



Alzheimer's Society services evaluation 2019

July 2020

Spotlight on the Carer
Information and
Support Programme



Spotlight on the Carer Information and Support Programme (CrISP)

'I learned bundles of excellently clear information, all about stuff I had previously put off due to being scared of what I would hear. Now I feel so much more prepared and stronger in myself.'

Person with dementia

The Carer Information and Support Programme (CrISP) provides evidence-based information to small groups of up to 12 carers (family, neighbours or friends of a person with dementia).

The programme consists of two separate parts. CrISP 1 is for carers of people with a recent diagnosis of dementia, and covers:

- understanding dementia
- providing support and care
- legal and money matters
- how to cope day-to-day.

CrISP 2 is for carers of people who have been living with dementia for some time, and covers:

- understanding how dementia progresses
- living with change
- living well.

In 2019, evaluation data was collected from 444 carers from 92 CrISP groups.

Did people who attended CrISP feel supported by staff and volunteers?

All the carers (100%) agreed that they felt supported by CrISP staff and volunteers. Carers praised the staff and volunteers for their knowledge and expertise, their ability to tailor knowledge to individual circumstances and the warm and supportive environment they created.

'They always take time to listen. They are empathetic, knowledgeable and respectful. I feel like we've got a voice for us. They're non-judgemental and supportive.'

Carer

Did people who attended CrISP feel supported by their peers?

Almost all the carers (99%) agreed that they received peer support. They told us that each programme created a safe listening environment free from stigma and judgement, with confidentiality agreements in place. They felt they could share things with the group that they couldn't say at home. They were also able to learn from one another.

'I felt so comfortable sharing personal experience. I felt by talking to knowledgeable people I often found answers.'

Carer



Did people who attended CrISP feel they were provided with useful information?

Most of the carers (99%) agreed that they received useful information through the service. Many told us that the information – particularly financial and legal information and practical tips – inspired them to take practical action. They also valued the information because it increased their understanding and helped them feel more able to cope with their caring situation.

‘Each workshop taught me something new, expanded on experiences and gave me direction to future assistance available.’

Carer

‘I now understand that my husband isn’t just being difficult. I can understand more of what he is experiencing. It has helped a lot.’

Carer

Did people who attended CrISP feel it made their life better in any way?

The majority of carers who attended CrISP (98%) felt that it made their life better in some way. They felt less alone because they met other people going through similar experiences. They were also able to manage their emotional reactions and their perspectives on what was happening.

‘It improved my tolerance. I am calmer and more relaxed as well as more confident as a carer.’

Carer

‘I feel less frustration when supporting my dad and therefore less stressed about everyday tasks.’

Carer

However, a small number of carers (2%) felt that although their understanding had increased, their life wasn’t necessarily better. For some, this was because they had not yet put actions into place. For others, it was because they were more aware of the realities of the progression of dementia.

Did people who attended CrISP feel they were able to plan for now and for the future?

Most of the carers (97%) agreed they were more able to plan with and for the person they cared for, both now and in the future, as a result of attending CrISP. Some carers acknowledged that planning for the future was challenging because dementia can be unpredictable and affects everyone in different ways. However, those who felt more able to plan told us that CrISP increased their knowledge and confidence, which meant they were able to make better decisions.

‘I now know what forms to fill out, what is actually ‘out there’ and where you go for help. It will be easier to make informed decisions.’

Carer

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