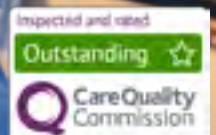


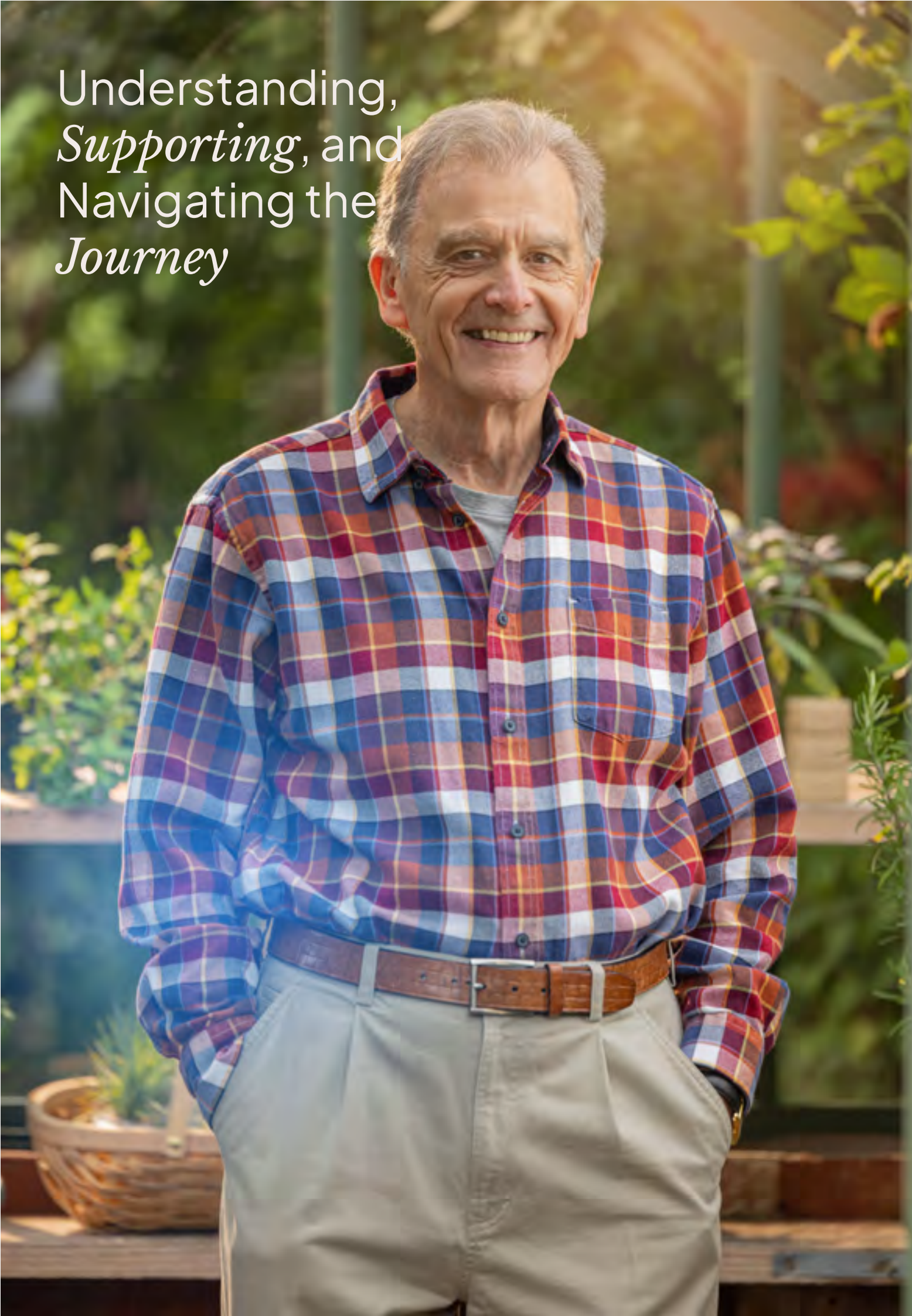
A Complete Guide *to Dementia Care*

Understanding, Supporting, and
Navigating the Journey



It's good to
be home





Understanding,
Supporting, and
Navigating the
Journey

A Complete Guide to

Dementia Care

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We are *Bluebird Care*

At Bluebird Care, we believe that care matters and we are committed to providing the highest quality, premium home care so that our customers can remain in their own homes. We have a reputation for going above and beyond for our customers, offering them premium services that are reassuring to their families.

And we're here so your loved one can stay home, where they want to be. Where things are familiar. Where they feel at ease. Where they have the best chance to live a full and meaningful life.

And we're here for you too. Because right now is no doubt a challenging time in your life as well. And you could probably use some support.

Because as everyone knows,
it's good to *be home*.

Introduction to Dementia

In this eBook, we'll cover everything you need to know about dementia and how to begin your dementia care journey with Bluebird Care.

We understand that exploring care options can be overwhelming, and we're here to make the process easier for you. At Bluebird Care, we take pride in providing premium, personalised dementia care, ensuring your loved ones receive the support they deserve.

Keep reading to gain a better understanding of dementia and the care available. It's a challenging journey, but we're here to support you every step of the way.



What is *Dementia?*

Understanding dementia is extremely difficult. It can be very hard to grasp as there is a lot of factors to it.

Dementia is not a single disease. It's terminology used to cover range of individual medical conditions. Disorders grouped under the term dementia are caused by irregular changes to the brain. These changes lead to a decline in cognitive skills, ways of thinking and can have serious effects on daily life and the ability to remain independent.

[Watch our video on dementia care](#)

What causes *dementia?*

Dementia is a result of brain cells being damaged which interferes with their ability to communicate with each other properly. These damaged brain cells cannot communicate as they normally would resulting in changes in thinking, behaviour and feelings.

Although early signs of dementia can be hard to spot, there are some which are more common than others and can be easier to notice.

Some of these include:

- > Memory loss or problems, mainly short term
- > Easily confused
- > Struggle to concentrate
- > Changes to personality or usual behaviour
- > Feeling more withdrawn or depressed
- > Finding everyday tasks hard to complete

Signs and Symptoms

Early signs and symptoms of Dementia can be hard to notice and although the early signs vary, there are some common ones to look out for.

Common *signs and symptoms* of Dementia include:

- > Memory loss or problems, mainly short term
- > Easily confused
- > Struggle to concentrate
- > Changes to personality or usual behaviour
- > Feeling more withdrawn or depressed
- > Finding everyday tasks hard to complete
- > Difficulty with visual and spatial abilities, such as getting lost while driving
- > Inappropriate behaviour

These common signs and symptoms usually go unseen and fail to be recognised as the early stages of dementia, often mistaken for normal parts of the ageing process.

You sometimes find some people may refuse to take action, even when they know something might be wrong. This is why it is important to give people the confidence and reassurance that it is a normal part of life and there is nothing wrong with suffering from dementia.

Seven pieces of information you should *expect* at diagnosis

- 01 Your type of dementia and how it will affect you.
- 02 Any further tests, treatment, activities or therapies that might help you.
- 03 Who will provide your care and how to contact them, including the professional who will coordinate your care.
- 04 Support groups and charities that can help you.
- 05 How dementia can affect your driving and what you need to do.
- 06 How your employer should support you if you work (or are looking for work).
- 07 Any research studies you could take part in.

How different people *respond* to *Dementia*

Unlike an upset stomach or a chest infection it is not always easy to recognise the early signs of dementia. It isn't always easy to accept the changes that are happening.

Those people with signs of dementia tend fit into one of these categories

01 Unaware

Half of the people with dementia have no idea they have it. In fact, they don't think anything's wrong at all. So if you point out they've done something irrational or unsafe, they'll likely get agitated or angry. For instance they might miss a road sign and drive miles out the way. Once they realise that something's up though, they'll insist the sign wasn't there, so that's why they kept looking for it. They're not lying. They just don't realise anything's a miss.

02 Aware and frightened

Another 20% of people realise they're losing their cognitive abilities and are scared by it. They know their memory is faltering. They cling onto people they trust, nervous about upsetting or losing them. They search for skills they've lost. And they get upset when things don't happen as promised. So if you tell them you're going to do something at a certain time, make sure you do. People living with dementia can be hard to live with and it is important to seek help.

03 Aware and hiding

The other 20% of people realise they're losing their cognitive abilities, but don't want anyone to know so they hide it. They might leave a bill out on the table to make sure they don't forget to pay it, but as more time goes on, fewer things get done. And they might choose to stay home or away from friends. That way, fewer people will suspect their health has declined.

Ultimately, whichever category your loved one finds themselves in, it's important to know that people living with dementia are simply responding to the symptoms of dementia. So they need to be supported appropriately.

Three responses to *dementia*:

- > 50% Unaware
- > 30% Aware and frightened
- > 20% Aware and hiding

Dementia Care

Do's and Donts

Do

- > Be the calming constant for the person living with dementia
- > Be present in the moment - talk about today
- > Encourage conversation and laughter: it may be slow in coming but don't give up.
- > Use your hands when talking to show actions, because words may not be enough.
- > Enjoy with them and encourage activities they have an interest in.
- > Walk with them when they wander, they may be looking for the toilet or bedroom but can't verbalise it.
- > Offer choices but limit them to just two at a time.
- > Help people get started with a task - because sometimes they forget how to start.
- > Encourage friends and family to be around.
- > Let others help and take a break
- > Encourage drinking of water and other fluids to help prevent dehydration.
- > Have a safe environment e.g. no loose rugs, inadequate lighting, cut off valve for the cooker.
- > Ensure the person can swallow without choking as choking can mean a deterioration and the customer needs a health review.
- > Learn to say "I am sorry this is hard" it will de-escalate their anxieties when they get upset, it's kinder and more respectful.

Don't

- > Try to reorient your loved one to be present, if they're in another time or place.
- > Hesitate to take their car keys away, as it's safer for them and they'd do the same if they were in your position.
- > Expect your loved one to immediately follow your guidance, if you haven't been giving them guidance before.
- > Change topics too quickly, as people with dementia can be slower to process things and therefore struggle to keep up.
- > Get angry with your loved one if they swear or use inappropriate language. They're just trying to use abilities they still have.
- > Ask open-ended questions like 'What do you want to drink?'. Instead include the answers in your question such as 'Would you like a hot or cold drink?'.
> Don't speak in 'baby talk' or high pitched tones, as it'll just make them anxious. Instead speak calmly using a deeper register of your voice.
- > Argue about minor things. Try to understand what's happening and let it go.
- > Feel selfish if you need a bit of time for yourself, away from your loved one.
- > Mistake dementia for stupidity. Your loved one isn't stupid, they're just living with dementia.
- > Tell your loved one that someone they're looking for instead, as they'll re-live grief each time instead, if they ask 'Where is my mother?', respond by saying 'Tell me about your mother'. That way they'll have a chance to talk about how their mother made them feel.
- > Be frustrated when people cannot complete an activity today they could do yesterday; sometimes each day is different

Facts and statistics

850,000 — people suffering with dementia in the UK

42,000 — people under 65 suffer with dementia in the UK

209,600 — people will develop dementia this year

Myth busters

- > All types of memory loss are a sign of dementia
- > Dementia is hereditary
- > Dementia cannot be prevented
- > In healthy people, your brain remains relatively unchanged as you age
- > People who often forget things probably have some memory loss or dementia

Things to know

Dementia is a disease that affects and causes deterioration in memory, thinking, behaviour and the ability to perform everyday activities. Although dementia mainly affects older people, *it is not a normal part of ageing.*

*One in five UK adults (22%) incorrectly agree that dementia is an inevitable part of getting older***

Worldwide, around *50 million people have dementia*, and there are nearly 10 million new cases every year.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia and *may contribute to 60–70% of cases.*

Dementia is one of the major causes of *disability and dependency* among older people worldwide. It has a *physical, psychological, social, and economic impact*, not only on people with dementia but also on their carers, families and society at large.

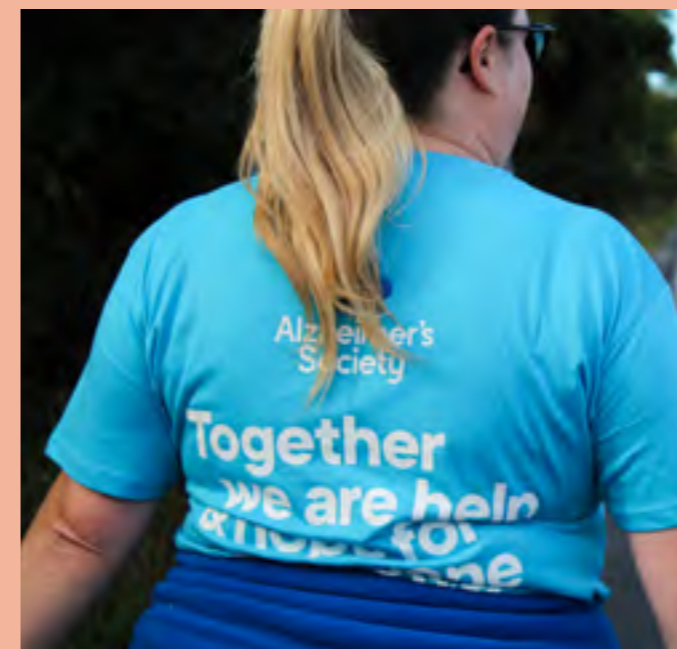
Reducing your risk of dementia requires starting healthier habits and lifestyle *changes straight away, not waiting until you're a little bit older*

Our *Partnership* with *Alzheimer's* *Society*

We recently joined national fundraising efforts for Alzheimer's Society, *contributing to over £50,000* raised to support the fight against this devastating disease.

As part of our efforts, we completed a 12.5km walk from our head office to Penshaw Monument, where we met with another Bluebird Care franchise. Our contribution to the national total reflects *our dedication to supporting this important cause.*

[Click here to see more about our fundraising efforts.](#)



Reducing *Your Risk* of Dementia

Reducing the risk of developing dementia involves making healthy lifestyle choices that support brain function. A well-balanced diet, such as the Mediterranean diet, which is rich in Omega-3 fatty acids, can promote brain health. Regular physical activity has been linked to better cognitive function, making exercise an essential part of a brain-healthy lifestyle.

Engaging in mental stimulation, such as solving puzzles, learning new skills, or reading, helps keep the mind active and sharp. Additionally, maintaining strong social connections by staying engaged with family, friends, and community activities can contribute to overall mental well-being.

Key Tips to *Reduce* Dementia Risk:

- > Eat a brain-healthy diet: Follow a Mediterranean diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and Omega-3s.
- > Stay physically active: Exercise regularly to promote circulation and brain health.
- > Keep your mind engaged: Challenge yourself with puzzles, reading, or learning new skills.
- > Maintain social connections: Regular social interactions support mental and emotional well-being



Caring for *Someone with* Dementia

Creating a dementia-friendly home is essential for ensuring the safety, comfort, and well-being of individuals living with dementia. As cognitive abilities decline, familiar surroundings can become confusing, and everyday tasks may feel overwhelming. By making simple modifications, caregivers can create a space that promotes independence while reducing stress and potential hazards.



Enhancing Safety and Comfort

A well-organized and hazard-free home is key to supporting a person with dementia. Small adjustments can make a significant difference in preventing falls, reducing confusion, and promoting a sense of security.

- > Remove hazards and clutter: Keep walkways clear of obstacles, secure rugs, and remove tripping hazards to prevent falls.
- > Use labels and signs: Clearly label important rooms, drawers, and frequently used items to aid memory and reduce frustration.
- > Ensure proper lighting: Well-lit spaces help prevent confusion and disorientation, especially at night. Motion-sensor lights can be helpful in hallways and bathrooms.
- > Simplify navigation: Arrange furniture to create open pathways and use contrasting colors to highlight important areas like doorways and stair edges.

Creating a Familiar and Comforting Environment

Familiarity is crucial for individuals with dementia, as sudden changes or unfamiliar settings can lead to distress and confusion.

- > Maintain a consistent layout: Keep furniture and essential items in the same place to provide a sense of stability and predictability.
- > Personalize the space: Display familiar photographs, favorite objects, and comforting decorations to create a warm and reassuring atmosphere.
- > Reduce noise and distractions: Soft background music or white noise machines can help minimize stress and create a calm environment.
- > Encourage natural light and outdoor access: Exposure to daylight can help regulate sleep patterns and improve mood. If possible, create a safe outdoor space for fresh air and gentle activity.

The Importance of *Consistent, Familiar Faces* in Dementia Care

For individuals living with dementia, routine and familiarity play a crucial role in maintaining their well-being. Changes in environment, caregivers, or daily schedules can cause confusion, anxiety, and distress. By establishing a predictable routine and ensuring consistent care, caregivers can help create a sense of stability and comfort for those affected by dementia.



The Role of *Regular Carers*

Having a familiar carer provides a sense of security for individuals with dementia. Regular carers build trust and understanding over time, making it easier for the person receiving care to feel comfortable and at ease. This familiarity also fosters better communication and reduces feelings of fear or uncertainty.

Preventing *Confusion and Anxiety* Through Consistency

Consistent care helps minimize confusion and emotional distress. When a person with dementia is cared for by the same individuals, they become accustomed to familiar voices, routines, and ways of interacting. Predictability in daily activities, such as mealtimes, bathing, and social interactions, helps reduce stress and promotes a feeling of safety.

Recognising *Subtle Changes* in Condition

A trusted carer plays a vital role in noticing subtle changes in a person's condition. Because they interact with the individual regularly, they are more likely to recognize shifts in mood, behavior, or physical health. Early detection of these changes allows for timely interventions, ensuring that appropriate adjustments are made to the person's care plan.

By prioritising routine and familiarity, caregivers can help individuals with dementia navigate their daily lives with greater ease, fostering a sense of comfort, stability, and overall well-being.

How Dementia Care *Changes* Over Time

Dementia is a progressive condition, meaning that symptoms worsen over time. Understanding the different stages can help families and caregivers prepare for the changes ahead and ensure the right level of care is provided at each stage.



The *Stages of Dementia* and What to Expect

Early Stage: Maintaining Independence with Support

In the early stage, individuals may still live independently but may experience mild cognitive difficulties, such as forgetfulness, trouble finding words, or minor disorientation. At this point, support may be needed for tasks like managing finances, remembering appointments, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Encouraging social engagement, mental stimulation, and physical activity can help slow progression.

Middle Stage: Increased Need for Care

As dementia progresses, memory loss and confusion become more pronounced. Individuals may struggle with daily activities such as dressing, cooking, or personal hygiene. This stage often requires more hands-on assistance from family members or professional caregivers. Behavioral changes, mood swings, and difficulty recognizing loved ones may also occur. A structured routine, a safe environment, and emotional support are crucial during this stage.

Late Stage: Full-Time Care and Managing Health Needs

In the late stage, individuals require round-the-clock care. Memory loss is severe, and communication becomes very limited. Mobility issues and other health complications may arise, making physical care as important as cognitive support. At this stage, caregivers focus on comfort, dignity, and quality of life, ensuring that medical needs, nutrition, and personal care are managed with compassion.

Adapting Care Plans as Needs Change

Dementia care is not one-size-fits-all. As symptoms evolve, care plans must be flexible and tailored to the individual's changing needs. Families and caregivers should regularly reassess care strategies, seeking professional guidance when necessary. Support networks, respite care, and long-term care planning can help ensure that individuals receive the best possible care at every stage.

By understanding the progression of dementia, families can better prepare for the journey ahead, providing comfort and dignity to their loved ones through every stage of the condition.

Support Available

If you or a loved one is living with dementia, there are many resources available to provide support, guidance, and care. Whether you need professional dementia care services, emotional support, or respite for family caregivers, knowing where to turn can make all the difference.

Local and National Resources

There are many organizations dedicated to supporting individuals with dementia and their families. The Alzheimer's Society offers information, helplines, and local support groups where you can connect with others facing similar challenges. Other national and local charities also provide advice, advocacy, and assistance tailored to those affected by dementia.

Accessing Professional Dementia Care

Professional dementia care services can help ensure that individuals receive the right level of support, whether at home or in a specialist setting. Bluebird Care provides expert, person-centered dementia care, allowing people to remain in familiar surroundings while receiving compassionate, tailored support. From assistance with daily tasks to more specialised care needs, professional services can help maintain quality of life and independence.

Support for Family Carers

Caring for a loved one with dementia can be both rewarding and challenging. Emotional support is essential for family carers, and resources such as respite care, counseling, and peer support groups can offer relief. Respite care allows carers to take a break while ensuring their loved ones continue to receive high-quality care in a safe environment.

[Click here to see more here about Respite Care](#)

How *Bluebird Care* Can Help

At Bluebird Care, we understand the challenges of caring for someone with dementia. Our specialist dementia care services provide tailored support to help individuals live well at home while giving family caregivers peace of mind. Whether you need regular visits, respite care, or expert advice, our compassionate team is here to help.

Get in touch today to find out how we can support you and your loved ones. Let's ensure that no one faces dementia alone.



Dementia Care *at Home*

Caring for a loved one with dementia at home offers numerous benefits that can enhance their quality of life and provide a sense of stability. Home care allows individuals to remain in a familiar environment, which can help reduce confusion and stress. Being surrounded by familiar sights, sounds, and routines can provide comfort and a greater sense of security for those living with dementia.

One of the key advantages of home care is the ability to create a personalized care plan that meets the unique needs of the individual.

Every person experiences dementia differently, and home care allows for tailored support, whether it's assistance with daily tasks, medication management, or companionship. This level of customization ensures that the person receives the right care while maintaining as much independence as possible.

Additionally, home care enables individuals to stay close to their loved ones and the belongings that bring them comfort. The presence of family members, personal items, and familiar surroundings can provide reassurance and emotional support, which is essential for overall well-being.

[Click here to see more about *Dementia Care*](#)

Key *Benefits* of Home Care for Dementia:



Familiar Surroundings: Reduces Confusion and Provides Security
Staying in a familiar home environment helps reduce stress and confusion for individuals with dementia. Recognizable spaces, routines, and personal belongings provide comfort and reinforce memory, promoting a sense of stability.

Personalised Care: Support That Adapts to Changing Needs
Home care allows for flexible, tailored support based on the individual's needs. Whether it's help with daily tasks, medication reminders, or mobility support, care plans can be adjusted as dementia progresses, ensuring the right level of assistance at all times.

Emotional Comfort: Staying Close to Loved Ones
Being surrounded by family, pets, and cherished belongings helps reduce loneliness and anxiety. Familiar voices, shared routines, and emotional connections create a sense of belonging, improving overall well-being and quality of life.

Why Choose Bluebird Care?

At Bluebird Care, we understand that living with dementia presents unique challenges, not only for the individual but also for their loved ones. Our home care services are designed to provide compassionate, professional support that allows people with dementia to remain in the comfort of their own homes while maintaining their independence and dignity.

How We Support Dementia Care at Home

- > **Expert Clinical Oversight:** Our dedicated lead nurse provides clinical oversight, ensuring that care is delivered safely and in line with best practices
- > **Specialist Dementia Training:** Our care team is fully trained in dementia care, focusing on compassion, dignity, and person-centered support to enhance the quality of life for those we care for.
- > **Consistency and Familiarity:** We prioritize continuity of care, meaning customers are supported by familiar faces who understand their individual preferences, routines, and needs.
- > **Tailored, Person-Centered Care:** Each customer receives a personalized care plan that evolves as their needs change, ensuring they receive the right level of support at every stage of their journey.



We can *help*

When searching for dementia care for a loved one it can be hard. We want to make this process as easy as possible for you. This eBook is a complete guide to educating yourself on dementia and supporting you in your journey. We learn about the do's and don'ts, the benefits of dementia care and how to support someone suffering. This helpful information will guide you along the way.

At Bluebird Care, we understand the complexities of dementia care and the importance of a compassionate, personalised approach. Our professional care team is here to support individuals and families by providing high-quality, tailored care that promotes independence and enhances quality of life.

[Click here to *contact us*](#)

If you need *guidance or support* in caring for a loved one with dementia, we're here to help. *Reach out to Bluebird Care* to learn more about our dementia care services and how we can support you and your family on this journey.

bluebird
care®

If you have any more
questions please

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