***The Tickhill & Colliery Medical Practice***

[www.thetickhillsurgery.co.uk](http://www.thetickhillsurgery.co.uk/)

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Alzheimer’s Society Information Session held on September 4th 2013 at Harworth Town Hall 2 ‘til 4pm

This was open to all patients and attended by 12 people.

The aims were to:

* link with the ‘It’s Time to Talk about Dementia’ programme currently being run by The Alzheimer’s Society.
* fit with our groups targets of reaching out to the patients and allowing access to health information.
* bring about an awareness of how our group and practice can form part of a Dementia Friendly Environment.

**The first speaker** from The Alzheimer’s Society was Kath Rawlings who gave us statistics explained the main forms of Dementia, and led us through the challenges that the patient and their carers will face.

She explained the progression of the disease in its different forms and the differences between the different forms whilst also making us aware of the deterioration caused to everyone by infection, dehydration, malnutrition and lack of the necessary vitamins and minerals.

The symptoms of dementia were highlighted along with the impact on family and carers as well as on the patient.Important facts were stated as

* Everyone experiences Dementia in their own way
* Emotions, which tend to be the foundation of our memories last the longest.
* Longer term memories last longer than recent memories which disappear first.
* The person may not see themselves as they are but rather as they were.
* Some people see a reflection and think it is someone else.
* Perception of what is seen may be different from the fact.
* Thirst and hunger responses may go, and night and day could have no meaning.
* Early diagnosis is important.
* Medication can slow down the development and give time to enjoy, plan and organise.
* Multitasking is harder for people with dementia.
* Noise, distractions and bustle do not help people with dementia .
* People with dementia need emotional and practical help and their dignity supporting.
* Signage is important as is stimulation.
* Verbal clues are good, corrections are not.
* A healthy diet, stimulation and exercise help everyone to stay healthy.

Two thirds of people with dementia live in the community. Of these:

* 77% feel anxious
* 755 don’t feel the community is geared to cope with them or for them to cope with it.
* 67% don’t feel part of the community.
* 61% are lonely.
* 48% feel a burden on their family.
* 44% say they have lost contact with friends.

We all need to show more understanding, awareness and empathy with people who have Dementia and with their carers.

* We could all become Dementia Friends.
* We need to spread the word, raise awareness and always remember that this is not just a disease it is people first and foremost.

**The second speaker** was Gill Owen a Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner who takes referrals from the Practice or can be contacted via The Talking Shop in Doncaster by calling in or telephoning 01302 565650. She can help if anyone is experiencing anxiety, panic, bereavement, self-esteem issues, feeling down, eating disorders or dealing with phobias She talks to people does an assessment and can refer out to other practitioners such as psychological services or involve the patient in a group where they learn about their condition and develop management strategies.

All decisions about care are made with the patient who is empowered to make informed choices.

**The third speaker**was Kate Ripley a Well Being Officer working with Doncaster. She explained her role in terms of facilitating access and provision for residents. She visits individuals in the community, completes a holistic needs assessment, & work towards maintaining people’s independence for as long as possible, reducing or delaying the need for mainstream health & social care services. This may be achieved in various ways including reducing social isolation, preventing falls, managing medication, & signposting to appropriate services such as counselling, exercise & weight management, & befriending services. Kate left contact details.

An exit poll showed

100% of participants found the session very interesting,

100% of participants found it Informative and of those 92% found it very informative.

100% of participants found it worthwhile and of those 92% found it very worthwhile.

Jan HartSecretary 04.09.2013