

## Winter Lunch Event 2022

Our Community Action on Dementia Winter Lunch Event was planned in partnership with the NHS NWL ICB. Some 69 People living with dementia and their carers attended the event at Chalkhill Community Centre which was officially opened by the Mayor Cllr Abdi Aden with some kind words

We were lucky enough to be joined by Shaun Wallace of the Chase fame. As a Brent resident, Shaun shared his personal and moving story about his mother living with dementia. He explained he was passionate about raising the profile of dementia and would continue to use his influence to do so.

Dr Abhishek Shastri, Consultant Psychiatrist Brent Memory Clinic, took the opportunity to answer any questions raised about the diagnosis process and enjoyed chatting to the attendees.

We started the day with the business element and asked attendees to record their top 5 priorities for the dementia community in 2023. Listed below are the 5 most common themes:

<p><b>1. Additional activities and events for the dementia community.</b></p>	<p>PLD and carers were keen to build on the good work already happening in Brent. They wanted more opportunities to socialise and attend fun and educational events. There was a mention of out of hours cafes for carers who work. There was also mention of increasing the access to de cafes and opening new cafes in parts of the borough not currently served.</p>
<p><b>2. IAG for PLD and carers that is accessible</b></p>	<p>Carers wanted access to IAG to help navigate a complex care/health system which often left them frustrated and exhausted.</p>
<p><b>3. Transport</b></p>	<p>Better access to safe and affordable travel for PLD and their carers so that they can continue to access services in the community.</p>
<p><b>4. Access to dementia friendly physical activities</b></p>	<p>Access to free and appropriate physical activities such as walking groups/exercise classes/swimming etc.</p>
<p><b>5. Carer support and respite</b></p>	<p>Improved access to support for carers – not empty promises. Improved respite for carers – which is easy to access and timely.</p>

It is also important to mention some other comments made by attendees. They include

- A one stop shop for information about dementia
- No means testing for care and respite in relation to dementia
- Striving for patience, understanding and kindness for people with dementia
- Regular opportunities for families to socialise together – like in this event
- Affordable and dementia-aware social activities in Brent – example given was Wembley stadium events (as PLD find it challenging to travel distance to socialise and enjoy days out – we must prioritise making social activities in Brent accessible, affordable and welcoming to the community)
- Improved access to GP appointments and ensure GP staff are understanding of the needs of PLD.

(PLD People living with dementia/IAG information, advice and guidance)

The second part of the day was all about fun and we were treated to some exercise with Donna – her high energy but low impact approach made for a fun session with everyone taking part. We then enjoyed a singing workshop with the lovely Tracey who got everyone involved with some popular songs, ending the session with 'Jingle Bells' – very fitting.



Finally, lunch was served giving everyone the opportunity to relax and enjoy some time to chat with others. We noted that of the 12 active de cafes in Brent, 10 were represented at the event. Carers and PLD alike spoke very highly about the cafes, saying they were a real lifeline for the community.

We are very grateful for the support of the NHS NWL ICB which allowed us to host this event.

You can also read more suggestions and recommendations at ['dementia conversations'](#) curated by CAD-Brent in 2021 and 2022.

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