



# East Kent Forget Me Nots

Forget Me Nots (FMNs) are a group of people living with a confirmed diagnosis of a dementia, professionals from Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust (KMPT) and other supporters. FMNs are active members of Dementia Engagement and Empowerment Project (DEEP) and seek to engage with other national groups of interested people. The group networks with other groups both through DEEP and independently.

## Values:

FMNs operate on the belief that every person living with dementia has something to contribute towards making the world more dementia friendly and the right to have their views heard. This is reflected in the diversity of the group (wide range of ages and backgrounds) and the way meetings are run.

## Aim:

- Promote a wide range of voices of people living with dementia to counter the stigma and stereotypes surrounding dementia.
- Contributing to the development and delivery of good quality health services for people with dementia in KMPT and other local NHS trusts, as well as regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Supporting the development and maintenance of good quality services for people with dementia in other sectors including Social Care, the Voluntary Sector, and private businesses in the community, such as theatres, cinemas, banks and newsagents.
- To raise awareness of dementia and the needs of people living with dementia through taking part in teaching, training, conferences, consultations, research, campaigns and engaging in other learning activities.
- Providing a place to meet, work and socialise with other people living with dementia, and to discuss challenges and strategies relating to living with dementia.
- To create opportunities for members to take part in projects alongside the group. The group also provides access to other projects relating to national research and consultations.
- To network with other similar groups on a county and national level.

## Structure of the group

The group meets monthly, on the second Friday of each month, 2.00–4.30pm at Thanington Neighbourhood Resource Centre, Thanington Road, Canterbury CT1 3XE for a business type meeting, to engage in consultation exercises, share feedback from past activities and co-ordinate and support members' future activities. There is a tea break for more informal socialising and the FMNs also meet socially outside the business meeting.

## **Confidentiality**

Member's personal stories will not be shared outside of the group without the permission of the person who told the story. Also, if members do not want to appear in photographs, or have their real name appear in minutes, then their wish will be respected.

## **The Chair**

The FMNs meetings are chaired by two people at every meeting, where possible. The first chair is a member of the group who is living with dementia. The second chair is one of the two clinical psychologists who support the group. Usually, they rotate the chairing responsibility between themselves on a month-by-month basis.

It is the role of the chairs to ensure that everyone in the group is able to contribute if they want to and to time-keep. This may involve requesting a change in topic or asking current speaker to remain quiet to give others an opportunity share their opinions. Also, they may ask speakers to talk more loudly and/or slowly if others within the group are finding it difficult to hear or follow what is being said. The chairs are also responsible for managing debates within the group and summarising discussions to enable minutes to be more accurate.

## **Existing members' Contribution**

The group values the contribution of all members and strives to support members in their participation. Any member can approach the supporters with items to be added to the agenda. Requests for consultations may come from KMPT but also from a wide range of other organisations.

Members have a right to be silent if they prefer not to speak on a particular topic. Members can raise the yellow cards ("Can I speak please?") to get the chair's attention and to speak. Members may attend for as much or as little of the meeting as they want to.

Comments from members about areas of difficulty or suggestions for improvement are welcome.

## **New Members**

New members are given information about the group by the chair and the supporters. A family member or friend of the new member can attend the first meeting with them. Aside from this, however, the group is only for people with a diagnosis of dementia.

## **Staff & Supporters**

The supporters consist of psychology staff from Kent and Medway Partnership Trust, volunteers and students.

The students/volunteers support the group by compiling the agenda from topics requested, taking minutes and distributing these afterwards. They assist individuals and groups of members with the organisation and attendance at projects and meetings, and they can sit next to group members who want more support. Staff from the KMPT are responsible for managing and supervising students/volunteers. They also provide a 'professional link', and are therefore able to provide the group with information about services and how they are run.

Staff and supporters are available to support members practically or emotionally throughout the meeting where members would find this helpful.

## **Visitors**

Requests to attend by visitors will be considered as long as the request fits with the values and aims of the group. The group may also invite visitors. Visitors to the group are encouraged to stay for the entirety of meetings.