

PPG TALK ON DEMENTIA 10 OCTOBER 2019

We held a talk at the Practice in arranged by Western Road Surgery on 10 October on Dementia, with the agreement of our Practice Partners, and with the collaboration of both Patient Participation Groups. Jane Gilbey, an Admiral Nurse, who works at Basildon Hospital on Dementia Care, gave a very interesting talk, followed by a presentation from a patient who has dementia, who explained what he had been through, and what he had done to carry on, knowing about this diagnosis and its consequences. Both talks were exceptional. There was a large attendance and extra chairs had to be found for people who came, and it was also attended by doctors from both surgeries and staff. The questions after were also very useful.

Jane said that there were no dedicated wards for dementia patients at Basildon Hospital, but that there were three older people wards that were equipped to deal with patients with dementia. In addition there was the 'Butterfly' service at the hospital where a nurse visits dementia patients to provide them with something stimulating to do while in hospital. This is a charity, and if you wish to donate to the Butterfly Appeal text 70070 followed by BFLY01£ and then the amount you wish to donate. Butterfly symbols are somewhere on the boards above the patients head so that staff will know that the patient has dementia and act accordingly.

Jane is an Admiral Nurse, and they support the patient and the family in hospital and in the home. They are looking at helping in hospices. There are 292 Admiral Nurses nationally. They get referrals from the Community, Alzheimer's Society, and Dementia UK. They are qualified specialist dementia nurses. To contact them ring 0800 888 6678, or email helpline@dementiauk.org. To contact Jane ring Basildon Hospital ext 4935 between 8 – 4pm Mon to Fri.

Every member of Basildon Hospital does dementia training at some level, according to their occupation, and there are three tiers of training.

The work the Admiral Nurses do is family and relationship centred, with liaison with professionals. They help from the diagnosis, to living with dementia, and end of life and after death care. With early diagnosis the patient can make choices and have an advance care plan. The patient at this point has the capacity to choose how he/she will live with dementia. When the patient is into his journey the focus is on the carer for him/her to adapt and navigate through the services to find out about what is available. Relationships change.

The Dementia Butterfly Group in Basildon Hospital has spent money raised for the charity directly for helping patients. They have bought utensils to help with eating and drinking, there is finger food; memory boxes; there is a resource trolley with things to do; twiddle muffs. There is a friendly homely environment with hairdressing, tea room and pub with no beer.

Tony who followed on from Jane, a dementia patient, explained how it was to live with dementia. He sings at Singing for the Brain with the Alzheimer's Society, he plays the piano regularly, he sings in a choir, and plays badminton. He is good at forgetting! He said people are considerate, and they know what is the matter with him. His advice was not to panic, and accept the diagnosis; not to give up; exercise; do Power of Attorney while still having capacity. He does small group activity, brain training games, he continues with hobbies and starts new ones. He keeps a daily diary. He does standard activities to hold back deterioration. He was simply amazing and an example to us all.