

# DSiDC

Dementia Services Information  
and Development Centre

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[www.dementia.ie](http://www.dementia.ie)



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and Development Centre

**ANNUAL REPORT 2020**



The Dementia Services Information and Development Centre (DSiDC) works alongside health and social care professionals; people with dementia and their care partners; community organisations; private and public care providers and national policy makers. The Centre is based in St James's Hospital, Dublin on the sixth floor of Mercer's Institute for Successful Ageing.

Our values are of dignity and respect; autonomy and choice; participation and empowerment. Our mission is to transform people's understanding and awareness of dementia through our educational programmes, research and by the voice of the person with dementia and those who support them. Our vision

## NEW WEBSITE FOR 2020

We aim to keep the public and professionals upskilled with the latest thinking on best practice in dementia care and were delighted to announce the launch of our new interactive website on 6th August 2020 offering users improved navigation and functionality. In a first for DSiDC, the website was redesigned to offer a range of innovative online courses which enable learners to learn flexibly, develop new skills and discover a deeper understanding of dementia. Additionally, the new website allows improved accessibility to our information booklets



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

## EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

Despite the fact that 2020 was a difficult year the DSiDC continued to provide face to face and online education sessions. In the first three months of the year the scheduled education programme was delivered along with a radiography study day plus several education sessions delivered to health care assistants and security staff in the Hospital. The DSiDC played a significant role in the teaching of third level courses including Trinity College's MSc in Gerontology, the MISA Foundation Programme in Gerontological Nursing and the two day National Dementia Programme. In addition staff from the Centre contributed to education sessions for the Global Brain Health Institute, Artists in Residence and hosted a group of occupational therapy students from the University of Michigan.

### E-LEARNING



**Environmental Design**  
How people with dementia can be supported to better understand their environment

Start Course



**Dementia Awareness**  
How dementia affects people and how to communicate with someone who has dementia

Start Course



**Communication**  
How best to communicate and enable positive relationships with those with dementia

Start Course

is of a society where the civil and legal rights of people with dementia are fully respected and they are able to participate in the making of all decisions that affect them without discrimination or prejudice.

2020 has been a difficult year for all, particularly for people with dementia, their supporters and health workers. Staff at the DSiDC had to adapt to the changing situation to continue to meet its obligations while at the same time managing staff redeployment and markedly different working environments. Despite the pandemic, significant pieces of work were completed and improvements to our services were achieved and these can be read about below.

and research publications. The website is updated regularly with DSiDC news, upcoming events, announcements from our partner organisations and the most up to date information about dementia. The enhanced website experience is a key component in the DSiDC's mission to transform people's understanding and awareness of dementia through its educational programmes and research.

[www.dementia.ie](http://www.dementia.ie)



## ONLINE EDUCATION

Over the last 12 months the DSiDC has significantly increased the online education options available on the new website. These offerings are a significant addition to our education programme with courses covering dementia awareness, communication and environmental design, the CSF biomarker course and the brain awareness education package for secondary school students.

In the middle of 2020 the DSiDC posted two Occupational Therapy and Dementia Care modules. Developed by a working group of experienced Occupational Therapists and the DSiDC, the modules have attracted great interest from both home and abroad with professionals as far away as Australia and Croatia completing the modules. Work to develop further modules on Speech and Language Therapy and dementia care continued during 2020 and are expected to be posted in the third quarter of 2021.

## INFORMATION AND CONSULTANCY

Our information and consultancy service continues to reflect 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 and we have received many requests for advice and information from the general public on dementia related issues.

Staff from the DSiDC worked in collaboration with the Alzheimer Society of Ireland and staff from the Martha Whiteway Day Hospital to develop five new fact sheets to help people living with dementia and their family carers to manage some of the difficult situations they may experience. The fact sheets are entitled: Understanding Change; Sleeping; Hallucinations; Agitation and Frustration and; Dementia and Intimate Relationships.

In March 2020 in response to the first pandemic lockdown the DSiDC produced a series of seven leaflets to help people with dementia and their families to cope

with the impact of Covid and isolation. The leaflets provided advice on exercise, gardening, videocalls, music, arts, museums, lifestory and reminiscence.

In April 2020, in collaboration with the Health Service Executive, the National Dementia Office, Understand Together and the Alzheimer Society of Ireland, the DSiDC produced a Resource Hub containing a collection of online resources for people with dementia and their families. These resources covered a range of medical, practical and emotional issues. Continuing this collaboration the DSiDC released an online weekly Activity Planner for people with dementia and their families along with a template for people to compile their own planner. The resources were very well received and got plenty of attention and were featured on the DSiDC website ([www.dementia.ie](http://www.dementia.ie)), the HSE website, the Understand Together website and the Alzheimer Society of Ireland website. On foot of this success we submitted a poster for the 30th Alzheimer Europe conference in October 2020 which was accepted and presented at the conference.



The collage shows several leaflets from The Alzheimer Society of Ireland and DSiDC. Visible titles include 'Sleeping', 'Hallucinations', 'Agitation and Frustration', 'Dementia and intimate relationships', and 'Understanding change'. Each leaflet includes a code (e.g., C8, B6, B4, B5, B12) and the Alzheimer National Helpline number 1800 341 341.

## COVID-19 VACCINE

COVID-19 is a highly infectious disease which can cause serious illness, hospitalisation and even death.

Now there is a **vaccine** available.

It is an injection in your arm, given to you two times, on different dates

If you want to get the vaccine, you can and it is free.

Once you have the **two doses** of the vaccine your chances of getting COVID-19 and getting very sick are much lower.



## RESEARCH

The DSiDC is currently working on research commissioned by the National Dementia Office on a Model of Care for Dementia in Ireland. The DSiDC was commissioned by the National Dementia Office to develop best practice guidelines on the disclosure of a diagnosis of dementia. Initially the work was expected to be completed by Autumn 2020 but was extended into 2021 as a result of staff redeployment during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The DSiDC continues to employ five staff members all of whom are based in the national centre in St James's Hospital. All professional activities undertaken by the DSiDC are overseen by a Steering Committee. Steering Committee meetings were held in May and November and an Advisory Group meeting was also held in November 2020. Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to wish Dr Robert Coen every success and happiness in the future and thank him for all his professional advice and kind support during his tenure. Dr Coen was a founder member of the DSiDC and served on both the Steering Committee and Advisory Group for over 20 years before retiring in December 2020.



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