



November 2014

Newsletter No. 80

# Brain Waves



## A monthly newsletter from Innovations in Dementia CIC

The aim of these newsletters is to keep people with dementia and their allies informed about the work of Innovations in Dementia Community Interest Company.

### Women and dementia

On 6<sup>th</sup> November, we held a meeting in York to discuss the debate the underlying issues about dementia from a women's perspective.

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## Women and dementia

On 6<sup>th</sup> November, we held a meeting in York to debate the underlying issues about dementia from a women's perspective.

The event was held at our partners the Social Policy Research Unit at the University of York and was part of a wider project funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.



We were joined by nearly 80 women, aged from a few months to their eighties, from across the country and a few men as well! People attended in both personal and professional capacities and attended lively and enthusiastic workshops on:

- Women with dementia
- Families and family carers
- The female workforce
- Policy which affects women and
- Influencing women more widely.

Throughout the day people stood up and pledged to make a change on their return to their home or workplace.

Central to the discussions was a booklet called "Women's experiences of dementia" which is packed with thought-provoking quotes from women affected by dementia in different ways and beautiful photographs.

You can download the book as a PDF from the project website – [www.dementiawomen.org.uk](http://www.dementiawomen.org.uk)

In addition, we discussed quotes from the growing number of contributions to the project website 'Thoughts and opinions' section – [www.dementiawomen.org.uk](http://www.dementiawomen.org.uk) – for example:

**Are women with dementia being heard?**

As a wife and mother I had many roles and challenges. I was an organiser and a caregiver, a nurse and carer for my parents – so when I got dementia it was just another challenge. The next role I had to take on was as a person with dementia. My life skills as a woman have helped me to cope with having dementia. I have been able to deliberately engage with dementia – and so the next role I have taken on is as a dementia campaigner.

I feel women have a lot to offer other women: to get them through the diagnosis and the bad times and to help them to find their voice as women with dementia.

**Is the 'Duty of care' something that falls predominantly on women in the family?**

"In a study, researchers who spoke with both female and male carers – through a survey, focus groups and interviews – found that there continues to be an implicit or explicit expectation that in families it is women who care, in both emotional and practical terms."

**Does the social care workforce deserve a better deal?**

"Until the social care workforce – which is 80 per cent female – is adequately supported and paid, then the plight of people with dementia will never really improve."

**Valuing women staff in dementia care**

"Care homes have had a very bad press lately, but we must not forget those homes which provide good care. I have met many care assistants in residential and nursing homes who provide an excellent service. Most are middle-aged women with no academic qualifications to speak of, yet whose intuitive and empathic reactions to people with dementia are appropriate, caring and imaginative."

**What happens next?**

We will be following up the pledges people made and writing a short report from the day.

If you feel you could use any of the resources for training or awareness raising, we are happy to share them.

Please get in touch with Nada – [nada@innovationsindementia.org.uk](mailto:nada@innovationsindementia.org.uk)

## Making a point about dementia

For this year's Dementia Congress in Brighton, the Dementia Engagement and Empowerment Project (DEEP) and the Carers Call to Action got together to make a video.

Carers and people with dementia all had a space to 'Make a Point about Dementia'.

The film had a huge impact on the audience in Brighton.

You can watch the video on You Tube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mf8Z4Qsjxzk> or via the DEEP website – [www.dementiavoices.org.uk](http://www.dementiavoices.org.uk)



**Innovations  
in Dementia**

Innovations in Dementia is run by three directors – Rachael, Steve and Nada. We are a Community Interest Company. This means that any profit we make is put back into the organisation.

We do not offer services for people with dementia. Instead we work with other organisations to make sure that people with dementia can continue to take part in their communities and have active lives.

Please share your ideas, experiences and positive stories with us.

### Contact us

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