

# A bright IDEA to improve dementia care

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A new free to use website has been launched at The University of Nottingham to improve care for people with dementia.

The [Improve Dementia Education and Awareness](#) (IDEA) site makes a range of quality courses and resources widely available—both nationally and internationally—with the aim of improving care and quality of life for people with [dementia](#).

It is targeted at all levels of expertise from family and friends who care for someone with dementia to qualified health professionals. IDEA also offers online discussion groups to allow users to exchange information around care and to support each other.

## Time and money

With an [ageing population](#) and the fact that one person in four over the age of 80 is likely to develop dementia, the number of people in the UK with the disease is set to double to 1.4m by 2040. This is why improving dementia care is of vital importance.

But there are a number of barriers to this including time and money, as well as accessibility of resources and training.

IDEA aims to tackle all of these obstacles by bringing together relevant resources, including both interactive and audio-visual materials, on a wide range of topics relating to dementia. The site is designed to help increase the confidence and skills of the growing numbers of people who

care for people with dementia.

## **The Impact Campaign**

The project is being developed under the direction of The University of Nottingham's Professor Justine Schneider and Dr Beverley Smith, supported by a team of dementia experts from Nottingham University Hospitals and Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust.

The website is funded by Impact: The Nottingham Campaign, the University's £150m drive to change lives, tackle global issues and shape the future, as part of the campaign's health and wellbeing strand.

Dr Schneider, Professor of Mental Health and Social Care, firmly believes that this online resource is an efficient way to upskill carers with a view to improving [dementia care](#).

She said: "There are many obstacles to creating and sustaining an adequately skilled dementia workforce: lack of time for carers to study or attend training; lack of cash to pay for training; failure of managers to encourage and facilitate staff development; lack of suitable learning materials, or inaccessibility of existing materials; and inhibitions about adult learning on the part of the people concerned.

"E-learning can help to solve many of these problems. Its advantages include low cost, convenience, and the ability to supply consistent, high-quality learning content tailored to individual needs."

## **Person-centred care for dementia**

Dr Smith, IDEA Project Director, considers the key to improve quality of life for people with dementia is to focus on person-centred care—and

this has been a priority when choosing content for the IDEA website.

She said: "Person-centred care involves care workers placing the individual at the heart of the care approach and seeking to view them as a person with unique characteristics, rather than just seeing the diagnosis of dementia.

"This approach will look at what is important to the person with dementia: their relationships and physical and mental health, and how they live their life. In this way an understanding can be reached of how an individual is experiencing their dementia and how their care can be adapted as appropriate and tailored to their particular needs."

For more information about IDEA, visit the website via [idea.nottingham.ac.uk](http://idea.nottingham.ac.uk).

Provided by University of Nottingham

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