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# The impact of Promoting Excellence in social service settings

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Dementia learning journeys

[www.sssc.uk.com/promotingexcellence](http://www.sssc.uk.com/promotingexcellence)

 Scottish Social  
Services Council

# Promoting Excellence

In 2011 the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and NHS Education for Scotland published **Promoting Excellence: a framework for all health and social service staff working with people with dementia, their families and carers.**

People with dementia will often have contact with care and support services, therefore education and lifelong learning across the social service workforce is essential.

The four practice levels within the framework represent the type of knowledge and skills that workers should have according to their role and practice setting. The minimum required practice level does not relate to a worker's seniority within their profession or organisation. Instead it relates to the contact that a worker has with people with dementia, families and carers, and their particular responsibilities in care, treatment and support.

			
<b>Informed</b>	<b>Skilled</b>	<b>Enhanced</b>	<b>Expertise</b>
The dementia informed practice level outlines the baseline knowledge and skills required by everyone working in health and social service settings, including in a person's own home.	The dementia skilled practice level outlines the knowledge and skills required by all workers that have direct and/or substantial contact with people with dementia and their families and carers.	The enhanced dementia practice level outlines the knowledge and skills required by workers that have more regular and intense contact with people with dementia, provide specific interventions or manage services.	The expertise in dementia practice level outlines the knowledge and skills required for workers who by virtue of their role and practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with dementia.
			

You can access free Promoting Excellence learning resources online. Guidance resources are also available to help you explore the relationship between Promoting Excellence, reflective practice and work based learning and qualifications. Visit [www.sssc.uk.com/promotingexcellence](http://www.sssc.uk.com/promotingexcellence).

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# Foreword



I'm really pleased to share these social care dementia learning journeys with you and hope you will find them a valuable source of support in your own setting.

As you will see, each journey is underpinned by the Promoting Excellence framework which the SSSC produced in partnership with NHS Education for Scotland in 2011. This framework gives us all a level of knowledge and skill to aspire to, while reminding us that our learning in this important subject can never really be complete. There will always be more that people living with dementia can teach us about their experiences and this should continue to shape the support we provide.

While we must always be open and willing to learn more, we should also remember to recognise and share the progress we make.

This publication was made possible with support from several organisations. Thanks are especially owed to the authors of the six approaches, many of whom engaged with Promoting Excellence in their roles as Dementia Ambassadors or Dementia Champions. Not only did they recognise the need to make improvements they also shared their ideas and experiences for the benefit of others across the sector that may still need to do the same. We need more leadership like this if we are going to create the trusted, skilled and confident workforce we need for the future.

**Anna Fowlie**  
**Chief Executive, SSSC**

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## Scottish Care Dumfries and Galloway: Community Dementia Partners

Carylann Williamson and Jenny Henderson, Development Managers



**"EXACTLY WHAT I NEEDED TO HELP ME BE A MORE EFFECTIVE AND CONFIDENT CARER FOR MY HUSBAND."**

Family carer

The Community Dementia Partners programme gives family carers, friends and professional carers the opportunity to think about how a person with dementia may feel, their lived experience and how they can improve the support they provide. Since May 2015 approximately 170 people have completed our programme.

### **Why we created Community Dementia Partners**

Dumfries and Galloway, like many areas in Scotland, has a growing population of people living with dementia. As providers and social care workers we all want to provide the best quality support however the sector struggles with issues, including poor recruitment and retention. We are all under increasing pressure. We need to meet the complex needs of people we support and at the same time we have the huge task of upskilling a large and transient workforce. Dementia education is vital if we are to fully embed the national Standards of Care for People with Dementia released in 2011.

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We created Community Dementia Partners to achieve consistency across the region. We wanted training that was realistic not only for us to deliver but that was also achievable for the local community-based workforce. The creation of dementia friendly communities was also a strong ambition.

### What did we do?

We looked at Promoting Excellence and gave serious consideration to the needs of the workforce. We wanted everyone to have the same starting point and decided a programme pitched between the **informed** and **skilled** practice levels would be best. This would give a good foundation for learning and encourage learners to recognise the degree of skill needed in their important roles.

Our experience is that many care workers do not complete lengthy learning programmes for a number of reasons. So we designed something shorter and kept it really engaging. Another reason for pitching the programme between the two levels was that we felt the learning gap between them was too big for some learners and we wanted to use a balanced, empowering approach that would encourage continued learning into the future.

### About our education programme

**Community Dementia Partners** is a two day programme aimed at the third and independent care sector (over 75% of the community care workforce). This includes workers in care at home services, care homes and other agencies. Importantly, we also wanted to include unpaid family carers. As the dementia standards state: 'I have the right to have carers who are well supported and educated about dementia'.

We adopted a blended learning approach to encourage everyone to come together to talk, learn, share experiences and in particular listen to one another. Here are some key points:

- the programme is engaging, experiential and interactive
  - we use very little PowerPoint and opt instead for open discussion, video clips and simulated experiences to help participants understand the experience of living with dementia better
  - we provide a workbook which contains the theoretical learning (knowledge and understanding) required
  - the focus is not on written material but on shared learning
  - the maximum group size is 14, but 8-10 is ideal
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- throughout the programme, we refer to paid staff as professional carers; we felt it was important that staff regard themselves as having a professional role and feel recognised for the good work they already do.

To help everyone participate the two sessions are usually three weeks apart. This means:

- services have time to plan and release staff
- participants have time to consolidate theory and practice
- family carers are better supported, as they would often have difficulty in attending two consecutive days.

### **Will it make a difference?**

It's paramount to us that this programme impacts on people who live with dementia, which is why we designed it to be experiential and focused on quality of life. We wanted to make sure that new learning was transferred into practice so we asked each participant to provide one reflective account to complete the programme. This needed to be about a real piece of support, which explained why a learner acted in a certain way and what the impacts of their actions were on the person with dementia. We hope that by doing this we are encouraging reflective, enquiring practice and preparing participants for the future.

### **Here is some of the feedback we've had.**

Professional carer:

“absolutely buzzing it's just brilliant it really makes you think!”

Family carer:

“The course enabled a committed (and yet, I suspect, greatly undervalued) group of professional carers to build their understanding.”

Professional carer:

“Brilliant! Has opened my mind to new things!”

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# CrossReach: Embedding knowledge into practice

Pamela Mackay, with Linda Kelly, Dementia Development Officers

CrossReach has been committed to training all staff in dementia care since the early 1980s. Recent developments in Scotland have helped us enhance our learning and Promoting Excellence has really made a difference.

## Starting out with Promoting Excellence

I was asked to become CrossReach's first Dementia Development Officer in 2005, so I could focus on improving outcomes for people living with dementia. Then, following the publication of the dementia strategies and the Promoting Excellence framework, CrossReach invested further with a second Dementia Development Officer, Linda Kelly, in 2014.

When Promoting Excellence was introduced in 2011 it gave a very clear aspiration of what Scotland as a whole wanted to achieve. It had clear statements of the knowledge staff should have, the skills they should be able to evidence and importantly linked to quality of life outcomes for people with dementia.

I began by cross referencing Promoting Excellence with all the dementia training we already provided. Any gaps identified were covered using a variety of tools such as established work by the Mental Welfare Commission, The Charter of Rights for People with Dementia and their Carers and also the personal experiences of those living with dementia and their loved ones. I did this cross referencing again in 2012 following the publication of the Dementia Skilled – Improving Practice learning resource.

## Promoting Excellence is a journey for everyone

The training that CrossReach provides is for all staff. Ancillary staff must complete **informed** level but they are encouraged to progress along with care staff to complete the **skilled** and **enhanced** training if they wish. From our experiences, Linda and I would advocate that ancillary staff are not only a valuable resource in the diverse care and support of those living with dementia but also have a very clear and practical understanding of different strategies that can be used. Through the dementia training, many ancillary staff have decided that they do have the values and talents needed to consider care as a career path.

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One example is Rebekah Perrit (pictured), who started in Adams House as a Housekeeping Assistant. She attended **informed** level training and was keen to progress. She continued on her Promoting Excellence journey and is now a care worker and a duty senior.

Training has also been offered to relatives of people living with dementia however this remains an area that we wish to develop.

**“PROMOTING EXCELLENCE HAS HELPED ME UNDERSTAND MY PRACTICE AND ENTHUSED ME TO WANT TO DO MORE AND LEARN MORE.”**

Rebekah Perrit

### **Our Dementia Ambassadors**

The main aim for any dementia training is a sustainable positive impact on the personal outcomes and support that each person experiences. I decided that a role such as Dementia Ambassador would be essential if we were to achieve this. So in early 2013 I had a discussion with the SSSC's Promoting Excellence Team about Dementia Ambassadors and realised they would support me to introduce them across all CrossReach services. My line manager Allan Logan was extremely positive about this and there is now a support package in place for our Dementia Ambassadors, including:

- their own email to directly link with Linda, myself and the SSSC Promoting Excellence Team
- CrossReach study days and regional meetings
- an annual conference.

Linda has done extensive work on developing online communities including Yammer so staff can share best practice in a secure space and ask for advice and support from peers. We also use Yammer to post up-to-date articles and documents to help staff stay engaged with best practice. This has been successful so far.



## Making a difference

This work has improved personal outcomes for people at all stages of dementia, including the advanced stages. We introduced 'Learning into Practice' documents for all staff undertaking training and it shows that there have been fundamental changes in staff opinions. In particular it's clear that staff do not focus on deficits but instead look at people's abilities and find ways to reduce the impact of dementia and ensure people are enabled to reach their personal outcomes.

One such example of 'Learning into Practice' and outcomes focused support was the development of a refurbished care home in Banchory called Bellfield.

When the plans were developed they didn't include an outside garden area. The Manager, Janis Grub, spoke with developers about the addition of gardens that residents could access. She used her knowledge from Promoting Excellence and in particular explained the quality of life outcomes statement 'People with dementia maintain their best level of physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing'. I then visited the service and worked with the team to see what might work well in terms of outdoor space and signage so that the environment was enabling and welcoming for everyone.



Bellfield's Garden

**“THE GARDEN HAS MADE A BIG DIFFERENCE. RESIDENTS ARE ABLE TO GO OUT AND HELP WITH THE PLANTS AND GET FRESH AIR WHENEVER THEY WANT. MRS S SAID SHE ‘LOVES GETTING OUT IN THE FRESH AIR’. BEING ABLE TO GO FOR A WALK WAS ALWAYS HER NORMAL ROUTINE.”**

Janis Grub

It's important we help people to achieve the things in life that are most important to them and engaging with Promoting Excellence helps us to do this.

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# Bupa care homes Scotland: Promoting Excellence in dementia care learning project

Thomas Bohlke, Bupa Admiral Nurse

Bupa Admiral Nurses are specialist dementia nurses, accredited by Dementia UK

## Introduction

I first got involved with Promoting Excellence two years ago as part of my task to support Bupa's Scottish care homes to become fully aligned to Scotland's dementia strategies and the Promoting Excellence framework. Since then I have been part of an SSSC and Scottish Care dementia working group for the independent and third sector social care providers.

Bupa is an engaged and enthusiastic advocate for the rights of people living with dementia, including the right to the best possible care and



**“THE FACT THAT WE REGULARLY OBSERVE OUR PRACTICE TO HELP EVALUATE OUR LEARNING HELPS EVERYBODY SEE THE IMPACT IT HAS ON PEOPLE’S LIVES AND THIS MOTIVATES EVERYONE TO KEEP GOING.”**

Thomas Bohlke and Gareth Hammond, Bupa Admiral Nurses

treatment throughout the world (see Alzheimer International report 2015). It was natural for us to fully support the civic rights-based approach of the Standards of Care for Dementia in Scotland and in particular 'Your right to have carers who are well supported and educated about dementia.'

### **Our approach to Promoting Excellence**

There are 29 Bupa care homes across Scotland with over 3000 employees. We already had an excellent UK training programme, Person First, and a network of home based coaches. However, we realised that Scotland's National Dementia Strategy, the Standards of Care for Dementia in Scotland and in particular the Promoting Excellence knowledge and skills framework meant that our Scottish workforce had particular aspirations to meet. These materials provided a fantastic opportunity for our staff to expand their knowledge and skills in dementia care in keeping with our Person First philosophy. Our aim is to support staff to make maximum use of all dementia learning, to sustain this effort long-term and to ensure that this learning is applied to practice in a measurable, evidence-based way.

In cooperation with and supported by the SSSC's Promoting Excellence Team and Scottish Care we invested heavily in producing learning resources for all employees. Everyone received their own professionally printed copy of the Dementia Skilled - Improving Practice resource.

### **Bupa's Dementia Ambassadors**

An early decision was to create a network of Dementia Ambassadors and we now have more than 100. Bupa takes the lead on their support and they maintain links with the SSSC for new information and invitations to a variety of professional development events. With Bradford University we also created a three-day course for those Dementia Ambassadors who support our staff with their learning. The course contains facilitator training and an introduction to measuring the application of learning through regular, structured practice observations.

**"OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS OUR DEMENTIA AMBASSADORS HAVE SUPPORTED OVER 90% OF THEIR COLLEAGUES TO COMPLETE THE INFORMED ABOUT DEMENTIA DVD."**

Over the past 12 months our Dementia Ambassadors have supported over 90% of their colleagues to complete the Informed about Dementia DVD. Also, over 40% have completed the Dementia Skilled – Improving Practice resource (including our area management and learning and development teams). Our shared target is to support 80% of our applicable workforce to complete the **skilled** level of Promoting Excellence by the end of 2015 and to achieve 100% next year. Applicable for us means virtually everybody working in our homes.

All three Scottish area teams have established regular support forums for their Dementia Ambassadors. These are organised and led by nominated and enthusiastic managers and are a source of advice and support. We have also set up a Dementia Ambassador forum on our intranet.

### **Making a difference**

Our Promoting Excellence project has already had some remarkable achievements and is increasingly having a real impact on the quality and effectiveness of the care we provide to people living with dementia.

We have received a lot of positive feedback from our staff. They tell us they are enjoying their learning and appreciate that materials are accessible and practice focused. We have seen great examples of staff creating posters, leaflets and memory boxes as part of their learning.

The fact that we regularly observe our practice to help evaluate our learning helps everybody see the impact it has on people's lives and this motivates everyone to keep going. We can see improving QIS (Quality of Interaction Schedule) observations, better quality of mealtimes and a reduction in the use of psychoactive medication.

### **Our future with Promoting Excellence**

Our senior management and area management team remain fully committed to Promoting Excellence and the support and significant resources it requires. Myself and fellow Admiral Nurse Gareth Hammond are also committed to supporting the homes with training implementation and will begin to deliver off-site courses at the **enhanced** level.

For ambitious staff members, our Bupa Academy in partnership with Bradford University enables support and funding for under and postgraduate certificates, diplomas and degrees in dementia studies at the **expertise** level.

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From the very beginning we were very inspired and enthused by the fact that the Promoting Excellence framework is designed to be accessible to everyone in Scotland. Staff members are excited that they are not learning in isolation but that many organisations in Scotland are doing the same. Many have found it particularly inspirational that their own learning is part of the Scottish dementia strategy's aims and that this will all go towards making Scottish communities a better place to live for people with dementia.

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# Balhouses Care Group: The impact of Promoting Excellence training on staff attitudes



**“THE VARIETY OF ROLES AND EXPERIENCE LED TO DYNAMIC DISCUSSIONS WHERE GOOD PRACTICE WAS SHARED, NEW IDEAS EXPLORED AND THERE WAS RECOGNITION OF EACH TEAM MEMBER’S ROLE IN CREATING A CULTURE OF VALUE.”**

Balhouses Care Group set about developing a learning and development pathway based on the **skilled** level of the Promoting Excellence framework in May 2014. This pathway was for employees in their 23 care homes across the north east of Scotland. Working from the learning outcomes identified in the Dementia Skilled - Improving Practice resource, a blended learning approach was developed. Staff took part in face to face training in Dementia Awareness, Value Based Care and Understanding and Responding to Stress and Distress. They were then asked to complete a self-directed learning booklet called Promoting Health and Wellbeing in People Living with Dementia.

## Our approach and evaluation

In each training session there was a mix of staff roles, experience and knowledge levels. Some staff who took part were new to care, while others including social care workers and nurses had over 30 years' experience. The variety of roles and experience led to dynamic discussions where good practice was shared, new ideas explored and there was recognition of each team member's role in creating a culture of value. As part of the course evaluation all participants were asked what they would tell co-workers the benefit of attending would be. There were four main themes identified in the answers:

- it allows you to understand and support residents with dementia
- it develops your knowledge of dementia, providing up to date relevant information
- it was enjoyable and interesting
- it allows you to reflect on the work you do and to see past the dementia to the people you are supporting.

Before the start of this programme, a plan for the evaluation of the **skilled** level was developed. As part of this evaluation an attitude questionnaire was completed by 529 Balhousie Care participants. They completed the questionnaire before the training and then again at the end. Small samples of participants were also provided with a training update six to 12 months after their initial training and at this stage completed the attitude measurement questionnaire a third time. The questionnaire, in addition to evaluating the course, had questions that were designed to explore participant confidence levels around:

- supporting people living with dementia
- perception of personal leadership
- the importance of their role
- their personal job satisfaction
- how they perceived the social profile of caring.

As an evaluation measure we were looking to see if the Promoting Excellence based training positively impacted on staff attitudes and whether any positive changes noted in attitude were sustained over time.

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## What we found

The results of the questionnaires before and after the training were compared for each participant. Results showed there were significant positive changes in staff attitudes in all areas. Furthermore, the smaller sample at the one year review indicated that those changes in attitude were sustained over time in several areas. The percentage of staff that strongly agreed or agreed with the following statements all increased after training.

- I feel confident in my role supporting people with dementia:  
before **87.2%** / after **94.3%** / one year on **100%**
- Other people look to me as a role-model in how to work with people with dementia:  
before **37.9%** / after **52.1%** / one year on **58.2%**
- Working with people with dementia is a high status job:  
before **78.9%** / after **86.7%** / one year on **86.1%**
- I feel proud of the work I do with people with dementia:  
before **91.7%** / after **95.9%** / one year on **100%**

## Looking to the future

The training continues to be offered to new starters and following the success of the **skilled** level training, dementia leadership courses are now being offered at the **enhanced** level of the Promoting Excellence framework for leaders within the homes.

Balhouses Care has supported staff with a passion for dementia care to become Dementia Ambassadors. This means they are able to access learning opportunities such as workshops and masterclasses. They can disseminate this learning to colleagues and indeed they are encouraged to become learning partners in the care homes.

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## Four Seasons Health Care and Promoting Excellence

Tracey Rhodes, Dementia Care Advisor



I first became involved with the Promoting Excellence framework in 2013, when I was appointed Training Coordinator for Scotland for Four Seasons Health Care. I was responsible for supporting and training colleagues to become more aware of residents' needs and to identify different methods to increase their quality of life on their journey with dementia.

I am passionate about supporting colleagues in their further education and about improving the quality of our residents' lives.

The Promoting Excellence framework complements our internal company training and provides integrated elements, which allow colleagues to take ownership and develop their own knowledge and education, whilst working to achieve their SVQs or Professional Development Awards. To implement Promoting Excellence we decided to use the Informed about Dementia DVD and the Dementia Skilled - Improving Practice resource.

**"I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT SUPPORTING COLLEAGUES IN THEIR FURTHER EDUCATION AND ABOUT IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF OUR RESIDENTS' LIVES."**

Tracey Rhodes

This also supports our PEARL strategy (Positively Enriching And enhancing Residents Lives) which is unique to Four Seasons and supports residents in all areas whilst on their journey. PEARL has been integrated into 18 homes in Scotland.

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## Four Seasons Dementia Ambassadors

We decided to nominate Dementia Ambassadors in every service to support the dissemination of learning to others. They would have a link to the SSSC to receive new information and would be supported to pursue continuous professional development.

The things I looked for when identifying Dementia Ambassadors were:

- dedication and enthusiasm
- a desire to make a difference for our residents
- experience in supporting people with dementia.

Additionally, I looked at the size of the home and the number of staff working there. I also wanted to take into account the different needs of the staff and make sure there was enough support within the home from the Dementia Ambassadors.

Looking to the future, I aim to not only increase staff awareness and knowledge as to the needs of our residents within Four Seasons Care Homes but also enhancing the support that our residents and relatives receive; which in turn will improve the quality of the residents' lives whilst on their dementia journey.



### Making a difference

Lorraine Dray, Manager, Woodside Care Home, Aberdeen

We have introduced some excellent practices that make a difference for our residents and help make colleagues aware that it is everyone's responsibility to provide good person-centred and individualised care.

**“WE ENCOURAGE COLLEAGUES TO START THE DAY BY ASKING THEMSELVES: ‘HOW CAN I MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR OUR RESIDENTS TODAY?’”**

Lorraine Dray

We encourage colleagues to start the day by asking themselves: ‘How can I make a difference for our residents today?’

One example, implemented after working closely with relatives and the wellbeing team in Aberdeen, was the introduction of therapy dolls which has had a positive impact on residents who showed signs of distress and had difficulties in expressing their thoughts, feelings and worries. The therapy dolls enabled residents to express themselves in a safe and understanding environment, which subsequently reduced some of their anxieties during the day. We also saw a significant reduction in distressed reactions; which in turn has had a positive impact on the quality and enrichment of our residents' lives; as well as increasing our colleagues' awareness of the different methods to support residents who struggle to express their emotions.

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# Alzheimer Scotland - Action on Dementia: Our approach to Promoting Excellence

Jan Beattie, Deputy Director of Workforce Development

Alzheimer Scotland is at the forefront of support for people with dementia and their carers. We campaign for the rights of people with dementia and their families and provide an extensive range of innovative and personalised support services.



**“WE CAMPAIGN FOR THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR FAMILIES AND PROVIDE AN EXTENSIVE RANGE OF INNOVATIVE AND PERSONALISED SUPPORT SERVICES.”**

Two priorities drive all our work:

- to be the foremost provider of support services and information for people with dementia, their families and friends throughout Scotland
- to be the leading force for change at all levels of society, protecting and promoting the rights of people with dementia, their families and friends.

More than 1000 staff and 700 volunteers are engaged across Scotland to deliver our priorities.

## **Our approach to Promoting Excellence**

One of the main ways we maintain our knowledge and expertise as dementia specialists is through Promoting Excellence.

All Alzheimer Scotland staff engage in our Promoting Excellence modular programme that is role specific and fits with their broader learning journey which is hosted on LAUNCH, our digital quality and workforce development framework.

All staff are required to complete a pre-induction programme at **informed** level; volunteers, corporate and administrative staff then engage in structured learning that takes them to **skilled** level and all our care staff and managers, including post-diagnostic link workers and dementia advisers who work in and with communities, engage in one of two programmes, dependent on role, that are benchmarked at **skilled** or **enhanced** level.

The **skilled** level learning programme is nine days; the **enhanced** level is six days.

In recognition of policy changes since the Promoting Excellence learning programmes were developed, we regularly review all content and make changes that reinforce our human rights approach and ensure we stay at the forefront of dementia knowledge and practice.

## **Making a difference**

Within Alzheimer Scotland, Promoting Excellence is part of our quality assurance framework. Evidence of learning is expected and monitored in our practice, is part of staff supervision and appraisal, quality audits and customer satisfaction and feedback tools we use to plan continuous improvement.

Our registered services regularly draw on the skill development and quality improvement delivered by Promoting Excellence in their self-assessments that are part of the Care Inspectorate regulatory framework. Inspectors regularly have conversations with our service managers about the difference Promoting Excellence is making; in turn, this informs and shapes our review of both the **skilled** and **enhanced** programmes.

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Alzheimer Scotland has been approached by a number of social care organisations to replicate our programmes in their setting.

Our biggest success with Promoting Excellence is that staff throughout the organisation recognise its value and reflect their learning in practice. They view having a Promoting Excellence certificate as something that is both an investment in them and of real and measurable value to the people they support; it is evidence of their commitment to delivering the best possible care and support to people with dementia and their carers.

### **Next steps**

Our LAUNCH framework mirrors our strengthened focus on outcomes and our approach to workforce development increasingly reflects the SSSC's Continuous Learning Framework. These two key drivers are shaping how we build on Promoting Excellence including continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities, practitioner research, peer learning and action learning approaches across services and staff groups.

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## Making a difference through learning

The Care Inspectorate believes every person in Scotland should receive high quality, safe and compassionate care that reflects their rights, choices and individual needs. There are 88,000 people living with dementia in Scotland, many of whom are receiving care and support services regulated by the Care Inspectorate.



We have been looking at how the Promoting Excellence framework is being used by services across the sector to develop their staff so they are ready and able to meet the often complex and varied needs of people living with dementia. Inspectors have reported seeing services encouraging their staff to be more person-centred in their approach and move away from a focus on tasks, to a focus on people.

Ongoing investment in staff learning and development is crucial to promoting positive outcomes for the people at the receiving end of service delivery. Many of our staff at the Care Inspectorate have been engaged in continuing their dementia learning at an enhanced practice level and the Care Inspectorate is well on its way to becoming a dementia informed organisation.

Enhancing dementia skills and knowledge cannot be the final outcome; we want to see the difference to the outcomes for people living with dementia. Every person with dementia is different; each person comes with their own life story, unique family and friends and hopes and dreams for the future. Each of us knows how we would like to be cared for and supported.



## How will greater understanding of what it means to live with dementia be carried over into the practical aspects of care?

One way that we are able to measure positive support and the promotion of person-centred care is by using the Short Observational Framework for Inspection SOFI2 during inspections. The SOFI tool helps enhance the observations we already make at inspections about the wellbeing of people living with dementia using the service and staff interactions with them. We are keen to see that as staff gain a better appreciation of what it means to live with dementia they make changes in how they interact and communicate with people.

The improvement in understanding about dementia changes many aspects of care and support. We start to look at the person's strengths and assets and view them as a fully present person with rights and aspirations which need to be recognised and looked for. So by engaging with Promoting Excellence we get a clear direction which can lead us to improve quality of life for people living with dementia.



**"WE ARE KEEN TO SEE HOW SERVICES ARE USING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA AND TO MAKE SURE THAT PEOPLE ARE MAKING THAT LINK BETWEEN LEARNING AND HANDS-ON PRACTICE."**

Heather Edwards, Dementia Consultant, Care Inspectorate





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