

Motion: Dementia Care in Chichester District

Proposer: Cllr Vivian, Central Ward

Council believes that:

- a. Providing a decent level of care for residents suffering from dementia, or dementia-adjacent conditions, is important for community care up and down Chichester District.
- b. Providing this service not only ensures that residents with these conditions have dignity throughout their care, but also provides significant peace of mind for relatives of these patients.
- c. Furthermore, interruptions to dementia assessments mean that patients and their families risk slipping through the net, receiving the wrong care, or otherwise creating uncertainty and worry for ordinary residents.

Council notes that:

- i. In December 2023, the Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust announced that their dementia assessment services in West Sussex and parts of East Sussex would be suspended for new patients between January-April 2024. Furthermore, the Trust announced that the number of 'dementia beds' available would be reduced by 20%¹.
- ii. According to Sussex World, the service was suspended owing to 'financial deficits' and a 'redeploy[ment] of staff'².
- iii. Local charity Sage House expanded its services in response to the announcement, but noted its "extreme concern... about how this reduction in services will impact local people"³.
- iv. According to Alzheimer's Research UK, nearly 950,000 people in the UK currently have dementia, the number of which is only expected to rise⁴.
- v. Despite a widely-held view that dementia patients are elderly, data by Dementia UK shows that 7.5% of dementia patients are below the age of 65⁵, so-called "Young Onset Dementia".
- vi. However, the NHS only aims to ensure that two-thirds of people with dementia receives a diagnosis, leaving uncertainty for the remaining one-third.

Council resolves that:

1. The closure of NHS dementia assessment services in West Sussex, although temporary, is unacceptable, and that the Council opposes any future suspension or closure of the service.
2. The Council thanks the Sage House team in Tangmere for their work in plugging the service gap left by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.
3. The Leader of the Council, Cllr Moss, shall write to the MPs for Chichester and Arundel and South Downs constituencies respectively, as well as the Department of Health, urging them to ensure that the funding to the Sussex Dementia Assessment service remains in place and that the future of the service is guaranteed.

¹ [Temporary changes to our services over the winter period :: Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust](#)

² [NHS trust confirms plans to suspend dementia services temporarily in Sussex \(sussexexpress.co.uk\)](#)

³ [Local Charity will step in to fill dementia support gap](#)

⁴ [Dementia is the UK's biggest killer – we need political action to save lives - Alzheimer's Research UK \(alzheimersresearchuk.org\)](#)

⁵ [Young onset dementia: facts and figures - Dementia UK](#)

4. Similarly, that the Council representative to the West Sussex Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee, Cllr Bangert, is requested to lobby that Committee to prioritise the future provision of the Dementia Assessment service.