

Training and development for care staff supporting people living with Dementia

Health and Scrutiny Board 5


17 September 2025



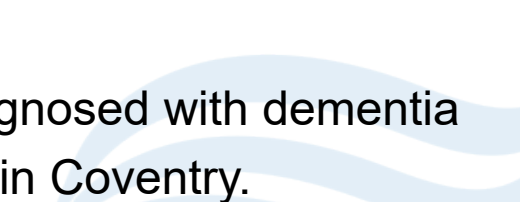
Coventry City Council

coventry.gov.uk


Background and purpose

- Alzheimer's Society recently published a report '*Because We're Human Too: Why dementia training for care workers matters and how to deliver it*', which expresses concern at low levels of dementia training amongst care staff – 29% nationally.
 - The report recommends local authorities, when commissioning adult social care services, include a contractual obligation for care providers to ensure staff undertake the Alzheimer's Society's dementia training programme at an annual cost of £2,000 per care home.
 - This paper offers assurance on the current requirements for dementia training and the associated training compliance within Coventry's Adult Social Care workforce.
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Dementia in Coventry

- 'Dementia' describes a set of symptoms such as memory loss, confusion, problems with language and understanding, and behavioural and personality changes which develop over time due to damage to nerves in the brain. Alzheimer's and vascular dementia are most common types of dementia, but there are 12 other types of dementia people may develop, or people can have more than one (mixed dementia).
 - While intervention and support can greatly improve quality of life for the person with dementia, there is currently no cure for dementia, and it will always become progressively worse. However, the length of time someone lives with dementia can vary greatly – for some they deteriorate within weeks, while others live well with dementia for many years.
 - In 2024 an estimated 3,780 Coventry citizens were living with dementia. By 2040 around 4,800 of our residents are expected to be affected.
 - Dementia usually affects older people, but rarely younger people may be diagnosed with dementia – it is estimated that 80 younger adults are living with young onset dementia in Coventry.
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Why good dementia training matters

- ASC share the Alzheimer's Society's view that good dementia training amongst our adult social care workforce is important:
 - A trained workforce enables more effective and compassionate care, particularly if the person becomes agitated or displays behaviour that challenges.
 - Settings where staff are sufficiently trained are less likely to rely on antipsychotics and other psychotropic medications to manage behaviour.
 - Relationships are better when staff properly understand and can communicate well with the person with dementia, and when environments are dementia-friendly.
 - Well-trained staff are more likely to be confident, competent and remain in their jobs, providing consistent and good quality care to our citizens.
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Dementia training requirements for care staff

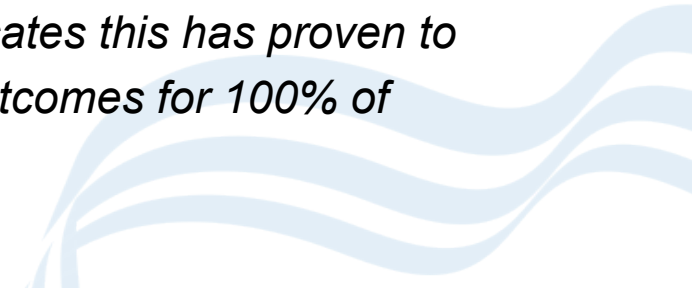
- **The Care Certificate:** National Care Standards require a minimum level of training for all new care staff, with dementia training included to ensure a consistent level of knowledge and awareness. Also states staff supporting those with dementia should have additional training.
- **DHSC Dementia Training Standards Framework:** aims to ensure quality and consistency in dementia education / training, specifically the skills and knowledge necessary.
- **Coventry and Warwickshire Dementia Strategy 2022-2027:** 6 priority areas, including 'Training Well' - *"We will work to ensure training and awareness opportunities are offered to support communities to increase their awareness of dementia, and that staff who work with people affected by dementia have access to appropriate, accredited training"*. Implementation of this is being strengthened through the multiagency Dementia 100 self-assessment Coventry and Warwickshire are currently going through.

Additional dementia training funded in Coventry above the requirement level

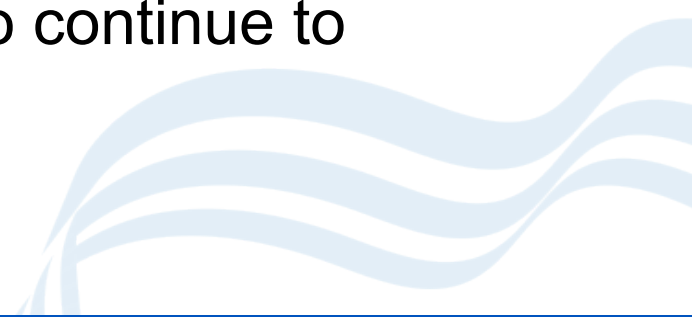
- In addition to the National Care Certificate, the following training and development opportunities are available which can be funded through the ASC Learning and Development Support Scheme

Award	Training providers	Funding available
Level 2 Award in Awareness of Dementia	City and Guilds Highfield iCQ Innovate Awarding NCFE/CACHE OCN London TQUK	£125
Level 2 Certificate in Dementia Care	TQUK NOCN	£305
Level 3 Award in Awareness of Demetia	BIIAB City and Guilds iCQ NCFE/CACHE OCN London TQUK	£185
Level 3 Certificate in Dementia care	iCQ	£430

Quality assurance

- The regulator, Care Quality Commission, is responsible for ensuring provider compliance with care standards and ensuring staff are appropriately trained.
 - CCC, in partnership with CWICB, jointly quality assure contracted services and internally provided services, including checks on training matrixes, conversations with staff, checks of supervision records etc. to ensure competence.
 - **Example: Youell Court Care Home** use of the Blue Butterfly sticker scheme to identify individuals with dementia to signify they may require extra support
 - **Example: Non-Pharmacological Approaches** – our QA team have developed a handbook and are delivering training to equip care staff with the skills to support people with distressed behaviour without resorting to pharmacological approaches. This will be supported by monthly clinics.
 - **Example: Virtual Dementia Tour** available nationwide giving training delegates a scientifically and medically proven simulation of what it is like to live with dementia. Research indicates this has proven to change practice in 95% of delegates, improve knowledge in 97% and improve outcomes for 100% of clients. Costs are from £1,040 for 16 people and £1,140 for 32 people.
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Our local position

- All Coventry providers are aware of the Alzheimer's Society training offer to enable them to make an informed decision around purchasing additional training.
 - 50% of **all care staff** in Coventry have received formal dementia training – well exceeding the national performance level (29%). Our QA processes assure us that rates are considerably higher amongst our dementia care home staff.
 - We strive to continue to build on this and regularly promote training opportunities through our Provider Forums, Provider Bulletin and Quality Assurance processes. We have encouraged Coventry providers to engage with a study at Leeds Beckett University aiming to continue to strengthen the adult social care workforce.
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Summary

- We are committed to ensuring our wider workforce is well-positioned to provide good dementia care and alongside ensuring minimum training standards are met, we will continue to promote opportunities for additional training including the Alzheimer's Society's offer, to ensure the quality of support for people living with dementia in Coventry continuously improves.
 - We have a level of assurance that levels of dementia training amongst Coventry's **whole** adult social care workforce exceed those cited nationally, and that for those working directly with people with dementia, our workforce has good levels of awareness and understanding of how to provide good dementia care.
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