

news release

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Free events scheduled to raise awareness during Dementia Action Week

Partnering organisations across West Sussex will join forces during Dementia Action Week to launch a new service and provide a range of events to raise awareness of support for people with memory loss or dementia and their family or friend carers.

This year's Dementia Action Week, from 16 to 22 May, will highlight the importance of diagnosis for people who may have symptoms of the condition and people who may be waiting for a diagnosis.

In 2020, it was estimated that 16,650 people had dementia in West Sussex and by 2030, this figure is estimated to rise to 22,450. However, research by Alzheimer's Society has shown [diagnosis rates falling to a five-year low](#).

A wide range of free sessions for members of the public has been organised across West Sussex throughout Dementia Action Week. A schedule of events is available on the [Carers Support West Sussex website](#).

Councillor Amanda Jupp, Cabinet Member for Adults' Services, said: "It must be devastating to be told you have dementia, but there is plenty of support available for those who have been diagnosed as well as those who care for them.

"Receiving a proper diagnosis can help identify what support is available, such as help around the home or assistive technology.

"With the right support, many people can continue to live independently in their own homes for a number of years, enjoying life as they did before their diagnosis."

A new Bilingual Memory Navigator service that will assist ethnic minority carers who care for people experiencing memory loss and dementia is being launched this month in Crawley, ahead of Dementia Action Week.

The 12-month pilot scheme has been commissioned jointly by West Sussex County Council and West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group and will be delivered by Carers Support West Sussex. It will help and encourage ethnic minority carers to seek professional support such as referral to a GP or memory clinic if they are concerned about someone they are caring for.

Sonia Mangan, CEO for Carers Support West Sussex, said: "It is a fact that three out of five of us will become a carer at some point in our lives and caring for someone with dementia can be full of ups and downs.

“This for some is exacerbated when language and/or cultural references are not familiar. Our work with carers has taught us that we need to provide navigation for all carers through the twists and turns of their journey and we hope that this pilot will enable us work with carers from ethnic minorities to test whether this bilingual service is needed longer term.

“We are excited to try this out and look forward to continuing to make a difference.”

More information about the Bilingual Memory Navigator, and other support for dementia and memory loss carers is available on the [Carers Support West Sussex website](#).

You can find out more about the [West Sussex Joint Dementia Strategy](#) online after it was launched last year with the aim of improving the health and wellbeing of people living with the condition in West Sussex.

It was developed in partnership between West Sussex County Council, NHS West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group, District and Borough Councils as well as community and voluntary providers and includes the views of people with the lived experience of dementia.

For further information please contact the news desk on 0330 222 8090 or email pressoffice@westsussex.gov.uk.

For urgent out-of-hours enquiries please call 07767 098415.

