



The Dementia Services
Information and
Development Centre

| **ANNUAL REPORT 2018**

Introduction

The **Dementia Services Information and Development Centre (DSIDC)** is a national organisation committed to best practice in all aspects of dementia care. Our mission is to improve the quality of life and care for all those affected by dementia. We aspire to make Ireland a place for people to live a meaningful life with dementia supported by family members and service providers with a thorough understanding of dementia. Staff at the Centre provide education and awareness sessions, disseminate information, participate in research and collaborate with other professional groups. These collaborations are both national and international reflecting the effective synergy between the Centre's academic research policy and service development pillars of Education, Information and Research.

Conferences & Seminars

In April 2018 the DSIDC, in conjunction with MISA, organised and facilitated the "Medicine, Law and the Older Person" training day. This was a fascinating day of learning on medico-legal matters and the older person. Directed at an audience of medical practitioners (doctors, consultants and GPs), the day aimed to equip attendees with some of the vital information needed for when the medical world intersects with the legal world.

The speakers and sessions were chosen to reduce gaps in knowledge and to address areas of increasing concern for doctors. Professor Brian Lawlor opened the event, Dr Simon Mills, Junior Counsel, Barrister-at-Law covered the area of Medical Witness, Mr John Costello, Legal Consultant addressed the issue of Ward of Court and Enduring Power of Attorney followed by Dr Shaun O'Keeffe, Consultant Geriatrician and Mr Danny Ryan, Legal and Insurance Manager, who explained the Assisted Decision Making Capacity Act and the legal aspects of the Nursing Home Support Scheme.

Dr Ciaran Craven, Senior Counsel, covered negligence, Professor David Smith, Associate Professor of Healthcare Ethics addressed the area of ethics and the law and Dr Myra Cullinane, Dublin City Coroner, rounded off the morning session with an overview of the Coroners Court. The afternoon consisted of three workshops and covered report writing, consent and medical council complaints.

In June, MISA and the DSIDC co-hosted the 8th Annual Memory Clinic conference. The theme of the conference was "Strategies for Preventing Dementia" and explored ways in which we could potentially improve outcomes for the person with dementia and those at risk. The conference provided a forum for health care professionals to challenge the negative attitudes that persist around dementia and gave experts in the field of dementia research and care the opportunity to disseminate the increasingly strong public health messages around prevention and the modifiable risk factors to potentially reduce the risk of developing dementia. Mr Ronan Smith gave a frank and moving account of his life with dementia followed by Dr Desmond Hickey who gave an interesting overview of the current level of knowledge of dementia in Ireland. Professor Dario Arnaldi gave us some insight into the interception of prodromal lewy body disorder and its relationship to REM sleep behaviour disorder.

Dr Jules Montague opened the late morning session with a thought provoking account addressing the fears that people experience around memory loss and dementia and about the sense of identity among people who lose their memories. Professor Sarah Pendlebury rounded off the morning session providing an excellent presentation on stroke and dementia. Professor Nikolaos Scarmeas opened the afternoon session with an interesting account of his research into cognitive reserve and how lifestyle, activities and diet can help older people cope better with the changes to their ageing brains and therefore reduce their risk for dementia and slow down their rates of cognitive and functional decline.

Professor John Nolan gave us some insight into Xanthophyll Carotenoids and the brain and a nutritional approach to cognitive function. Professor Ian Robertson was the final speaker of the day and delivered a thought provoking account about the probable effectiveness of cognitive training and how to explain it. The conference was a successful and rewarding day and well attended by over 100 medics and health care professionals.





In November the DSIDC and MISA, Creative Life, in association with the National Gallery of Ireland presented “One Thursday at the Gallery”. The event brought together expert speakers and practitioners who explored the extraordinary impact that the arts can have on the lives of those people who are living with a dementia.

Arts and heritage organisations around Ireland are starting to recognise the need to open their doors to visitors with a variety of different needs including those people who are living with a dementia.

Speakers both national and international discussed art, theatre and music in the morning and the afternoon was set aside for practical workshops that included art appreciation, Virtual Reality and a Silent Disco and how these could be applied to dementia care.

The conference proved to be a great success and provided an excellent opportunity for information sharing and networking amongst people inspired by the impact the arts can have on people living with a dementia.



Throughout the year DSIDC staff presented at the Alzheimer Europe conference in Barcelona, the Sonas annual dementia conference and attended several national events including, the Irish Gerontological Society in Cavan and the launch of the Dementia Friendly Hospitals Design Guidelines.

Towards the end of 2018 staff from the Centre took part in an Interdisciplinary Skills Fair hosted by MISA, a Cognitive Rehabilitation master class and a Round Table discussion on Advocacy at Croke Park.

In November the St James’s Hospital DemPath project and the DSIDC launched “Supporting the Person with Dementia in Hospital”. This handbook, officially launched by CEO Lorcan Birthistle and Anna deSiún of the National Dementia Office, was written to provide practical information and advice to staff working in clinical settings caring for people who have cognitive impairment, dementia or delirium.

Education & Information

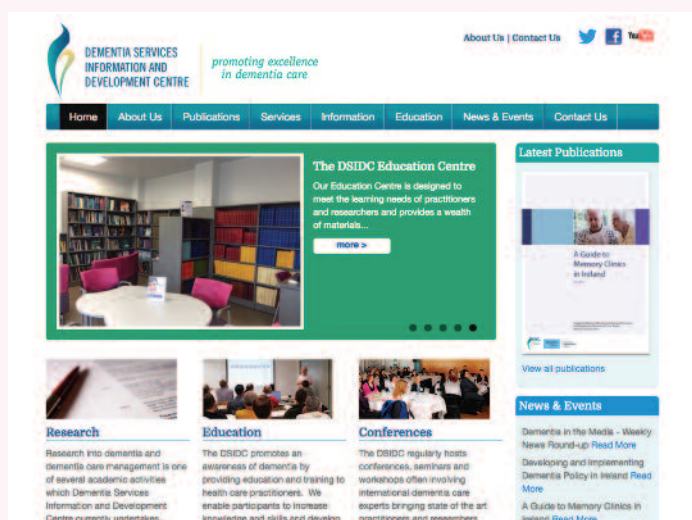
Staff from the DSIDC continued to provide education to healthcare professionals nationwide which included an in-house programme of dementia specific workshops. In January the DSIDC played an active role in planning and participating in the Gerontological Foundation Day. In June staff from the DSIDC were involved in the launch of the DemPath online dementia education programme and are collaborating with the National Dementia Office and the PREPARED project, a national GP and primary care initiative, in developing an online education programme for allied health care professionals. During 2018 staff from the Centre attended the facilitators training for the new 'Understanding Dementia: Homecare Education Programme, this programme has been designed by Dublin City University and the HSE for home helps/homecare workers, homecare managers and coordinators. DSIDC will deliver this training alongside their own education programme.



Our information and consultancy service reflects the increased quest on the part of practitioners and the public for information on dementia related topics. These queries came from a variety of organisations and settings. We provide a professional consultancy service offering advice on a broad range of issues including architectural design, service evaluation, quality of life issues, situational analysis and strategic planning.

Throughout 2018, the DSIDC staff responded to queries, from health care professionals and the public about topics such as quality of life interventions for nursing homes, responsive behaviours and ability assessments for activities and life story work.

We also received many requests for advice and information from the general public on dementia related issues and what to do if one is worried about memory or cognitive problems.



The DSIDC website, Facebook and Twitter accounts continued to be a valuable information source for both health service professionals and the general public and offer users a forum to seek out assistance, information and advice on any dementia related enquiry they may have.

We aim to keep the public and professionals up skilled with the latest thinking on best practice in dementia care.



www.dementia.ie



The DSIDC continue to play an active role on the Dementia Friendly Hospital Guidelines Committee, the Post-diagnostic Support Pathways Steering Committee and the National Dementia Strategy Monitoring Group. Towards the end of 2018 the DSIDC was invited to join the Dementia Understand Together campaign to examine ways in which Libraries Ireland can encourage local libraries to become more dementia inclusive. A focus group of library staff has already met and pilot training schemes for library staff were planned for 2019.

Awards



In January 2018 Matthew Gibb and the DemPath Team were the proud recipients of a European Foundation Initiative on Dementia (EFID) award for the St James's Hospital Way Finding Project.



L to R: Matthew Gibb, Natalie Cole and Federico Palermi.

Research

Early in 2018 the DSIDC was commissioned by the National Dementia Office (NDO), Health Service Executive (HSE) to develop and produce a guidance document to support the establishment and ongoing facilitation of dementia post-diagnostic psychoeducational programmes for people with dementia and care partners.

This guidance document forms part of the larger Dementia Post-Diagnostic Support Project and furthers the National Dementia Strategy's action area of Timely Diagnosis and Early Intervention. The early stages of dementia represents a crucial entry point for post-diagnostic support where the person diagnosed and their families can come to terms with the diagnosis and start planning for future care together. Insights from people living with dementia, and care partners along with a review of the literature and guidance from an expert advisory group, have shaped the contents of this document.

The guidance includes the available evidence and good practice in relation to dementia psychoeducational programmes and practical considerations on how to administer these programmes. The document was submitted to the National Dementia Office late 2018 and the launch of the guidelines will take place on 18th January 2019.

Governance Structure

The DSIDC continues to employ five staff members. We are delighted to announce that Matthew Gibb accepted the position of National Director in February and in August we welcomed Diana Burgui to the DSIDC team as senior medical social worker. All professional activities undertaken by the DSIDC are overseen by a Steering Committee.

Dr Declan Byrne stepped down as Chair of the Committee towards the end of 2018 and we would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr Byrne for his commitment and advice during his tenure and wish him well in the future. During 2018 Steering Committee meetings were held in June and November and an Advisory Group meeting was also held in November 2018.



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*promoting excellence
in dementia care*

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