

## **Coronavirus update and information from Alzheimer Scotland Midlothian**

**24<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

Following advice from Public Health Scotland, Alzheimer Scotland have cancelled or suspended all Dementia Cafés, community group activities and befriending services until further notice.

In Midlothian this means, people will no longer be able to attend:

- Dementia Cafés: Roslin, Penicuik or Dalkeith
- Brain Gym, Maintenance Group or Tea & Blether
- Woodland Skills
- Food with Friends
- Memory Planters
- The Bungalow (Day Opportunities) (Monday-Friday)

Contingency plans are now in effect for people who attend The Bungalow.

Non-essential home visits from our Dementia Advisor (Michael Huddleston), Carer Project Worker (Jacqui Reade) and befriending volunteers have also been suspended.

Michael and Jacqui, as well as our Community Activities Organiser, Carol Hamilton, will keep in touch with people they have contact with and those attend groups.

Our office at 3 Edinburgh Road, Dalkeith, EH22 1LA is now closed until further notice.

We appreciate this will be an unsettling and stressful time for everyone and actively encourage people living with dementia and their carers to contact us as and when you need someone to speak to. We are available to offer information, advice and emotional support. We cannot offer personalised medical advice but will direct you to other reliable sources of information.

- Michael can be contacted on 07831 859490 or [mhuddleston@alzscot.org](mailto:mhuddleston@alzscot.org)
- Jacqui can be contacted on 07979 954876 or [jreade@alzscot.org](mailto:jreade@alzscot.org)
- Alzheimer Scotland's 24-hour dementia helpline 0808 808 3000

We will continue to review guidance from the government and public health bodies and will provide updates as and when our service provision changes again.

We will be working closely with other statutory and voluntary sector partners to look at how we can best use our staff and volunteer resources to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people in the community. More information will be provided in due course.

### **IMPORTANT CONTACTS**

Where carers and family and friends are unable to provide essential care for someone, they should contact their local social work department. Contact details here:

**Adults/Adult Carers (Office Hours)**

Midlothian Health and Social Care

**Phone:** 0131 271 3900

**Out of Hours:** 0800 731 6969

**VOCAL Carer Centre**

**T:** 0131 663 6869

**E:** [midlothian@vocal.org.uk](mailto:midlothian@vocal.org.uk)

**W:** [www.vocal.org.uk](http://www.vocal.org.uk)

**USEFUL LINKS**

This is a fast-moving situation and advice and information is being updated regularly. The following links are useful for staying up to date with national and local responses and how they will affect you.

**NHS**

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/>

**MIDLOTHIAN COUNCIL**

[https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/360/community\\_safety\\_and\\_crime/622/coronaviruses](https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/360/community_safety_and_crime/622/coronaviruses)

**DEMENTIA SPECIFIC**

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/blog/coronavirus-covid-19-information-people-affected-dementia>

<https://www.dementiauk.org/dementia-uk-coronavirus-advice/>

**CARERS**

[https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/1352/carers/187/support\\_for\\_unpaid\\_adult\\_carers/2](https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/1352/carers/187/support_for_unpaid_adult_carers/2)

<https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/health/looking-after-your-health/coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/resources/short-breaks-for-strange-times/>

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**The following information has been adapted from the Alzheimer Society website:**

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/blog/coronavirus-covid-19-information-people-affected-dementia>

**Coronavirus: Information for people affected by dementia**

If you're caring for a person living with dementia, you may be more worried about coronavirus. There are some things you can do to help prevent the person from

catching any germs or viruses. If you need to self-isolate, there are also other ways to support the person with dementia.

- Check that they have handwash and hand sanitiser available – and that any visitors know to make use of it: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/health-51722269/coronavirus-how-do-i-protect-myself>
- Clean things that are handled a lot, such as remote controls, door handles and taps
- If the person or their primary carer is self-isolating, you might help out with practical tasks. The person might need shopping dropped off, medicine collected or some library books left for them – ask how you can help
- Make sure the person has access to the medication they need. If you or the person with dementia is advised to self-isolate, speak to a GP or local pharmacist to make sure they will have a supply. Keep checking in to make sure they are continuing to take the right medication.
- Check that they know who to call if they get unwell – leave the number prominently displayed
- If the person is going to be stuck in doors for a while, encourage them to stay active and consider gentle exercises. Try to make sure they have activities that they can engage in at home as well; reading, magazines, jigsaws, music, knitting, their favourite TV/radio programmes available
- Keep in touch. If you can't visit the person, then stay in contact by phone, post, email or Skype. Tell the person that you're thinking of them and encourage others to do so as well.
- Carers who do not already have an emergency plan in place may want to talk with family and friends about who could take over their caring role if they become ill or need to self-isolate – particularly while social work services are under additional pressure during the coronavirus outbreak. It will also be important to make sure you have key information about the person you care for easily available – so that anyone taking over care has all the information they need: [www.enable.org.uk/emergencyplanning](http://www.enable.org.uk/emergencyplanning)
- Make sure that they have Alzheimer Scotland's [24 hour helpline 0808 808 3000](tel:08088083000) so that they know that we are here to help.