

Becoming a dementia friendly pharmacy



Case Study: Association of Danish Pharmacies

Why should pharmacies consider dementia?

- Dementia affects 50 million people worldwide, with a new case diagnosed **every three seconds**.
- Almost **80%** of people worldwide **are concerned about developing dementia** at some point.
- **1 in 4** people think that there is nothing they can do to prevent dementia.
- Dementia is the **5th leading cause** of death in the world.
- Pharmacy teams are ideally positioned to help patients and their carers to make positive choices about their health, optimise their use of medicines and signpost to other forms of support.
- Pharmacies are uniquely placed as potential places for better information and signposting for people with dementia or worried about their memory.
- Pharmacies are a source of medical support and information within local communities. They are also generally widely used by people with dementia.
- It is important that all staff in a pharmacy benefit from having dementia awareness and not just those on the pharmacy counter. However, many pharmacists will have had no formal dementia awareness or training.
- Negative customer experiences are lost opportunities for customer loyalty and business growth.
- Pharmacies may provide an excellent opportunity for signposting by having local service leaflets at the pharmacy counter from the Alzheimer's association.

Case study: What are pharmacies in Denmark doing to become more dementia-friendly?

The Association of Danish Pharmacies is the employer and professional organisation of pharmacies in Denmark. The 202 members of the association are all proprietor pharmacists in Denmark. The association's Executive Board has the overall responsibility for the association's activities and political work.

Almost 90,000 people are living with dementia in Denmark. More knowledge about dementia among pharmacy staff will benefit people with dementia with the challenges they face, one of which, is collecting medicine.

The Association of Danish Pharmacies, with the support of the **Danish Alzheimer's Association**, want to raise awareness about dementia among all staff members to provide better support and customer experience to people living with or affected by dementia.

'We are delighted that the pharmacies are focusing on how to help customers with or affected by dementia. This will hopefully lead to a better and safer environment for people with dementia and their families when visiting the pharmacy. The pharmacies are in contact with a lot of different customers, and it means that we can make a significant difference in local communities across the country.'

Birthe Søndergaard, Director of Health at The Association of Danish Pharmacies

What does becoming a dementia-friendly pharmacy business involve?



People

Training and awareness so staff can support customers and employees who are affected by dementia



Process

Customer and client support through clear information provision and signposting



Place

Review of pharmacy branch to be more dementia friendly and linking in with community engagement

The partnership and the Dementia Friends campaign in Denmark



Dementia Friends is the biggest social action initiative on dementia. There are more than 65 Dementia Friends programmes around the world, led by Alzheimer's associations and other organisations. Every Dementia Friends programme is different, tailored depending on the country, and sometimes named differently to suit the cultural context. Working together under the Global Dementia Friends Network, these programmes are transforming the way the world thinks, acts and talks about dementia.

In Denmark the Danish Alzheimer's Association is raising awareness of dementia and supporting more inclusive communities of people living with dementia via the Demensven programme and to date have created over 100,000 Dementia Friends.

- In 2017 dementia was selected as a health information campaign to be run throughout all the pharmacies in Denmark.
- 154 pharmacies ran Dementia Friends Information Sessions and started working towards becoming dementia friendly.
- The campaign ran again in September 2018 with a focus of engaging the remaining pharmacies. In total 174 pharmacies in Denmark participated.
- Pharmacies' staff attended a presentation about dementia made in collaboration with The Association of Danish Pharmacies and the Danish Alzheimer's Association with a focus on how to engage with people with dementia for example: being patient, asking simple questions and making it clear that they are there to help.
- After the presentation and additional training all employees received a 'Demensven' pin badge and a mini guide with key messages and advice on how to support people with dementia.
- A campaign package was distributed to all pharmacies with posters, flyers, materials (pin, mini guide and sticker) to help with continued awareness about dementia in pharmacies.
- Pharmacies also received a sticker to place in the shop window to raise awareness of the dementia friendly initiative and 2 short videos were made for social media.
- All pharmacies participating were encouraged to host public meetings at the pharmacy with representation from the Danish Alzheimer's Association's local groups, dementia trained staff from the local municipality, people with dementia and their care supporters. The meetings were used to inform about medicine and health services and where to find local help and support.



'When you are living with dementia it can be a challenge to visit the pharmacy. We are therefore very happy about the initiative. It is great see that so many pharmacies have become dementia friendly. It signals openness and understanding of dementia and helps people with dementia in their daily life.'

Katrine van den Bos, Project Manager for the Demensven campaign

Results

- 80% of all pharmacies in Denmark are now working to become more dementia friendly
- Pharmacy staff have increased their knowledge about dementia
- Pharmacists feel more confident interacting with people with dementia and feel more ready to help than before.
- The presentation and skills gained have helped pharmacist give a better service to customers with dementia.
- The focus on dementia has opened up more conversations about the condition internally and many staff members have shared stories about how they are personally affected by dementia.
- There is less stigma and fear when talking about dementia.
- **Huskeugen** ('remember me week' in September) has become an ongoing event for the Association of Danish Pharmacies. Pharmacies are encouraged to take part in various events including a refresher Dementia Friends session or to place a collection tin at the cash register in support of the Danish Alzheimer's association.
- It makes a great difference for people living with dementia and their families that there is a focus on the condition and that the staff has knowledge about dementia.

'The most important task for the pharmacy is to have an overview of the condition and to communicate our knowledge to our customers. This is how it should be with our customers with dementia: we must see them. And we must have focus on the best possible communication while taking their challenges into account. The more we know about their condition, the better we can service them.'

Charlotte Brun, pharmacist at Sct. Hans Apotek, Odense



For more information:

About the partnership (in Danish)

About the Association of Danish Pharmacies (in Danish)

For more information about the Dementia Friends programme in Denmark:
www.demensven.dk

Additional considerations and resources for pharmacies

- Make sure everyone is aware of safeguarding and fraud prevention measures.
- Making sure everyone is aware of **Power of Attorney** (both sides financial and health)
- Making sure employees are aware of the challenges people with dementia might have with handling money, chip and pin, difficulty with automated call menus or forgetting information like addresses or birthdays
- For public facing office or premise look through the **UK's Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee dementia-friendly environment checklist** to see what changes pharmacies could make. This could be more seating, clearer signage to support people to use your organisation and action plan.
- Download **The Association of Convenience Stores guideline for Supporting Vulnerable Customers** for inspiration about design considerations / store layout

Visit us

alzheimers.org.uk/international

alzheimers.org.uk/dementiafriendlycommunities