

How can we improve the way we communicate with people diagnosed with Alzheimer's?

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A professor from the University of the West of England is seeking participants for a survey that aims to inform and eventually improve how the diagnosis of dementia is communicated.

The study is led by UWE Bristol, working in collaboration with researchers from the University of Southampton, and is funded by the Alzheimer's Society.

Professor Richard Cheston said, "We need participants for an [online survey](#) to help us gauge what people know about the symptoms of [dementia](#) and the impact that it has on the lives of those who are diagnosed."

"We have collected a list of 64 descriptions of dementia which have been taken from Alzheimer's Society information leaflets and other material that is widely available and intended to be read by people with Alzheimer's disease. In this survey we want participants to rate each description in terms of how serious this description is for the person's well-being, and how characteristic it is."

"The answers that we receive will enable us to go onto the second part of our study where we test out whether there are differences in how people affected by dementia remember the different descriptions. All of the evidence to date suggests that memory is better for descriptions which

are less threatening – and this is what we will be investigating."

The survey is open to staff and students working at UWE Bristol and to the general public. The [survey](#) takes approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Professor Cheston said, "I am especially interested in how people respond to diagnosis and how it affects people. Alzheimer's is a frightening and distressing illness and there is a need to focus on finding ways to help people adapt to the emotional impact of diagnosis.

"This is a neglected aspect of caring and an extremely difficult diagnosis for GPs and consultants to communicate to patients effectively. We want to help professionals with finding better ways of breaking the news that someone has Alzheimer's that is informed by research that gives better insights in to the understanding people already have."

More information: The survey can be accessed here:
jfe.qualtrics.com/form/SV_38ATt2bg4mHidYF

Provided by University of the West of England

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