



**Job Information Pack**

**Dementia Support Worker**

**October 2009**

Dementia Support Worker- Job Information Pack

Dear Applicant

**Dementia Support Worker**

Thank you for your interest in the above position with Alzheimer's Society. Please find enclosed an information pack as requested.

We ask you to fill in your application carefully, giving all relevant information and in particular, setting out the ways in which you meet the competencies outlined in the job description. You should provide clear and concise examples of a time when you have had to use the necessary skills.

The application should be typed or completed in black ink. The panel will be considering the presentation of your application during the selection process.

Your completed application should be returned to us by 5 pm on **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November**. Late applications will not be accepted.

Interviews will be held on 17<sup>th</sup> November.

You are also invited to attend an open evening at the branch on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2009 between 5pm and 7pm. This will give you an opportunity to look around the branch, find out about the services we offer and speak to a dementia support worker to learn more about this role.

Please send your completed application form to:

Alzheimer's Society Coventry Branch  
31 Barras Green  
Coventry  
CV2 4PH

Or e-mail [Coventry@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:Coventry@alzheimers.org.uk)

CV's will not be accepted.

Yours faithfully

Debbie McIlhone  
Dementia Services Manager

## **Alzheimer's Society**

### **Information for Candidates**

#### **Alzheimer's and Dementia**

Alzheimer's Society is concerned with all forms of dementia, of which Alzheimer's is the most common. Structural and chemical changes in the brain are responsible for the devastating effects of dementia which include deterioration of memory, confusion over time and place, changes in personality and behaviour together with the loss of everyday skills such as driving or telling the time and, as the condition progresses, the ability to wash or dress or even recognise friends.

More than 700,000 people in the UK have some form of dementia - one in 20 of those aged 65 or more and one in five of the over 80s. As the population ages we expect this figure to rise and demand for specific services to grow.

#### **Alzheimer's Society**

Alzheimer's Society is the leading national care and research charity for people with all forms of dementia, their families and carers. We offer support, give information and advice, run day care and home care services, campaign for adequate benefits, proper assessment and high quality care and we fund research into the causes and possible treatments for dementia.

The Society delivers its services through a combination of national and local activity and last year provided help to over 100,000 people.

Alzheimer's Society is made up of approximately 240 local branch operations, varying in size from £10k to £600k pa, supported by a central office based in London. We employ approximately 1,800 staff and benefit from the time and commitment of up to 5,000 volunteers covering a range of duties from direct care to finance. The Society has grown to this size in under 30 years, and is still ambitious. The challenge is to build on its successes, to actively pursue its growth and develop services across the country, whilst at the same time improving governance arrangements and the management of risk.

## Job Description

**Job Title:** Dementia Support Worker

**Job Family:** Information and Support

### Main purpose of job:

To provide support to people with dementia and their carers helping to maintain their independence, improving their sense of well-being, and putting them in more control of their lives. To assist people with dementia and their carers to identify their needs and to access services.

### Position in the organisation:

Reports to the *branch line manager*

### Scope of job:

This service involves dedicated members of staff giving support, information and guidance to a person with dementia or their carers and wider family or friends, whether in the client's own home, at branch offices or at other locations, face to face, by phone, letter or email. The service may include signposting and providing referrals to other services.

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### Dimensions and limits of authority:

- Responsible and accountable for the delivery of a high quality support services.
- Responsible for liaising with relevant statutory and voluntary organisations in the area in relation to this service
- Responsible for representing the needs of people with dementia and their carers at local forums / events.

### Duties and key responsibilities:

1. To manage referrals, assisting clients in assessing their information and support needs.
2. To maintain and manage a caseload of clients who have dementia or are affected by dementia from appropriate geographical locations. Information and support may be by phone, email, letter, or face to face, at the client's home or other appropriate location.
3. To provide information regarding services and benefits available and, where appropriate, assist clients in accessing them.
4. When appropriate, to signpost clients to a choice of suitable other sources of help.
5. To offer clients printed information, and send within established timescales.
6. To maintain accurate, up to date client support plans and client contact records.
7. To develop a proactive approach in reaching people with dementia and carers who may not otherwise access our services.

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8. To develop networks with partner organisations who also work in the field of dementia, mental health, disabilities, and benefits and income advice, including Primary and Secondary care, Social Care and Health, and Welfare Benefit agencies, with the aim of empowering individuals to make informed choices.
9. Where necessary to liaise, seek advice and information from other parts of the organisation to ensure information provided is accurate and up to date and based on accumulated knowledge including; Alzheimer's Society fact sheets; Dembase, trusted websites; the Dementia Catalogue and own experience or research.
10. To assist in the identification of other areas of need and service development for people affected by dementia and work with other organisations, statutory, voluntary and independent to identify need and to help maximise the availability of local resources.
11. To assist in raising public awareness about dementia and the way it affects families and individuals, and to participate in local events such as conferences.
12. To seek and record client feedback to understand whether needs are being met, and to plan any necessary adjustments.
13. To have an exit strategy for people with dementia and their carers, signposting them to other, more appropriate services.
14. To work as part of an information and support team, providing cover for colleagues at agreed times or in unforeseen circumstances, as appropriate.

**1. Additional responsibilities:**

1. To adhere to all the Society's service standards, policies and procedures.
2. To comply with the data protection regulations, ensuring that information on clients remains confidential.
3. To be responsible for personal learning and development, and of those managed by this post, where appropriate, and to support the learning and development of others and the whole organisation.
4. To work collaboratively with fundraising and media and campaigns teams, sharing responsibility for the achievement of jointly agreed objectives, as appropriate.
5. To work in a manner that facilitates inclusion, particularly of people with dementia
6. To implement the Society's health and safety policy and procedures, ensuring that all practices and procedures are undertaken in accordance with a healthy and safe working environment and that all staff and volunteers for whom you may be responsible are aware of their responsibilities in respect of their role, monitoring data and recommending action as required.
7. To administrate and organise own work to ensure that it is accurate and meets quality targets, reasonable deadlines and reporting requirements.
8. To follow the Society's management information guidelines and requirements, including ensuring appropriate monthly measures on service usage levels are collected and submitted on the services database or other systems in accordance with deadlines.
9. Where appropriate, to recruit, induct and support volunteers

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10. To undertake any other tasks, duties or projects which may arise from time to time which are commensurate with the general level of this post and as directed by the designated line manager.

This job description is not exhaustive and serves only to highlight the main requirements of the post holder. The line manager may stipulate other reasonable requirements. The job description will be reviewed regularly and may be subject to change.

## Person specification – Dementia Support Worker

All of the following requirements are essential, unless marked with a \* when they are desirable, and will be assessed from a combination of information provided from the application form, extended interview process, panel interview and references:

<b>2. Education and qualifications</b>	<b>Application</b>	<b>Interview</b>
NVQ Level 3 or equivalent	✓	

<b>Skills and experience</b>	<b>Application</b>	<b>Interview</b>
Good organising and time management skills	✓	✓
Good communication skills	✓	✓
An understanding of dementia		✓
An understanding of the needs of people with dementia and their carers *		✓
Experience of working with statutory and voluntary agencies *	✓	✓
Knowledge of relevant legislation including the Health & Safety and the Mental Capacity Act *	✓	
Experience of record keeping and report writing	✓	✓
An understanding of the need for client confidentiality		✓

<b>3. Personal attributes / qualities</b>	<b>Application</b>	<b>Interview</b>
Able to assess and evaluate client need		✓
Able to represent the needs of the organisation and clients externally	✓	✓
Able to travel independently within the service area *	✓	
Empathy		✓
Non judgemental communication		✓
Commitment to and understanding of equal opportunities		✓
Understanding of the inclusion agenda and its relevance within a diverse society		✓

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### **Job Application Guidelines**

Alzheimer's Society aims to be an equal opportunities employer. We aim to treat every applicant fairly. The information you provide in your application form is the only information we will use in deciding whether or not you will be invited for interview, so it is important that you complete it with care. To help you, please follow these guidelines.

1. Please complete all sections of the form.
2. Please complete the application form in black ink, as it will be photocopied. Do not stick or glue paper to the back of the form – it gets caught in the photocopier. Please add a separate piece of paper instead.
3. After reading the person specification and job description, think carefully about your application and consider to what extent you have the skills and experience necessary to meet the requirements of the post.
4. Your last and present post allows you the opportunity to tell us about the work you are doing or have done in the past. Be as brief as you can, and use the personal statement at the back of the form to describe in more depth your skills, knowledge and experience relevant to the job.
5. Under the section 'Education, qualifications and training' you are asked to state your qualifications or name a course that you attended. We do not need a full account of your education since your junior school days. It is sufficient to state that you have a specific number of 'A' levels and GCSEs unless you are asked for a specific qualification on the person specification, such as GCSE English. You should mention qualifications or training relevant to the post you are applying for.
6. The personal statement is an important part of the application form and should be used to tell us how you meet the person specification. Always remember to specify your responsibilities rather than those of your section or department. Remember to explain how your current or previous experiences relate to the job you are applying for.
7. Please ensure that your completed application form is returned by 5 pm on the closing date stated on the advertisement. Do not attach any other documentation apart from the equal opportunity monitoring form. Any attachments, such as CVs, references or photocopies of your qualifications, will be disregarded and will not be seen by the selection panel.
8. In order to make good use of the charity's money, your application will not be acknowledged unless you enclose a stamped addressed postcard or similar, nor will you hear from us unless you are selected to attend for interview.

## **Information for Candidates**

### **Terms and Conditions of Employment**

Outlined below are some of the main terms and conditions of employment relevant to all employees of the Society.

#### **1. Probation**

All posts are subject to a probationary period of 12 weeks unless otherwise stated on the letter of appointment. During this probationary period, either party may give the other one-week's notice in writing to terminate the employment. After successful completion of the probationary period, the notice stated on your contract of employment will apply.

#### **2. Annual Leave**

The holiday year runs from 1 April to 31 March. In each holiday year, in addition to bank and statutory holidays, the holiday entitlement in the first full year will be 25 days, scaled down according to start date. This then increases in line with service as follows: During the first full leave year and up to 2 leave years 25 days, third leave year 26 days, fourth leave year 27 days, fifth leave year 30 days. Holiday will be calculated on a pro-rata basis for part-time workers.

#### **3. Pension Scheme**

The Society currently operates a Group Personal pension scheme. All employees under the age of 75, may join the scheme on completion of the probationary period. Employees may contribute a percentage of their salary to the scheme, and the Society will double the employee's contribution up to 8% of the employees' gross salary. This will mean that a 1% employee contribution will attain a 2% contribution from the Society and a 4% contribution will attain the maximum 8% from the Society. Alzheimer's Society will not pay into a personal pension scheme. .

#### **4. Salary Payment**

All new employees are placed on a grade based on the Society's salary scheme, which is normally reviewed in April of each year.

The commencing salary is as stated in the letter of appointment. Salaries are paid in arrears on the 25th of each calendar month, by direct credit transfer into a bank or building society account. (If the 25th falls at a weekend, payment is made on the working day immediately prior to the 25<sup>th</sup>)

#### **5. Sick Leave**

The Society operates an occupational sick pay scheme that is based on length of service with the Society.

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**6. Retirement Age**

The Society's normal retirement age is 65. However, staff may be employed who are over the age of 65.

Any applicant aged 65 and over who is successful in obtaining a position with the Society should be aware that as a result of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 they will now have the statutory right to claim unfair dismissal. They will now also be entitled to a statutory redundancy payment if they are made redundant. In addition, they also have the right to claim statutory sick pay for up to 28 weeks if they are absent to work due to sickness.

**7. No Smoking**

The Society operates a no smoking policy.

**8. CRB**

This post is subject to a satisfactory disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau. Further information on the Society's CRB policy can be found on [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk) and type "CRB" in the search box

### **A day in the life of a Dementia Support Worker**

This morning, I have come into the office to two messages. One is from Coventry PCT responding to an enquiry I have made regarding a carers' G.P. service. The other is from a Community Psychiatric Nurse wanting to find out about services for one of her clients. I contact both callers and we exchange information. The CPN is particularly pleased to learn about our leisure and well-being service for her client. I also tell her about statutory services available from social services that may be beneficial.

I receive a faxed referral from the Community Mental Health Team requesting support for a person with dementia and her carer. I speak to the carer who explains that his wife is in advanced stages of dementia and he would like me to visit to talk about some of his difficulties. We arrange an appointment for the following week.

During the course of the morning, I receive general enquiries from carers about a range of difficulties they are having. One was about a carer getting access to his mother's savings to buy clothes and underwear. I explain about Power of Attorney and send the relevant fact sheets. Another call was regarding the difficulty a carer was having getting her father to agree to see a doctor about his swollen feet.

At 3.45 p.m., some of our carers arrive for carer training. This afternoon, our daycare manager is giving a talk on activities and meaningful occupation. It is the fourth of our six week course. One of the carers asks to speak to me as he is struggling with caring for his wife. She often asks him what she should do next and always wants to be on the go. He finds this very tiring. We talk about how this afternoon's subject may help him. I explain her need to be active even though she often needs supervision and suggest that she may find attending a daycare centre to be stimulating whilst giving him some respite. I offer to fax a referral to social services to ask them to visit and talk about what help they can provide in this area. He explains that his wife's confusion and agitation seem to be particularly bad this week. He had noticed that his wife had a sore eye and he had taken her to the G.P., who had also found that she had a urinary tract infection. I explain that an infection will increase her symptoms of dementia which should settle down once the infection has been treated. He thanked me for my help and said that he would not have known what to do or where to go without help from the Alzheimer's Society. He particularly enjoys coming to the Alzheimer café and monthly Carers' Support Group which I run, where he meets other carers who can offer emotional support to one another.

More carers arrive for training and I make them comfortable with cups of tea until the session starts. I give out fact sheets about carers' assessment as there has been an enquiry following last week's training. One of the carers tells me that her mother has been particularly confused following a weekend away. We talk about her difficulty with strange environments such as her not knowing the location of the bathroom, leading to toileting problems. She says her father has to dress his wife, give her medication and she is no longer able to be left alone as she becomes anxious. I asked if her mum is receiving attendance allowance and give her the telephone number for new claims and also the benefits advice line as they can help to complete the application form.

I receive a telephone call from a lady who has recently been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. During our conversation, she talks about how she would like to meet other people with dementia. I tell her about our monthly Quest group for people with dementia, where she can talk about her feelings, challenges, and celebrate her achievements. I also suggest she might like to see one of our Dementia Advisers who are able to tell her of other services in the city that she might find of interest, discuss her diagnosis and make plans for the future. She agrees to me making the referral on her behalf.

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I finish the day by preparing for tomorrow's Shipmates group, when I will take the opportunity of handing out leaflets from Coventry University. They are undertaking a survey of residents over 55 years of age seeking opinions on a range of issues. The group offers a chance for people with dementia and their carers to gather in a social setting to talk about their concerns, enjoy their time together and discuss the future. They often finish the meeting by having lunch with the new friends they have made.