

MEETING	Scrutiny Committee
DATE	26.09.2024
TITLE	Transport for people living with Dementia to attend day care
REASON TO SCRUTINISE	Council Plan 2023-28 A Caring Gwynedd
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CABINET MEMBER	Dilwyn Morgan

1. Why it needs scrutiny?

It is noted in the Council Plan under a Caring Gwynedd that supporting unpaid Carers and supporting well-being is a priority.

Some members are concerned that there is no transport available for people living with Dementia to attend day care and this lead to isolation, lack of socialising and a lack of respite for unpaid carers/family.

2. What exactly needs scrutiny?

- The impact of not offering transport on the number who attend and their families
- Has there been a reduction in the number of people with dementia who attend day care due to not having transport to reach day care?
- Have any complaints been received from unpaid carers and what is the impact of this on them?
- What plans are in place to tackle the problem?

Additional questions

- Does attending day care have a positive impact on the people using the service?
- What is the data in terms of figures of those attending day care with dementia for the pre-covid period, post-covid and now since stopping the transport?
- What is offered instead of the day care sessions for those who are too poorly to attend and the sessions now unsuitable for them?

3. Summary of the Key Matters

In the report we will set the current context on the day care provision available to adults with dementia in Gwynedd and the transport arrangements for it. There will be an emphasis on the Social Services and Well-being Act and the expectation for us to be considering individuals' personal resources and strengths when assessing and planning care and support needs. In addition to the transport question, it is hoped that this report

sparks real consideration of the type of day care needed by individuals living with dementia and their families today and into the future.

I would ask the committee to consider a wide and varied range of day provisions and that we move away from traditional day care models, for individuals with profound needs as well. It must also be recognised that the current situation with day care provision is not unique to individuals with dementia. Answers to the above scrutiny questions will be included in the relevant areas of the report.

3. Background / Context

Dementia is a destructive illness, and it is much more than just memory loss. It is a degenerative brain disease that restricts life and affects every part of an individual's physical, cognitive, emotional and social abilities. Dementia is a progressive condition that worsens over time, and a person with dementia increasingly has to rely on carers as the condition develops. It is anticipated that the number of people being diagnosed with dementia will increase, and recent evidence shows that more young adults (under 65 years) are being diagnosed with dementia. Dementia has a substantial impact on individuals, their families and their friends, which leads to great pressure on statutory Health and Care services and the third sector. Of the total of 45,000 people in Wales who are living with dementia, it is estimated that approximately two-thirds of them are living in the community, with the remaining one-third living in care or residential homes. A large part of the work of the Council's Community Resource Teams relates to supporting individuals with dementia and their families/carers.

4. Legal context

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 is the legal framework for us to identify a person's personal outcomes and to assess their care and support needs. Social Services have a duty to meet the need if the resources (personally, in the community or by others) are not available for the person to meet their own needs.

Current 'Day care' (Traditional) provision

The Council has 3 day care provisions for older people living with dementia; Plas Hedd, Bangor, Llys Cadfan, Tywyn and Plas y Don, Pwllheli. It is noted that all 3 services are associated with and part of the care provision of the residential homes.

At Plas Hedd Day Centre, Bangor, the provision is currently full. 5 individuals attend per day, with a service available 2 days a week with 2 members of staff caring. Families take the individuals back and forth because the needs of the individuals are too severe to use independent taxis. Prior to the Covid period, Plas Hedd was able to accept more individuals (up to 12) due to 3 staff members supervising, one of whom was an Older People's Mental Health Nurse. Health has had to pull the staff member out of the centre due to the increased demand for nurses in the community.

At Plas Y Don, Pwllheli, and Llys Cadfan, Tywyn, 6 individuals are provided with a taxi to take them, an exceptional arrangement because there are no alternatives for them. The other attendees make their own arrangements, usually a lift by a family member. Centre staff have not received a complaint from the families about the lack of transport nor have

they seen a noticeable impact in attendance due to transport issues. Plas y Don and Llys Cadfan have seen the number of attendees and day care applications reduced but feel this is not due to transport.

A large number of other Council residential homes also offer day care to a small number of individuals depending on an adequate staffing situation and families arranging transport themselves. Home carers also often take individuals to day care when there is no other suitable option for them.

Overall across Gwynedd, demand for transport to day care has reduced since the Covid period. This is largely due to the reduction in 'traditional' day care provision, with Blaenau Ffestiniog and Cricieth centres not having re-opened since Covid (these were not dedicated services for individuals living with Dementia).

The adults teams have not received a complaint specifically relating to a lack of transport to dementia day care. One recent complaint came to the attention of our Customer Care Officer regarding a lack of transport to general day care (not dementia day care) because the minibus was unable to come to the door of the house due to poor and limited road conditions. Due to the specific circumstances, the Department agreed to pay for a taxi in this case as an exception.

BCUHB Health Dementia Day Provision

Specialist day care provision for individuals with dementia is provided by Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board in the Llŷn and South Meirionnydd area which provides carers with respite and clinical support to monitor the individual's health condition. At Hafod Hedd, Bryn Beryl Hospital Monday to Friday 9-5, for individuals with health needs related to or in addition to the dementia. 33 individuals currently attend Hafod Hedd, with numbers ranging between 10 and 15 each day. The number of days attended is dependent on the need and risk assessment. In terms of transport, the Health Service request that people make their own arrangements because hospital transport is unreliable. Most are taken by family members and others use the local community transport schemes 'O ddrws i ddrws' or 'Cymrod'. Also, some pay carers privately to take them. Attendance at Hafod Hedd is currently on the rise, staff are not aware of anyone not attending due to lack of transport and have not received a complaint about the lack of transport. They report that attendance is higher now than it was before Covid – perhaps due to the new location and being able to accept more people.

The transport arrangements to Hafod Hedd can be summarised as follows:

- 24 - Transport by family
- 4 - O ddrws i ddrws or Cymrod
- 3 - Hospital Transport
- 2 - Cyngor Gwynedd Dementia Support Worker

In addition to the above, it is thought important to highlight the types of alternative support available in Gwynedd for individuals living with dementia.

Dementia Actif

The Dementia Actif team works with a number of the community hubs and very effectively attracts new members and arranges transport for them at a reasonable cost. The individuals have varying needs and conditions, some living a lonely and isolated life. Everyone is welcome because physical activities and socialising are factors that help reduce the risk of dementia, and therefore preventative support. Dyffryn Ogwen and Dyffryn Nantlle Community Hubs (Yr Orsaf) provide transport to the Dementia Actif classes for members who would not otherwise be able to attend, with the cost set at £2 per trip/day. There is now an intention to collaborate with Henblas Community Hub, Bala, once they have established their community transport scheme and there are also initial conversations in Tywyn with the new hub under the umbrella of the Dementia Friendly Community. Some attendees pay for a taxi to come to the classes and others rely on volunteers.

Dementia Support Workers

It is very important for people living with dementia to remain in their own homes for as long as possible, and to receive support to remain safe and secure at home. Many people rely on their families and friends for support, and there is a need to ensure that these carers are given reasonable breaks from their caring roles so that they are able to continue as carers, and have lives of their own beyond the caring role. The Welsh Government's ICF funding has also enabled us to appoint Dementia support workers as part of the Community Resource Teams, in order to support individuals with dementia and their carers to remain independent in their communities. We have 5 Dementia Support Workers providing one-to-one day support at the home of the individuals who mostly have profound dementia. They also take individuals to day activities in the community when no other support is available.

Eryri Cydweithredol

The Council commissions Eryri Cydweithredol to provide day support in the homes of individuals with dementia, mostly individuals with profound dementia where it is not suitable for them to attend day activities. This is a support service that provides respite to unpaid carers who have a very intense caring burden and are dependent on receiving specialist support in their own home. Eryri Cydweithredol is currently supporting in the Caernarfon, Bangor, Porthmadog and Harlech areas.

This is a list of Gwynedd Day Activities and Community Transport (Third Sector) providers

3rd Sector Provider	Services offered
Yr Orsaf, Penygroes – Dyffryn Nantlle Area	Green vehicles taking people to Yr Orsaf day activities

Y Dref Werdd- Blaenau Ffestiniog area	Green vehicles taking people to y Dref Werdd day activities, a desire to extend the provision further.
Porthi Dre – Caernarfon Area	Arrangement with yr Orsaf, Penygroes, to borrow a vehicle and driver to take individuals who have no other means of accessing Porthi Dre
Partneriaeth Ogwen – Dyffryn Ogwen area	Green Vehicle, taking individuals to lunch clubs and on trips
Congl Meinciau, Botwnnog – Llŷn area	Using the O Ddrws i Ddrws or Bws Fflecsi service
Bala Community Hub	Applied for a grant to purchase a green vehicle
Tywyn Area	Community Hub and Community Transport schemes underway

Obstacles and Considerations

It is essential that transport provision is suitable and safe. From the examples above, you will see that a normal minibus or taxi is not always a suitable option, with risks of challenging behaviour and instances where the drivers have not been very supportive and sensitive to the vulnerable situation of individuals living with dementia. According to the experience of the social work teams, it is very difficult to find a taxi company willing to do this work for the Council. If they agree, the costs are often very high. There is also very limited supply/availability of vehicles with wheelchair access. More often than not, family members are the most suitable people to take their loved ones to day care. It is also important to note that the Council does not have the resources, vehicles or staff to provide transport with a chaperone/supervisor.

We have positive examples where Dementia Actif has collaborated with 'O Ddrws i Ddrws' in Llŷn, by providing 'Dementia Friends' sessions to staff. Staff at 'O Ddrws i Ddrws' had concerns about taking people with dementia as they had experienced very challenging situations in the past. Staff have now been on training with the Community Transport Association and staff report that this has been very beneficial.

“MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Training) is a nationally recognised driver training and assessment scheme which focuses on putting the needs of passengers first. MiDAS trained drivers and the community transport providers they drive for hold a common pride in the caring, compassionate and supportive nature of the community transport sector. Central to MiDAS is the understanding that as a sector we remain responsive to the needs of passengers. To do this, it’s important to work with organisations that hold expertise and best practice to make sure drivers learn the best skills to support their passengers. The new MiDAS training round will include Dementia Friends information for all trainers and drivers.”

The financial climate must also be considered. The individual's contribution to the cost of the Council's day care is currently very low (£4 per day) and is based solely on contributing towards the meals provided. The Council has not been charging for the care provided to individuals from 10am-4pm mostly by 2 members of staff. This has not been considered in the Charging Policy in the same way as Home Care where there is a cost attached to every hour provided. The Council's Charging Policy is currently under review and this issue is one of the considerations for modification and to be discussed at this Committee. It is important to note that the Council provides financial welfare support to individuals through the Income and Well-being Team. Income and Well-being officers are available in every area to support individuals with care and support needs and their carers, to assess their ability to pay for services and enable them to submit a benefit application to pay for care services, including day care and transport.

Next steps

As can be seen from the report, the transport arrangements for individuals to attend the above activities/services are very varied. It is dependent on personal resources, individuals' financial circumstances, the availability and willingness of families to support and the availability of third sector resources in our communities. It also highlights that every effort is being made to ensure that individuals have access to local day services but consideration is first given to the availability of transport by family or friends or suitable and affordable local transport before there is an expectation on the Council to provide transport.

It is recognised that it can be argued that our position as a Council on transport is not clear and consistent enough and that Transport Policy needs to be considered for our service users. A review of the transport arrangements of the Adults and Children departments is already underway including the initial work on preparing and updating our transport policy.

It was decided to undertake this review due to inconsistency and a lack of clarity in terms of the use made of transport, the taxi/public and community transport booking procedures and the reasons for booking them and how/who pays. The main aim of the review is to ensure that there is a consistent system for transport across Gwynedd within social services. Contact will be made with other authorities to identify good and current practice. The policy shall be prepared in consideration of the following matters:-

- That transport is provided in situations when it is not possible for the individual to use public transport or other independent transport
- That the care and support plan enables the individual to be as independent as possible and to make the best use of their strengths, abilities and local resources
- That support is available for individuals to arrange suitable transport through local resources and the third sector
- That consideration is given to affordable transport arrangements and the support of the Income and Welfare Team with benefits to pay for care and transport

- That transport provision from the Council is only offered after all other options have been considered. In such exceptional circumstances, Direct Payments may also be considered.

5. Consultation with others for the report

Sian Griffiths – Gwynedd Well-being Team Leader

Geraint Jones - Customer Care Officer, Adults, Health and Well-being Department

Bethan Williams – Supporting Health and Well-being Manager (Community Resilience)

Mirain Llwyd Roberts – Supporting Health and Well-being Manager and Gwynedd Age Friendly Co-ordinator.

Manon Elwyn Hughes – Community Resource Teams Development Project Manager (Cyngor Gwynedd and Health Board)

Emma Quaeck – Supporting Health and Well-being/Dementia Actif Manager

Idwen Roberts – Bangor Day Care Manager, Plas Hedd

Nia Thomas – Day Care Manager Plas Y Don, Pwllheli

Katey Louise McMullen – Llys Cadfan/Tywyn Day Care Manager

Glenys Williams (Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board) – Hafod Hedd Day Centre, Bryn Beryl

Gwynedd Dementia Super Group Members – Users and Carers Group

Melanie Sillett - Regional Dementia Project Manager

6. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Have you included residents / service users? If not, why and how do you intend to consult with them?

Further consultation on general day care provision is planned on a local area basis. This will start with the Cricieth area

If Committee members are aware of individuals who have stated that they are unable to attend day care due to transport, the service would be pleased to receive the information in order to contact them.

Have you considered working together?

The Council is already working with the third sector and the Health Board on day care issues and developments in the Third Sector through our community resource teams and our Supporting Health and Well-being Managers

What has been done or will be done to prevent problems arising or worsening in the future?

An evaluation of day care provision is underway by the Department. The aim is to improve the way individuals can be supported within their communities rather than providing 'traditional' day care. Our collaboration efforts with local 3rd sector groups and programmes such as Dementia Actif are already showing progress and puts us in a stronger place to support vulnerable residents in the County.

How have you considered the long-term and what will people's needs be in years to come?

Local and national data collection highlights projections that the older population (over 65 and specifically over 85) will increase significantly over the next 20 years. This means there will be a growing and significant demand for services to support individuals, families and carers living with dementia. Work within the Council to look at the likely impact of this on service provision along with a programme of work to meet the challenges has also been completed. It is hoped that it can be published soon.

To ensure integration, have you considered the potential impact on other public bodies?

We already work closely with the Health Board in providing services to support individuals living with dementia along with their carers and families. Their feedback has contributed to this report. It can be confirmed that close/integrated collaboration between health and care staff happens in our Community Resource Teams

7. Impact on Equality Characteristics, the Welsh Language and the Socio-Economic Duty

For Welsh-speakers living with dementia, receiving care and support in their mother tongue or the language of their choice is a matter of clinical need.

The vision contained in the Dementia Action Plan for Wales 2018-2022 is "for Wales to be a dementia friendly nation that recognises the rights of people with dementia to feel valued and to live as independently as possible in their communities." The Adults, Health and Well-being Department is committed to meeting the requirements of the plan and reports on the successes and barriers to a Dementia Delivery and Action Assurance Group.

Dementia is a particular theme within the National Ageing Well Programme. One of the aims of the programme is to "make Wales a dementia supportive nation by building and promoting dementia supportive communities." Our vision as a Council is to support all the people of Gwynedd to thrive and live full lives in our community, in a county which is one of the best counties to live in. It is a priority in the Council plan to ensure that we will have care services which help people to live their lives in the manner of their choosing.

8. Appendices



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