

Dementia Awareness Training Workshop Brief

On August 21, 2024, a comprehensive dementia workshop was facilitated by Kate Shorthose, Dementia Friends Ambassador.

Harminder Kaur Bhogal, Manager welcomed all and offered a brief overview of Rootz Global CIC and how APNA daycare was reinstated.

The workshops aimed to help people think differently about dementia and to gain a better understanding of the condition.

Areas covered included:

- What is Dementia?
- Types of dementia
- General dementia signs and symptoms
- How Dementia can affect a person
- Creating Dementia friendly communities
- Turning understanding into action

Kate delved into various types of dementia, shedding light on each one:

- Alzheimer's disease, the most prevalent form of dementia among older adults, was discussed. Its root cause lies in the brain, where abnormal protein buildups, such as amyloid plaques and tau tangles, lead to its manifestation.
- Vascular dementia, caused by conditions damaging blood vessels in the brain or hindering the flow of blood and oxygen, was also explored.
- In addition, mixed dementia, a combination of two or more types of dementia, was highlighted. It was mentioned that many individuals, as identified through autopsy studies, exhibited a mix of brain changes associated with different forms of dementia.

Practical activities included quizzes, interactive discussions and 'how many steps to making a cup of tea'. There was a question-and-answer session.

The workshop highlighted the importance of understanding the various types of dementia and gaining a deeper understanding of how to work with those experiencing the condition. The attendees included working professionals, volunteers, committee members of the Sikh Cultural and Sports Community Centre, as well as members and staff. Claire Wilson, the Community

Development Coordinator, provided dedicated support and offered literature and information in Punjabi to help South Asian communities navigate through these experiences. Onkar Singh, Chair/Director of Rootz Global CIC, thanked everyone who attended the workshop and stated that the work must continue.

The feedback:

“It was highly informative”.

“There was a lot to take in, but my awareness has certainly arisen”

“it made me aware of what people who experience dementia go through in their day-to-day life”.

“I found it to be helpful, it made me think whether our service users can follow the steps of making tea, and it made me realise how difficult it must be for them”.

“My mother had dementia, and I used to get angry with her, being part of this workshop has made me realise how difficult it was for her”.

“Information is power, I learnt so much”.

My father passed away having dementia and I am keen to volunteer with APNA, I can pass my knowledge and help others”.

Prevent Dementia.

While there's no guaranteed way to prevent dementia, adopting a healthy lifestyle can significantly reduce your risk. Here are some key strategies:

1. **Stay Physically Active:** Regular exercise, such as walking, swimming, or cycling, can help maintain brain health
2. **Eat a Balanced Diet:** A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins supports overall health. The Mediterranean diet, in particular, is associated with a lower risk of dementia.
3. **Keep Mentally Active:** Engage in activities that challenge your brain, such as puzzles, reading, or learning new skills.
4. **Stay Socially Connected:** Maintaining strong social connections can help reduce the risk of cognitive decline
5. **Manage Health Conditions:** Control conditions like hypertension, diabetes, and high cholesterol, which can impact brain health.

6. **Avoid Smoking and Limit Alcohol:** Smoking and excessive alcohol consumption can increase the risk of dementia.
7. **Protect Your Head:** Prevent head injuries by wearing helmets and taking precautions to avoid falls.

Implementing these habits can contribute to better brain health and potentially lower the risk of developing dementia. If you have any specific concerns, it's always a good idea to consult with a healthcare professional.