

Press Release

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Dementia book selected for groundbreaking national program

A guide edited by specialist staff from Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust - the county's main provider of community and mental health services - to help people live well with dementia has been selected to be part of a national ground-breaking scheme to support people with dementia and their carers.

The 25 titles on the Reading Well Books on Prescription for Dementia list was unveiled on Monday 26th January at an official launch in London. It includes the *ABC of Dementia*, edited by Dr Felicity Richards and Dr Bernard Coope, both Consultant Older Adult Psychiatrists in Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust, with chapter contributions from a number of other Trust as well as Worcester University employees, including Jenny La Fontaine, Dr Dhanjeev Marrie, Dr George Theodoulou, Professor Dawn Brooker, Sally Williams and Tanya Jacobs.

Launched in June 2013, the *Reading Well Books on Prescription* scheme in England supports people with book based therapy for common mental health conditions available from public libraries and has helped over 275,000 people feel better through self-help reading. It has been endorsed by the public as well as by GPs, mental health professionals and government ministers as a helpful community-based mental health service.

The *ABC of Dementia* is a practical guide to the diagnosis, treatment and management of dementia. The focus of the book is on the experience of the person with dementia and their families throughout their journey with dementia, from first changes to the end of life. It is a valuable resource for health care professionals caring for patients with dementia and related disorders. It is also relevant for people living with dementia and their families.

Dr Bernard Coope, Associate Medical Director and Consultant Older Adult Psychiatrist at Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust, said:

"The Books on Prescription scheme has played an important role in helping to meet the huge need for mental health support. It has been a great honour to be included in the Books on Prescription list."

A chapter of the book is dedicated to the Early Intervention in Dementia Service (EIDS), set up in Worcestershire Health and Care Trust in 2010 in response to the needs of the local population. The service is available to people of any age, registered with a GP in Worcestershire who are experiencing memory problems and do not have a formal diagnosis of dementia.

The EIDS team is based at Kidderminster Hospital but has locally based clinics around the county to see patients. It has already helped over 2,500 people across the county receive an earlier, timely assessment. By intervening early in the illness before cognitive deficits affect mental capacity, the service encourages patient choice and autonomy, helping the individual

and their family adapt to the illness and start making plans for the future.

There are approximately 8,000 people in Worcestershire who are living with dementia plus many more close families whose lives are touched by the condition. In addition, the numbers are growing by at least 3% every year. Many more people are being diagnosed early, especially as this has been a government priority.

Dr Bernard Coope said:

“The aim of our ABC of Dementia book is to help them develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to support those with dementia and those close to them to live well. So much can be done to support families and to maintain the personhood of the individual in the face of limited therapeutic options.”

Reading Well Books on Prescription for Dementia, including ABC of Dementia, is available in the country's public libraries and on Amazon.