

Headline: Local Charity will step in to fill dementia support gap

Dementia Support, a local charity supporting people with dementia and their families, from Sage House in Tangmere will increase its services if needed. The news comes in response to reports that the Sussex Dementia Assessment Service is to pause appointments until April 2024.

The charity offers specialist advisors, known as Wayfinders, who help people understand how to deal with dementia, whether diagnosed or not, and will seek to extend its offer to support the need that will arise if this decision is taken.

CEO Sally Tabbner says, 'We are extremely concerned about how this reduction in services will impact local people and want to get the message out that we're here to help, whether someone has a diagnosis of dementia or not. We will do everything we can to increase our services to try to fill the gap and we urge anyone who is worried to contact us.'

The festive period often sees families get together and changes in behaviour, personality or memory issues can be more noticeable. Sage House Tangmere always sees an increase in people seeking help in January for this reason. Sage House not only offers its unique Wayfinding Service providing help, advice, and emotional support for people through their dementia journey, but it also hosts a café, wellbeing activities, and a daycentre.

'We know that if this happens, it will be a worrying time as people won't know when they will be able to see a specialist for a diagnosis, and we will do everything in our power to try and alleviate that. We are here to offer support and advice and will do everything we can to support local people.'

As soon as confirmation of the NHS Trusts plan is received the charity will start the process to initiate new Wayfinder sessions over the phone and face to face to meet the anticipated demand. Already supporting more than 2,500 local people it plans to develop and set up extra programmes to support people covering important issues that are often a worry, including legal matters such as Powers of Attorney, Benefits, emotional support and wellbeing.

'We're always here for anyone concerned about dementia and we will help before, during and after a diagnosis. We know this is going to be worrying and we will do everything we can to support our local communities in West Sussex. We would like to reassure those affected that as a charity our Wayfinding, Activities and Support services are all free of charge.'

Notes to Editor:

1. Dementia is now the leading cause of death in the UK. 1 in 3 people born will now develop dementia and people living with dementia in the UK are predicted to rise to 2 million by 2050.
2. Established in 2014, Dementia Support is an independent local charity that has been operational since opening the doors of Sage House, in West Sussex in 2018.
3. Our vision is "a society where dementia is wholly understood and accepted, enabling people living with dementia to be fully supported throughout the whole of their journey."
4. Our unique dementia hub brings a full range of services under one roof, including advice, guidance, activities, day care, and personal care. We support over 2,500 people affected by dementia in West Sussex
5. We receive less than 4% of our annual income from statutory sources and actively fundraise to provide support.

Contact Details: For comment & interviews over the weekend please get in touch with:
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