

Information for Patients

# Dementia and Pain Control

This leaflet will help you learn about the support you can expect whilst the person important to you is in hospital.

***Pain can last for a short time (acute) or a long time (chronic).***

It is important to us that we work together with families. We want to treat pain in people living with dementia. This is to help improve their quality of life.

## Does dementia change the experience of pain?

**No**, they feel pain the same as everyone else.

## Is it more difficult to assess pain experienced by people with dementia?

**Yes**, someone with dementia (depending on the severity) may not be able to tell you they are in pain. People with dementia often have pain but not tell anyone.

Here, we use the Abbey Pain Scale. This scale uses non-verbal signs as a way to find pain.

**Facial signs** - are they frowning, grinding, looking frightened or clenching their teeth?

**Verbal signs** - are they calling out, crying, or shouting?

**Changes in body language** - are they protecting, rubbing, or pulling a part of their body?

**Physical changes** - have they injured themselves, developed sores or had an operation?

**Changes inside their body** - are they sweating or red faced? Has their heart rate gone up?

**Changes in behaviour** - have they become upset, agitated, quiet or sleeping more often?

## Can pain cause changes in their behaviour?

**Yes**, their pain maybe not be recognised, or it may be mistaken for challenging behaviour.

## Can I help you assess the pain?

**Yes**, you can give us important information to help us. You know the person best. You can tell us about any behavioral or physical changes you have noticed.

## What can cause pain?

1. Being lifted or moved in an uncomfortable or painful way
2. Not able to go for a poo or a pee infection
3. Painful joints
4. Painful sores
5. In growing finger or toenails
6. Being in an uncomfortable position or the same position for a long time
7. Headache
8. Glaucoma
9. Heartburn
10. Sore mouth, toothache or dentures do not fit
11. Operation
12. Health problems such as arthritis, varicose veins, osteoporosis, back pain, nerve pain.
13. Diabetes

## How can it be treated?

- The nurse will give medicine depending on the type and how bad the pain is.
- Other therapy e.g. gentle exercises with the physiotherapists. They may also move them into a more comfortable position.

**If you have any concerns about pain management, please speak to the ward staff. They will contact the Acute Pain Team, if needed.**

## Further information is available from:

### **Acute Pain Specialist Nurse**

Royal Shrewsbury Hospital 01743 261000 extension 2627 or Email – [sath.pain.nurses@nhs.net](mailto:sath.pain.nurses@nhs.net)

### **Dementia Support Team**

Royal Shrewsbury Hospital 01743 261000 extension 3571 or  
Princess Royal Hospital 01952 641222 extension 4679

**NAPP See Change Think Pain** - Recognizing Pain in People with Dementia – A Carers Guide.

## Further information is available from:

### Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback which can be shared in a number of ways through the hospital website. Scan the QR code to give feedback. [www.sath.nhs.uk/patients-visitors/patient-experience/feedback-hub/](http://www.sath.nhs.uk/patients-visitors/patient-experience/feedback-hub/)



### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS will act on your behalf when handling patient and family concerns, they can also help you get support from other local or national agencies. PALS, is a confidential service.

Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, Tel: [0800 783 0057](tel:08007830057) or [01743 261691](tel:01743261691)

Princess Royal Hospital, Tel: [01952 282888](tel:01952282888)

## Other Sources of Information

### NHS 111

A fast and easy way to get the right help, whatever the time. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.

111 (free from a landline or mobile) [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### Self Help & Support Groups

A selection of websites providing access to good quality health information, local organisations and community groups is available from the library. [www.library.sath.nhs.uk/find/patients/](http://www.library.sath.nhs.uk/find/patients/)

### Information in Other Languages or Formats

If you require this information in a different way such as easy read, a different language, larger print, audio or braille please tell a member of staff or contact the Patient Experience Team;

[sath.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:sath.patientexperience@nhs.net) or [01743 261000](tel:01743261000) ext. 2503.

## Your information

Information about you and your healthcare is held by the NHS. You can find out more about how we hold your information and how it is used on our website: [www.sath.nhs.uk](http://www.sath.nhs.uk)

**Website:** [www.sath.nhs.uk](http://www.sath.nhs.uk)

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