredients to the blender:

Put the mango, yogurt, milk, honey (or sugar), and cardamom (optional) into a blender and blend for 2 minutes.

If you want a thicker consistency, either blend in some ice as well or serve over ice cubes.

Serve with a sprinkle of cardamom: Pour contents into a glass and sprinkle with a tiny pinch of ground cardamom to serve.

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Rights and Howard Gordon Unpaid Carers Crisis

The Scottish Government is continuing to invest in Hospital at Home for Older People, with £3.6 million allocated for 2024/25, bringing total funding allocation for the initiative to over £15 million since 2020 due to capacity increasing by 57%, exceeding targets

The service is now the eighth biggest “hospital” for older emergency inpatients, proving popular with patients who can receive acute treatment in a place they feel comfortable and familiar with.

What is Hospital at Home?

Hospital at Home enables people to receive acute support treatments that would otherwise require them to be admitted to hospital, such as an intravenous drip or oxygen supply. It also provides access to hospital tests under the care of a consultant in their own home.



Alternative to acute hospital admission

Recent statistics released by Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) show that last year the Hospital at Home service for Older People, which provides a safe, alternative to being admitted to an acute hospital, exceeded targets in several key areas between April 2023 and March 2024, including:

- total bed numbers have increased by over 57%, ahead of the Scottish Government’s 50% target
- 14,467 patients used Hospital at Home, up from 11,686 in the previous 12-month period
- the Hospital at Home service is now the eighth biggest “hospital” for older people emergency inpatients, alongside Forth Valley Royal Hospital in Stirling.





Health Secretary Neil Gray said:

“These figures from HIS show that Hospital at Home is becoming an increasingly popular care alternative for elderly patients to receive acute treatment in a place they feel comfortable and familiar with.

“There are more Hospital at Home beds available and an increasing number of patients choosing to use the service.

“Hospital at Home gives people greater independence during their recovery process. Evidence shows that those benefitting from the service are more likely to avoid hospital or care home stays for up to six months after an acute illness.

“It is also one of a range of measures that we have put in place to tackle delayed discharge numbers and free up beds within our hospitals.”

Belinda Robertson, Associate Director of Improvement, Healthcare Improvement

Scotland said:

“This announcement of additional funding will continue to improve access to Hospital at Home services and make them more sustainable to the benefit of patients across Scotland. It’s heartening to see that Hospital at Home services prevented over 14,400 people spending time in hospital over the past year.

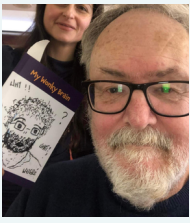
“Moreover, with our support we’ve witnessed more NHS boards and Health and Social Care Partnerships embracing Hospital at Home by establishing and developing services.

“We look forward to continuing to help services develop and share learning in the year ahead.”



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Reflections on the Alzheimer's Disease International Conference 2024 by Willy Gilder



Having come across the organisation Alzheimer's Disease International, and agreeing with their message of involvement, I thought it might be interesting to go to their World Conference held in April in Krakow Poland.

Through Age Scotland I applied for funding to do this, so ADI paid for my attendance whilst Age Scotland booked flights and accommodation. I'm glad I went, but I have to say that I found the whole experience to be a rather mixed bag. The first hiccup was at Edinburgh Airport. I have problems with my feet, so always book Special Assistance. A couple of days before we were due to take off my right foot decided to be particularly painful, making walking very difficult. At the airport I was wheeled through security very efficiently and then parked at Gate 15. I was told that when the plane was ready someone would come to push me to the foot of the stairs up to it. But – no one arrived. In the end Graham Galloway, who was on the same flight, pushed me as far as the plane. Without him being there I might still be stuck at Gate 15! I have since complained to the Airport about this, and they've acknowledged that someone should have been there to help, and apologised for the inconvenience.



After a rather cramped flight we arrived in Krakow, where the special assistance worked well – with a young lady going out of her way to link me up with my designated taxi. The driver was proud of his city, so gave me a free guided tour of the old city before dropping me at my hotel. I confess I had no idea that Krakow was such an attractive place, and such a major tourist destination.

Graham and I had a day in hand before the conference started, so we became tourists ourselves – exploring the medieval market square, and taking an electric buggy tour of the old Jewish Quarter. We then went to enrol at the conference venue, a large hotel on the outskirts of the city. We each got given a name badge and branded goody bag with conference programme. Enrollment started at 6pm.

Willy and Graham being tourists for a day!

That evening, reading through the programme I discovered that at 4pm there had been an introductory and orientation session for people with lived experience. I was sorry to have missed this, but it did rather sum up the conference's attitude towards those of us with brain disease – that we weren't exactly central to the discussions. It wasn't that we weren't welcome, more that we weren't written in to the proceedings as a vital and integral part.

The next day the conference got underway. Most sessions consisted of specialists from around the world sharing their latest research. To be honest, much of this was a bit dull: researchers aren't always the most riveting public speakers! Alongside these sessions numbers of organisations had stands where they promoted their work, and then there were numbers of posters detailing research projects.

Taking all of this in is quite a feat. It made me realise just how much work worldwide is going into dementia research – but there was little on working alongside people who themselves have Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia. I couldn't help but reflect that Scotland is showing the way here.





Meeting Centres Scotland Chairperson, Ron Coleman with Willy, speaking about the Scottish Dementia Arts Festival

I was involved with one particular presentation. In a session on ‘non pharmaceutical interventions’ Ron Coleman talked about the Highland Dementia Arts Festival – and while he talked for his 11 minutes I was on stage, drawing the audience. This seemed to go down well, and we finished the session with an improvised boogie courtesy of Magda, an American dance therapist!



Whilst I’m critical of the rather dry style of the conference I loved meeting people from many different countries and organisations. I learned about Lewey Body dementia from a lady whose father had the disease. I met a lady from Northampton Massachusetts, who was surprised that I knew her town. I talked with people from Australia and Indonesia and Japan, and finally found a British researcher now based in Australia who could explain to me the difference between my type of parietal Alzheimer’s and Posterior Cortical Atrophy. I’ve never been able to find anyone in Scotland to explain this. It was also great to meet up with Meeting Centre enthusiasts from around the UK, and around the world. It was good to hear from Emeritus Professor Rose-Marie Dröes from Amsterdam about how she developed her thinking behind the idea originally.

Emeritus Professor Rose-Marie Dröes giving a keynote speech about her work developing the Meeting Centre model

After the conference ended, we again had a day in hand. Graham and I first visited Heroes Square, the centre of the old ghetto. It is now marked with 33 dining chairs, cast in iron – each representing the lives of a thousand people. Later we met up with some other delegates for a tour of the rather strange underground museum, built under the medieval square at the centre on Krakow. This features the graves of supposed vampires and is all very impressive, except there’s not a lot of information to explain everything.



Willy sketching the holocaust memorial in Heroes Square

All too soon we were back at Krakow Airport, waiting to fly back to Edinburgh. This time around special assistance worked well, and I got wheeled all the way to the tram! Back home I started to wonder about how we might influence things like the ADI Conference. There are some really interesting bits of work going on all over Scotland, and some excellent examples of involvement of people with ‘lived experience’. I think we need to share some of these to a global audience. In fact I’ve now submitted an idea for a presentation to the Alzheimer Europe conference. I really think we need to be shouting loudly about some of the great work going on in Scotland

Willy Gilder 08/05/24

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Concerns for Disabled pensioners as Winter Fuel Payments cut



Winter fuel payments scrapped for millions

Around 10 million pensioners in England and Wales will lose their winter fuel payments under new plans announced by the chancellor.

From this autumn, those not on pension credit or other means-tested benefits will no longer get the annual payments, worth between £100 and £300.

A planned cap on social care costs and several major rail and road projects have also been axed, as Rachel Reeves said she had to make "urgent decisions" because of the previous government's "undisclosed" overspending.

Shadow chancellor Jeremy Hunt said her claims were "spurious".

Mr Hunt said the Conservatives had been open about the state of the public finances while in power, and Ms Reeves had held talks with Treasury officials before the election.

The Scottish government said it was "deeply disappointing" changes were made to the winter fuel payment by the chancellor "without any consultation or discussion" between ministers.

The responsibility for the payment is set to be transferred to the Scottish Government this winter and replaced with a Scottish equivalent - the pension age winter heating payment.

In Northern Ireland, ministers will decide whether to follow the UK government's decision to restrict winter fuel payments.



How do winter fuel payments work and what's changing?

Winter fuel payments were created in 1997 to help everyone above state pension age with their winter heating bills

The chancellor has announced that winter 2024 will be the first time pensioners in England and Wales will not be eligible for the payment

Instead, the payments will be restricted to those on benefits and pension credit

The devolved governments in Scotland and Northern Ireland will have to make a decision on whether to follow the new policy

Cancelled projects

The following infrastructure projects have been scrapped:

Former Prime Minister Boris Johnson's plan to build 40 new hospitals in England by 2030

A planned cap on care charges for older people

The chancellor pointed to spending cuts being necessary due to a £22bn black hole in the public finances. She said it was a “difficult decision” which she did not expect or want to make, but that it was urgent. The £3bn cut means that the Winter Fuel Payment will now not be paid to all pensioners, leaving millions of older Disabled people, who don't receive benefits but are nevertheless on extremely low incomes, with no help at all to meet their higher energy costs over the winter.

Disabled pensioners are 45% of all pensioners. Almost 80% of those aged 85 or over are Disabled people. The decision to cut Winter Fuel Payments will leave millions of older Disabled people without any financial assistance with the extra costs of heating, required to stay safe and healthy.

Caroline Abrahams, charity director at Age UK said: “We strongly oppose the means-testing of Winter Fuel Payment because our initial estimate is that as many as two million pensioners who badly need the money to stay warm this winter will not receive it and will be in trouble as a result – yet at the other end of the spectrum well-off older people will scarcely notice the difference – a social injustice.”

Dan White policy and campaigns officer at DR UK and one of the leads at the Disability poverty Campaign Group said: “This announcement could not have come at a worst time. We know the energy price cap is likely to rise this October and stay high across the winter. This will keep energy bills high and completely unaffordable for the most financially vulnerable.”

“Cutting support is archaic, it will see many pensioners, many of whom are Disabled people, struggling to heat their homes and power their essential equipment.”

“With the last Government ending all cost-of-living payments, no progress on an energy social tariff and the reductions in eligibility for the Warm Home Discount, the Government is currently proposing no financial support to millions of older Disabled people on low incomes, to help them through the winter.”

“We urge the Government to think again and to bring forward proposals to support all Disabled people in poverty, to meet their energy costs.”



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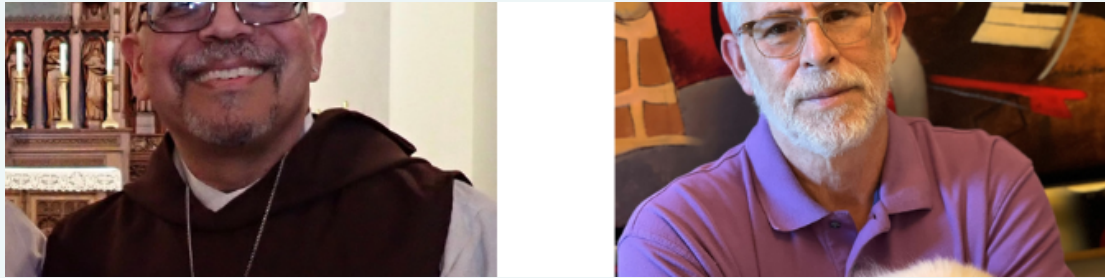
Steps to Becoming Dementia Friendly From People Living with Dementia



What does the term dementia friendly actually mean and what does it mean when a community or business is dementia...

People Living With Dementia

What does the term dementia friendly actually mean? How does a community or organization take steps to become dementia friendly? Our friends Brother John-Richard and Arnie Beresh, both living with brain change, helped us explore these questions.




How do you feel about the term dementia friendly?

Arnie felt that the term could be more inclusive. He stated that the skills and awareness required for becoming dementia friendly should extend to those living with other forms of brain change. He also isn't certain that he likes the word friendly in the term – anyone can just be friendly, but it requires actual training to gain awareness of brain change and ways to effectively accommodate individuals living with these changes. Perhaps dementia competent might feel more accurate?

Brother John-Richard had a more positive response to the term dementia friendly. However, he noted that, far too often, groups will advertise themselves to be dementia friendly, but then have no awareness or understanding of his needs. He especially finds it challenging when an entire community designates themselves as being dementia friendly, but it is clear that many of the businesses have no idea how to support those living with brain change.

What are some ideas for how a community or organization can become dementia friendly?



Both Brother John-Richard and Arnie referenced the Sunflower Lanyard program, which originated in the United Kingdom and was recently introduced to air travel in the United States. A neck lanyard can be picked up at many airports and is intended to be worn by those living with hidden disabilities and their care partners.

It helps alert those familiar with the program that the individual may need additional support, and helps people understand that the care partner is supporting the individual. In the United Kingdom, the Sunflower Lanyard is used in many other businesses and organizations, as well as with air travel. Brother John-Richard and Arnie both mentioned that expanded use of the Sunflower Lanyard program would be an important step toward improved support. [Click here to learn more about the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program.](#)

When an organization chooses to become dementia friendly, Arnie felt that the first step would be to provide training to all employees in all facets of the organization. Training only the business owners or leadership staff is ineffective if other employees or organization members do not receive the training. He stated that everyone involved should have awareness of the basic aspects of the brain and the various conditions that can cause brain change.



This helps people understand why accommodations may be required. He said that recognizing the signs of a hidden disability is also essential, since, without training, many people have trouble recognizing disabilities that are not outwardly obvious. For example, Arnie often carries a card that explains he is living with dementia, and when he shows it to others, he feels that they become more helpful and give him more eye contact. Dementia friendly organizations should also receive training on the fundamental ways to provide support. A few examples are:

- Using slower speech patterns
- Utilizing fewer words
- Being patient with repeated questions
- Using more gestures or visual aids
- Improving signage
- Increasing font sizes on forms

Brother John-Richard agreed with these ideas and added that bringing in someone living with brain change as a consultant is essential. Those with this lived experience can provide extremely valuable insight on how to improve support. They can also provide feedback on the experiences they have had in various settings. These experts also help to reduce stigma and dispel misconceptions that those living with brain change are not able to communicate effectively or advocate for themselves. Having a connection with someone who is living with this type of condition can also improve empathy, Brother John-Richard explained.

Do you have any other ideas of how our communities and organizations can become more dementia friendly or competent?

Arnie explained that he is on a committee of physicians that is working to improve training about neurocognitive differences for students in the health field.

Incorporating this education into health care professional training would be an incredibly important step in improving the way they respond and interact with individuals, and how they manage these types of conditions.

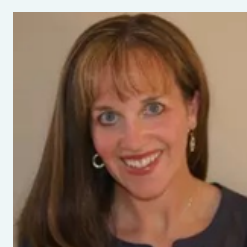
Brother John-Richard supported the idea of incorporating education about brain change into schools. However, not just at the university level. Teaching young children these concepts would be a way of creating normalcy around the conditions, instead of fear, he explained. He stated that children often have fewer preconceived notions of what is socially acceptable, and are more open to learning, so this would certainly seem to be a valuable way to improve the culture of inclusivity.

Whether using the term dementia friendly or something else, both Arnie and Brother John-Richard agree that the term needs to be supported by awareness and skill of all involved in the organization or community. Training and consulting with someone living with brain change is also invaluable for effectively supporting and accommodating others.

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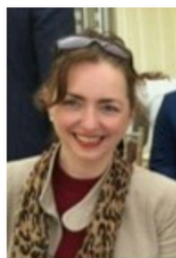
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Pension Age Winter Heating Payment – Scotland



The Scottish government is committed to paying Pension Age Winter Heating Payment (PAWHP) in winter 2024/25 as a like-for-like replacement for the UK Government's Winter Fuel Payment.

The new benefit will be delivered by Social Security Scotland (external link will open in a new browser tab or window) and provide an annual one-off payment to pensioner households to help with higher heating costs over the colder months.

Who will be eligible?

Until Rachel Reeves' (Chancellor of the Exchequer) recent announcement about limiting the payment to pensioners on low incomes, there would have been approximately one million people in Scotland eligible to receive Pension Age Winter Heating Payment. As the estimated £160 million required for this comes from the UK government, which will not now be providing so much money, Holyrood has to make a decision between following the example of Westminster or finding funds elsewhere to maintain the payment to everyone over pension age.



Scottish Social Justice Secretary Shirley-Anne Somerville has said that the Scottish Government was now “urgently considering the financial impact of the UK Government's cut to Winter Fuel Payment in England and Wales, and what this means for our replacement, pension age winter heating payments in Scotland”.

Scottish minister were not consulted before the Chancellor made her decision and limiting the benefit, and the devolved government was not informed until shortly before the statement was delivered in Parliament, according to Stephen Flynn the leader of the SNP in Westminster.

A Scottish Government spokesman said:

“Responsibility for Winter Fuel Payment will be transferred to the Scottish Government this winter, with these payments funded from within the 2024-25 Scottish Budget.

“The full implications of the Chancellor's statement are being examined, however it's understood means-testing Winter Fuel Payments will reduce the funding given to the Scottish Government associated with our planned replacement Pension Age Winter Heating Payment.

“That such a change can be made without any consultation or discussion with the Scottish Government Ministers is deeply disappointing given both governments committed to resetting the relationship between them.

“The Scottish Government is committed to tackling fuel poverty and has consistently supported vulnerable households through a range of actions.

“We are keen to develop an understanding of the UK Government’s wider plans to protect energy customers in greatest need, such as a social energy tariff.”



Petition to reverse the decision



The charity Age UK launched an online petition shortly after the Chancellor’s announcements, urging the Labour Government to reverse its decision on eligibility.

At the time of writing, nearly 350,000 people have signed the ‘Save the Winter Fuel Payment for struggling pensioners’ petition which states that the change is the “wrong policy decision” and will impact millions of older people who rely on the extra financial support to help cover the costs of higher bills during the winter month.

Age UK highlights the vulnerable groups who will feel the impact most:

- Those on low incomes who just miss out on Pension Credit
- Those with high energy needs because of disability or illness
- The 1 million who don’t receive the Pension Credit for which they are eligible

You can view the petition online here (external link will open in a new browser)

Who continues to receive the payment?

People over State Pension age (66) resident in Scotland for at least one day during the qualifying week in September (22-28, to be confirmed) who are receiving Pension Credit, Universal Credit, Income Support, income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance or income-related Employment and Support Allowance will receive Pension Age Winter Heating Payment, the replacement for Winter Fuel Payment.

It pays between £100 and £300 as an annual lump sum.

Anyone who thinks they may be eligible for Pension Credit is urged to check their entitlement. An award of just £1 per week is enough to unlock other support, including the Winter Fuel Payment.



Save the Winter Fuel Payment

Campaign with us to help save the Winter Fuel Payment for struggling pensioners.

Age UK

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Scots experts in bid to develop tool to predict dementia risk



Scientists in Scotland are examining hundreds of thousands of brain scans in order to build the new software.



Share this story

Scientists and researchers are set to examine hundreds of thousands of brain scans to build a software tool they hope will be able to predict a person's risk of dementia. A group of 20 experts will analyse data from CT and MRI scans using AI along with information contained in health records to find patterns that could indicate the likelihood of the condition developing.

The team aims to create a digital tool that radiologists can use when scanning patients to determine their dementia risk and diagnose early stages of related diseases.

They believe isolating a patient group with a high risk of dementia will enable the development of more precise treatments for various types of the condition, including Alzheimer's.

The team is made up data scientists and clinical researchers from the universities of Edinburgh and Dundee who are working as part of a global research collaboration called NEURii, which launched a year ago.

They estimate they will analyse up to 1.6 million images during the project, which they are using with the approval of the Public Benefit and Privacy Panel for Health and Social Care, a part of NHS Scotland.

The data will be held safely in the Scottish National Safe Haven, which was commissioned by Public Health Scotland to provide a secure platform for the use of NHS electronic data for research.

Professor Will Whiteley of the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Clinical Brain Sciences, who is co-leading the project, said: "Better use of simple brain scans to predict dementia will lead to better understanding of dementia and potentially earlier diagnosis of its causes, which in turn will make development of new treatments easier."

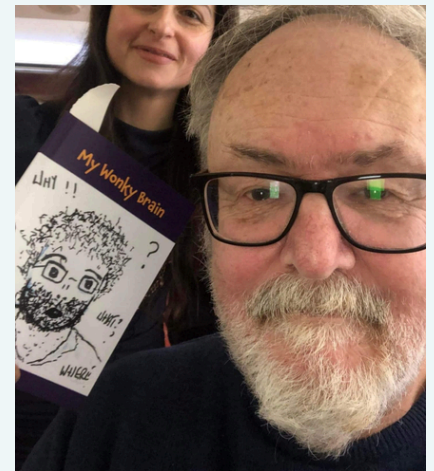


Currently treatments for dementia are expensive, scarce and of uncertain value. If we can collect data from a large group of people at high risk, who then give their consent to take part in trials, we can really start to develop new treatments.”

Professor Emanuele Trucco, an expert in AI and medical imaging at the University of Dundee, said: “This new data set will be of great use to neurological researchers.

“Should we establish a successful proof of concept, we will have a suite of software tools that are smoothly and unobtrusively integrated with routine radiology operations that assist clinical decision-making and flag the risk of dementia as early as possible.”

Former journalist Willy Gilder, 71, from Edinburgh



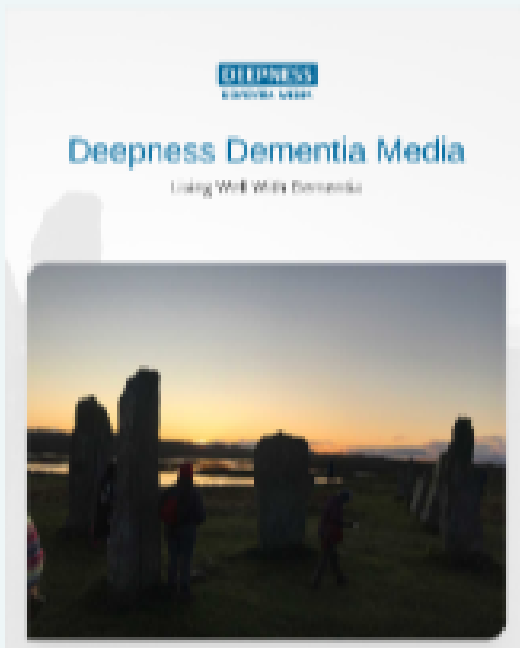
was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s three years ago. He welcomed the project and said: “We know that 45% of dementia cases are preventable, and The Lancet has published a list of risk factors including smoking, obesity and air pollution.

“If you know you’re at risk, you can make changes that are going to improve your brain health. Because I was diagnosed early, I know that keeping very mentally active, for example, is going to help me.

“Possible new treatments in development for Alzheimer’s are likely to work in the early stages of the disease, which is why early diagnosis is important. With long waiting lists for diagnosis, as well as relatively low funding for dementia research in general compared to cancer, a project like this to predict a person’s risk is extremely important.”

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Dementia Media is a platform that gives people tools for living well with dementia designed collaboratively with those with dementia leading the process. By coming together in a supportive, energetic common space makes up a huge difference to the well-being of those going through dementia. As opposed to providing a cure, our goal is to help people become autonomous and get the most out of life. We bring a series of innovative projects - such as our radio station, online education courses, and much more - that use technology and music in a way that keeps people connected and stimulated.

“I didn’t want to die without leaving something for my family to enjoy and remember my strengths,” he says of the thinking behind the EP. “The whole concept was to create something that was a legacy for the person, and as soon as I thought about wanting to do that for myself I knew it was something other people would want to do, to leave our mark on society. It’s almost like leaving our families a gift.”

The Demented Poets EP is on sale now via Bandcamp iTunes and other outlets:

Bandcamp - <https://thedementedpoets.bandcamp.com>

Spotify - <https://open.spotify.com/album/6pngYVybZ3qUf6XMhOOFuK>

Deezer - <https://www.deezer.com/en/album/258048592>

iTunes / Apple Music - <https://music.apple.com/us/album/the-demented-poets-ep/1585080810>

Amazon - <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09FRVYQ1F>

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