

Integration in Action

Housing services to enable people to stay living independently at home

Homewise Memory Matters: Supporting people with memory loss, dementia and their carers at home in East Lancashire



This brochure describes the Homewise Memory Matters project for people with memory loss, dementia and their carers providing help with the home environment, advice on care and support services and welfare benefits.

Outcomes include:

- Prevention of hospital admission e.g. reduced falls risk
- Reduced risk of admission to residential care
- Extended independent living at home
- Improved wellbeing including support for carers
- Improved safety and security at home
- Reduction in social isolation

The NHS (NHSE) England view of housing

The *'Next Steps in the NHS Five Year Forward View'* highlights the importance of keeping people healthier for longer, improving care, reducing health inequalities and working jointly across professional boundaries, including housing.

NHSE's CCG Engagement Programme has published a *'Quick Guide to Health and Housing'* and its housing programme focuses on three key elements:

1. How housing can help prevent people from being admitted to hospital;
2. How housing can help people be discharged from hospital; and
3. How housing can support people to remain independent in the community.

This brochure outlines how a local service is delivering to achieve these outcomes.

Why housing?

Where people live, the physical quality, suitability and stability of their home, has a significant impact on their health, and hence on demand for NHS (as well as social care) services¹.

Home adaptations and repairs both enable people to continue to live independently at home and improve quality of life.

A forward-looking view of the NHS which envisages not only prevention but also more health care delivered at or closer to home, will only be achievable if people live in decent, suitable homes where such care can be provided effectively.

Health & Housing Links

- 2 million older households live in non-decent homes, 78% in the owner-occupied sector. 95% of homes lack even basic accessibility features.
- Two thirds of people with dementia in the UK live in their own home in the community mostly in mainstream housing, with one third living on their own.
- Older people are more prone to falls, most of which occur at home with falls risk level linked to home hazards.

A local solution

Homewise Memory Matters: Supporting people with memory loss, dementia and their carers at home in East Lancashire

Homewise Memory Matters has been funded mainly by NHS East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) since 2014. It is run by Homewise, a home improvement agency in Accrington, Lancashire that offers comprehensive, impartial help on all aspects of home improvement, adaptation, repairs and maintenance to enhance independent living in Hyndburn and Ribbles Valley.

¹ Nicol S, Roys M, & Garrett H (2015) *Briefing paper: The cost of poor housing to the NHS* Building Research Establishment

Homewise Memory Matters supports people with memory loss and dementia to stay at home continuing to live independently keeping them safe and out of hospital and residential care. It also works with their carers to ensure that they are aware of local services including respite care and have a network of support available to them.

Simple innovations in the home can make all the difference whilst advice on care, support and benefits ensures continued independence, good health and wellbeing.

Homewise Memory Matters makes the home a safe and comfortable environment for people with memory loss and dementia. It offers changes to support visual and orientation difficulties and other repairs and adaptations where necessary and appropriate. It also supports their carers by referring them to appropriate advice and support.

Caseworkers visit people for free in their own home and, working with their carers, come up with a plan to adapt the home environment to meet needs supporting the person to raise the funds needed, organising the work and offering advice on care, support and income issues. A feature of the project is the partnerships developed with other local agencies to offer wide ranging support meeting the client's holistic needs.



Since 2014 to June 2017 548 clients have been helped alongside their carers. As an example of their work, from April 2016 to March 2017 Memory Matters helped 226 clients with memory loss and dementia with work to their home. This included making the home safe and accessible with help such as:

- bannister and grab rails
- stair and bath lifts
- bath and shower boards
- bed levers

...to items supporting navigation and orientation to aid memory such as:-

- nightlights
- signage
- specially coloured items such as grab rails and light switches and
- memory aids such as memo minders, clocks
- items providing reassurance such as 'dementia bracelets'
- door alarms and sensors

"My Mum feels a lot safer and now does not worry when home alone"

Carer

In addition, some clients undertook repair and improvement work; many clients were helped with welfare benefits such as Attendance Allowance and offered advice about local care and support services. Carers, too, were supported with referrals to respite services and other support networks including sitting services, dementia support via the Alzheimer's Society, 'peace of mind' care plans and befriending services.

Case studies

1 Reducing falls/Preventing hospital admission (2016)

A lady (79) who lives at home with her grandson, had no formal package of care in place, has poor mobility and numerous other health problems. Her grandson was waiting for an operation on his back and has very poor mobility. He helps with all aspects of daily living and was finding things increasingly difficult. There are no daily living aids in place and should the lady take a fall her grandson would struggle to help her. Her grandson does have to leave her home alone on occasions. Telecare including falls pendant alarm, smoke, CO1 and flood detectors were installed for when the lady is left at home alone and following a referral to Social Services a care package of evening and night visits was also put in place. Bannister rails and landing rails were prescribed and now the lady can access upstairs once again safely with the assistance of her carers and grandson.

SAVINGS

Reduced risk of unplanned admission to hospital (each incidence) £2,837².

2 Preventing admission to residential care (2017)

A gentleman (75) lives alone with no social care package, has poor memory with no diagnosis. He recently had a stroke and is losing weight. He was admitted into hospital due to pains in his groin and a brain scan was also carried out. He has problems with his heart and suffers from depression and anxiety. His mobility is poor but manageable, but there are no daily living aids around his home to help him remain steady on his feet, he struggles particularly with bathing. His wife passed away two years ago and he has not got over the loss.

- *Referred to Age UK; this resulted in him attending a grief counsellor and a men's club both with the assistance of an Age UK liaison officer*
- *Referred to Occupational Therapy for bathing and daily living aids*
- *Homewise installed nightlights and fundraised for a dementia clock*
- *Referred to Social Services for a package of care to help with bathing, meals and medication prompts to enable him to stay safely at home.*

SAVINGS

Reduced risk of admission to residential care – annual costs £25,636 per year³.

Homewise Memory Matters - based on local residential care costs for people with dementia - estimate savings at £39,000 per year.

The Impact

Through the support given by Homewise Memory Matters people with memory loss and dementia have been able to continue living at home independently and their carers supported to help them to do so.

Their performance data in 2016 – 17 identifies:-

OUTPUTS

226 people were helped. Out of these:-

- 66 applications for benefits were made, mainly for Attendance Allowance (total increased benefit including all benefits was £119,043.34 for the year⁴)
- 126 people were referred for telecare
- 79 for Occupational Therapy
- 156 had support from Homewise with works to the home
- 40 were referred to the Alzheimer's Society for practical support
- All 226 carers seen were signposted to carers agencies and/or Social Services for advice and support

OUTCOMES

Approximately 2 months after the home assessment and interventions clients are contacted and the following outcomes met: -

- 103 people benefitted from a reduction in falls
- 111 identified improved wellbeing and personal safety
- 22 had improved home security
- 39 saw a reduction in social isolation
- 86 saw improved wellbeing of the carer
- 108 cases prevented hospital admissions
- 109 cases prevented residential care admission

“Wow ...the benefits for patients and their carers must be dramatic”

Hyndburn Locality Manager East
Lancashire CCG response to early monitoring in 2015



“The patients I have seen by Homewise have been made safer and able to continue to live at home due to this service”

Over 75's Community Matron

² Unit costs of health and social care PSSRU

³ Unit costs of health and social care PSSRU for general residential care

⁴ Since inception annual increase in benefits of £298,000 has been achieved

About Care & Repair England

Care & Repair England (Charitable Society Reg. No. 25121R) aims to improve older people's housing. It innovates, develops, promotes and supports practical housing initiatives & related policy and practice which enable older people to live independently in their own homes for as long as they choose.

info@careandrepair-england.org.uk

www.careandrepair-england.org.uk

**Care & Repair England
The Renewal Trust Business Centre
3 Hawksworth Street
Nottingham NG3 2EG
Tel: 0115 9506500**

About Homewise

Homewise aims to serve the community by providing comprehensive, impartial help and advice services on all aspects of home improvement, adaptation, repairs and maintenance.

info@homewisesociety.org.uk

<http://homewiseonline.org/>

**Homewise
2-4 Whalley Road
Accrington
Lancashire BB5 1AA
Tel: 01254 232249**

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