

Dementia Select Committee – Hearing 29th March 2011

Panel (Equalities theme):

Simon Bannister, Ashford Borough Council
Shaminder Bedi, KASS - Guru Nanak & Milan Day Centres
Christine Locke, Diversity House,
Roger Newman, East Kent Independent Dementia Support (EKIDS)
Viniti Seabrooke, Alzheimer's and Dementia Support Services (ADSS)
Rock Sturt, Alzheimer's and Dementia Support Services (ADSS)

Biographies

Simon Bannister

Simon is Neighbourhood Development Coordinator within the Cultural Services section of Ashford Borough Council. Over the last three years he has been in the very unusual position of straddling public and voluntary sector dementia services. He is Chairman of the Ashford and Shepway Dementia Working Group and in this role has gained a great deal of experience on maximising the role of the voluntary sector.

He believes fervently that if we are going to improve services for people with dementia we need to improve the integration of services; increase the role of the voluntary sector to co-design services; mobilise volunteers and communities; facilitate people to establish and run self help groups and mentoring schemes; work with carers, and reduce the stigma sufferers face.

Shaminder Bedi, MBE

Shammi works for Kent Adult Social Services and manages 2 Day Centres for Asian older people - Guru Nanak Day Centre, Gravesend and Milan Day Centre, Dartford. His other voluntary involvements include being a former chair of Gravesham Police Community Liaison Group; he is a member of the Asian Welfare Society; supports a local carers association and helped formed the Gravesend International Club. Shammi received an MBE in 2005.

Christine Locke

Christine Locke is the Founder and Project Lead of Diversity House based in Sittingbourne, Kent which opened in March 2007.

Christine holds degrees in Modern languages, Addictive Behaviour, Community Cohesion Management and Community Care Practice. She is currently studying for a Masters MSc in Public Health. She is passionate about equality and diversity and works with many local organisations and minority groups to raise awareness amongst various groups. She strives to promote diversity and community cohesion especially within our local area.

Roger Newman, MBE

Roger Newman is a 69 year old retired teacher from Margate. As a result of caring for his partner, David, who had dementia, he co-founded the LGBT Support Group of the Alzheimer's Society.

He is heavily involved locally with supporting carers of those with dementia and is a co-founder of 'East Kent Independent Dementia Support' (EKIDS).

He contributed to the books 'Telling Tales about Dementia' and 'Changing Minds' and is the subject of the film 'Roger's Story' made by SCIE. He writes and speaks on the subject of the needs of older LGBT's and represents that issue on two committees of AgeUK. In 2007 he was awarded the MBE for charitable services.

Dr. Viniti Seabrooke

Viniti is Project Manager for a 5 year Early Intervention Project at the Alzheimer's & Dementia Support Services (ADSS) in North West Kent. She has been working with ADSS since 2002 and began by researching the dementia-related needs of the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. Since then she has focused on raising awareness of dementia among the BME communities and developing multicultural services to meet these needs.

In 2007 Viniti led a pilot collaborative project with colleagues in Health, Social Services, GP practices and the University of Kent, to raise awareness of the need for the early diagnosis of dementia among BME patients. Alongside her current role, she continues to oversee the development of services for BME communities in N.W Kent. Viniti has worked in mental health and dementia since 1997 and is now committed to ensuring that dementia services are responsive to the needs of individuals, including those from the BME communities.

Born in India and educated in the UK, she graduated in pharmacology from London University in 1976 and gained her doctorate from the University of Aberdeen in 1983. In the early stages of her career she worked as a medical research scientist in various fields, including cardiovascular and central nervous system pharmacology.

Rock Sturt

Rock works for Alzheimer's & Dementia Support Services as the BME Service Development Officer in Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley.

Rock's remit includes making presentations on dementia awareness and he is ADSS' main contact for referrals. His aim is to enable people from BME communities to access relevant services and also to signpost carers to finances and facilities that may be available to support them.

Another part of his role consists of networking with other statutory and voluntary agencies in order to develop multicultural services and improve BME uptake of dementia services.

He has a consultative role in West Kent and recently has been tasked with promoting the 24 hour Kent and Medway Dementia helpline.

Panel - Themes & Questions

1. How well are the cultural needs of ethnic minorities understood and provided for within the range of services and support for people with dementia and their carers? What cultural and social difficulties arise when helping people with dementia from different communities?
2. How should Health and Social Care Services be finding out about the particular needs of people with dementia and carers from different communities?
3. Are any particular groups of people less likely to obtain an early diagnosis of dementia, what are the reasons for this and what is being, or should be done to address this?
4. What are the issues affecting people with learning difficulties that go on to develop a dementia?
5. Where and how, in your view, should people be able to access information about dementia, and caring for a person with dementia – how can any imbalance of information provision across the County be addressed and how can equal access to information that is sensitive to cultural, sexual or other differences be assured?
6. What groups of people might suffer additional stigma for cultural/other reasons and how could this be addressed?
7. What can be learnt from diverse communities elsewhere about the care and support of people with dementia and their carers?