

Policy and pressure: making dementia strategies a reality

Alice Jarratt

Policy Officer, Alzheimer's Society, United Kingdom

Introduction

- The heart of policy
- Evidence creates pressure
- Spreading influence



Evidence

Dementia affects your mind but I can still have a say.

I want to talk about it. I'm the person with dementia and this is my perspective. This is what I think.

- Powerful tool
- Ensures a strategy can secure what really matters to people

How?

- Broad: what would make the biggest difference to your life? If you could tell the government one thing, what would it be?
- Focused time with people with dementia



Success

- *'The dementia café has been a lifeline to me. Allowing me to learn from other people with dementia and carers how to cope and hearing from specialists too how to plan for the days ahead.'*
- Examples: peer support in England, younger people in Wales

Creating pressure

- Evidence is powerful
- Focus evidence on strategy objectives
- E.g. Counting the Cost



Counting the cost

- Targeted on strategy recommendation
- Surveyed over 2,400 people with dementia, carers, nurses and nurse managers
- Powerful findings

Impact

- Showed the need for strategy implementation is urgent
- Created pressure: significant media attention



From strategy to reality

- This is me: enabling person-centred care
- Society's training course for staff in acute settings
- Core education for nurses



From strategy to reality

= better support and services for people with dementia in hospital, a major strategy aim





Working together

- Working across groups has impact on implementation
- All Party Parliamentary group – antipsychotics ‘Always a last resort’
- Extend influence; be heard by parliamentarians
- Impact: reduce inappropriate use of antipsychotics, improving quality of life

UK general election

- Identify key strategy commitments and lobby to have included in party manifestos
- All major parties had dementia in manifestos
- Dementia strategies = political priority



Summary: main lessons

- Put people with dementia at the heart
- Target evidence on strategy recommendations
- Many players - work across groups to secure commitment and broaden influence

Alice.Jarratt@alzheimers.org.uk