

## **East Cheshire Hospice Community Dementia Companion Service**

### **REFERRAL CRITERIA AND PROTOCOL**

#### **Who is the service for?**

We're pleased to invite you to refer to our Community Dementia Companion Service which is designed for people who:

- have a diagnosis of dementia and are living with their main carer.
- have needs for companionship and activities that are not being met at present
- have a GP within East Cheshire CCG boundary, including Congleton, Knutsford, Wilmslow and Macclesfield.

Anyone referred, and their carer, should be aware of and agree with the referral.

#### **Who can refer to the service?**

The person living with dementia or their carer can themselves refer, or any professional supporting the person living with dementia and carer can do so, including Hospice staff and those of partner organisations.

#### **How do I make a referral?**

Complete the Dementia Companion Referral Form and send to the Sunflower Centre, all options for ways to send are available at the top right of the form.

The more detail you put on the referral the better we can understand the needs of the person living with dementia, please do fill out every section to be best of your ability.

You may want to talk through your referral in advance, you'd be welcome to do this by phoning our Admiral Nurse Debbie Callow on 01625 610 349, please be aware she works part-time and may take a few days to respond.

#### **What happens next?**

Once we've received your referral, we will check the suitable for the service usually within **one week**. We may also contact the person living with dementia and their carer or referrer for more information or clarification so we can make a good decision about what we can offer.

The Admiral Nurse will then get in touch with all of you to let you know the outcome of the referral. If there is currently a wait for matching to a companion you will be informed of this. The service is limited to the availability of trained volunteer dementia companions, at times we may already be at capacity.

**When the referral is accepted:**

- The person living with dementia and/or the carer will be contacted to further explain the service and how it can help.
- This will be followed by a home visit from the Admiral Nurse to talk about hopes and expectations of the service, gather any further information to make sure the service is well matched to the persons needs and to discuss any safety issues or concerns.
- Following the home visit, if all are agreeable, the Admiral Nurse will identify a suitable companion and arrange a joint visit with them, this can sometimes take time.
- Once a suitable match has been made and everyone is happy the companion will arrange regular visits and activities to be engaged in.
- Initially, a review of the service and need will be undertaken at three and six months and at six monthly intervals thereafter.

**How long does it last?**

There is no set time limit to the provision of this service whilst it still meets the person's needs and our referral criteria. However, as the service is delivered by our trained volunteer dementia companions, if the needs of the person living with dementia increase and go beyond what we would expect a volunteer to manage, the service may then be brought to an end.

**Referral Protocol for access to East Cheshire Hospice Community Dementia Companion Service:**

<p><b>The service is suitable for:</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Person with a diagnosis of dementia is in the early stages of dementia.</li> <li>2. Person lives with their main carer and have an East Cheshire GP.</li> <li>3. Person has a need for companionship and social or other activities and are aware of the referral thus meeting all the referral criteria above.</li> </ol> <p>Upon receipt of a referral we may give referrers a call to find out more about the person and their carer to help us decide if we can help.</p> <p>If the person you refer does not have dementia or social needs or they live outside the East Cheshire area they won't be eligible for this service. If this is the case, we'll let you know as soon as we can and, where possible, give you information about services which could also be helpful.</p> <p>Referrals to the Dementia Companion Service will not be accepted if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The referral criteria listed above are not met.</li> <li>• If the person living with dementia has significant personal care needs, which would need attending to during a volunteer visit as volunteer companions will not be able to support personal care needs in the absence of carers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Agreement:</b></p>	<p>Referrers, people living with dementia and their carers will be provided with information on the Dementia Companion Service and can contact the Admiral Nurse for additional information.</p>

	Referrers must discuss any referral with the person living with dementia and their carers and ensure adequate information is available to enable them to make an informed choice and agree to a referral to the service.
<b>Declined referrals:</b>	<p>Any referrals which are outside the remit of the Dementia Companion Service will be discussed with the referrer and returned with a rationale for the decision.</p> <p>Advice and signposting will be offered where possible.</p>
<b>Service end/ completion:</b>	<p>The Community Dementia Companion Service can be ended at any time by the service user, carer or East Cheshire Hospice. This may be due to a change in the condition or needs of the person living with dementia, if personal care is required or if the service is not meeting the need of the service user.</p> <p>Any ending of the service will involve advice and signposting to other services where possible.</p>
<b>If the service is declined by the service user or carer:</b>	<p>In the event of the service being declined by the person living with dementia or their carer this decision will be feedback to their referrer.</p> <p>The person living with dementia and their carer will be informed of how to opt back into the service in future and provided with information about other services available to them if appropriate.</p>