

### **Supporting members with dementia**

You might be worried that a member of your guild is showing signs of dementia, or they might already have received a diagnosis of dementia. We hope that this information will help you support them, but their family and close friends will also be able to advise you what works best for them.

### **Common signs that a person may be suffering from a form of dementia**

- Asking the same questions over and over again
- Getting lost in places they used to know well
- Having trouble following routines, recipes, or directions
- Becoming more confused about time, people, and places
- Mood changes and difficulty controlling emotions
- Not taking care of themselves— eating poorly, not bathing, or behaving unsafely

### **Helpful Hints**

1. Be calm and patient
2. Face the person, speak clearly and slowly
3. Don't argue if the person is confused or agitated, just continue to be calm and patient
4. Make sure you have their attention by gently touching their arm and saying their name
5. Use short, simple sentences and say exactly what you mean
6. Allow plenty of time for the person to take in what you say and to reply
7. Try not to confuse or embarrass the person by correcting them.
8. Use questions which ask for a simple answer
9. Don't ask questions which test memory such as 'where are you?'
10. Talk about familiar people, places, and ideas.
11. Use the names of the people you are talking about instead of he or she to remind them who you are talking about.
12. Use facial expressions and hand gestures to make yourself understood.
13. If dealing with money on the person's behalf, try to have someone else present.
14. Talk to their family, if possible, to find the best way of supporting the member
15. If the member is attending guild meetings or events, then include suitable adjustments in your risk assessment and help them complete forms and advise the organisers to ensure support is in place.

**For more information:**

The Trefoil safeguarding policy has additional information on actions you can take to protect vulnerable members and if you are concerned about a member do talk to your county chair.

Additional information, help and advice can be found though the following organisations:

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| • Alzheimer's Society | <a href="http://alzheimers.org.uk">alzheimers.org.uk</a> |
| • Alzheimer Scotland  | <a href="http://alzscot.org">alzscot.org</a>             |
| • Dewis Cymru         | <a href="http://dewis.wales">dewis.wales</a>             |
| • Dementia UK         | <a href="http://dementiauk.org">dementiauk.org</a>       |
| • Care UK             | <a href="http://Careuk.com">Careuk.com</a>               |