

A guide for leisure and recreation organisations

Why should you care?

There are currently 64,000 people living with dementia in Ireland. 30 people develop the disease every day and over 500,000 families have been affected. The majority of people with dementia (63%) live in the community and want to continue to be active and included. Dementia does not mean someone stops doing the things they love, but as time goes on, they may need support to do so. Do not underestimate the difference you can make by understanding dementia and taking steps to be inclusive. People with dementia say that it is the personal interactions which make the biggest difference to their experience.

What are some of the symptoms of dementia?

Everyday challenges differ for people with dementia. Some common difficulties may include:



1. Remembering names or specific details

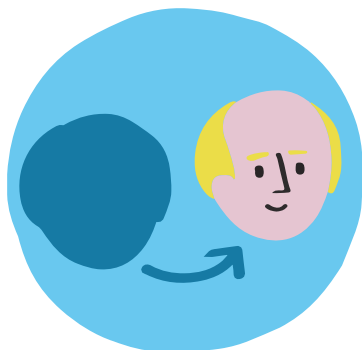


2. Finding words to express themselves



3. Navigating complex, confusing or noisy environments

There are simple things you can do to include a person with dementia:



See the person, not the dementia

Dementia does not define the person. Behind the dementia is an individual who may need a little support and understanding.



Body language

Smile warmly and make eye contact. Check if there is anything you can do to help the person to get or stay involved.



It's good to talk

Ask the person how they are getting on. Encourage them to let you know if they are experiencing difficulties in staying involved in their chosen activity and let them know you are there to help.



The environment

Identify if there are any ways you can improve the physical environment such as having appropriate signage, seating and reducing any unnecessary distracting noise.



Take time

By giving someone extra time, listening closely, showing your appreciation and making allowances for any mishaps that may arise, you can encourage and support a person to stay involved.



Provide information

Let people know that your service or activity is inclusive and that everyone is welcome. Provide leaflets about dementia in your club or centre as this may enable members to get some practical tips and information on resources and supports that are available locally.

Dementia Inclusive Communities

To find out more about the things you can do in your community, training and other resources visit the HSE's www.understandtogether.ie/get-involved/

dementia

understand together

Everyone has a role to play in making our communities inclusive. Often it is the small things and acts of kindness that make the biggest difference in a person's life.