

AFTER A DEMENTIA DIAGNOSIS

A diagnosis explains what may be happening.

It does not tell a family how to manage Monday morning.



No jargon. No politics. Just practical ideas for creating a more manageable week after a dementia diagnosis.

A free guide for families across Bristol, South Gloucestershire and BANES

When the appointment is over, ordinary life carries on

You may leave a diagnosis appointment with leaflets, follow-up information and a name for what has been changing. Then Monday arrives—and the questions are completely practical.



The diagnosis may explain...	Monday morning still asks...
Changes in memory, thinking or behaviour	Who is making sure Dad has breakfast?
Why familiar tasks have become harder	How do we introduce help without a battle?

You are not behind. Most families build the practical plan gradually. Start with the part of the week that is causing the most worry.

Three questions to begin with

- What is currently hardest before lunchtime?
- What still goes well and should be protected?
- What could one reliable person take off the family's shoulders?

1. Rebuild the week around familiar anchors



A helpful routine is not a strict timetable. It is a handful of familiar points that make the day easier to recognise and reduce the number of decisions somebody has to make.

Choose four anchors

Morning A familiar wake-up time, breakfast and medication routine.	Midday Lunch, a regular visitor or one planned job.
Afternoon An outing, music, a club or a favourite programme.	Evening A familiar meal, lighting and bedtime pattern.

Keep what feels like them

- A former office worker may enjoy sorting post or checking a list.
- Someone who always cooked may still enjoy choosing lunch or preparing vegetables.
- A football supporter may respond better to a match or sports programme than a generic “activity”.

Try saying... “It’s Monday, so Grace is coming to help with lunch, then you’re going to the garden centre.”

2. Introduce support through something familiar



“I don’t need help” may really mean “I don’t want to lose control” or “I don’t want a stranger in my home.” The first introduction matters.

Make the first visit easier

- Begin with a purpose Dad already accepts: lunch, shopping, a lift, laundry, the garden or company for an outing.
- Use the person’s name and role. “Sam is coming to help with lunch” can feel easier than “your carer is coming”.
- Choose a time of day when Dad is usually at his best.
- Use the same familiar person wherever possible.
- Let the relationship build before adding more personal tasks, unless there is an immediate safety need.

If support is refused Step back and try a different time, reason or wording. A difficult first attempt does not mean support will never work.

A diagnosis does not remove choice

Dementia does not automatically mean somebody cannot make decisions. If you are worried about an important decision, ask the relevant health or social care professional for advice about capacity and the person’s wishes.

3. Put connection back into the week



A person can be safe at home and still face very long, lonely days. The right company or activity can support confidence, conversation, movement, appetite and a sense of purpose.

Match the support to the person

- Someone who dislikes groups may prefer one-to-one companionship or an outing.
- Someone who previously enjoyed clubs may welcome a consistent day service with familiar faces.
- Music, dancing, gardening and practical tasks can create connection without relying on memory.

Before choosing a day service, ask...

- Will the faces remain familiar?
- How are eating, drinking, toileting and continence needs supported?
- Can the family visit or arrange a taster session first?
- How will meaningful changes be shared with relatives?

Your Care Dementia Day Club A calm six-hour day in Hanham with familiar faces, meaningful activities and practical support. Families can arrange an informal conversation and taster session before deciding.

4. Make a plan for the family carer too



Family carers often become the organiser, shopper, appointment keeper, medication checker and emotional safety net—while also working, parenting or managing their own health.

Take one job off the invisible list

- Give relatives a specific, repeatable job rather than asking, “Can anyone help?”
- Ask the council for a carer’s assessment, which looks at how caring affects your wellbeing and what support may help.
- Tell your employer if caring is affecting work and ask what flexibility or carers’ support is available.

Accepting support is not abandoning somebody. It can help you remain their daughter, son, partner or friend—not only the person managing every task.

What about food and drink?

Changes in appetite, weight, drinking or the ability to prepare food are important to notice. Rather than repeating all the advice here, download our separate Food and Drinks Guide for practical mealtime ideas, a seven-day meal plan and a family food-and-drink record.

Download the separate guide Look for the Your Care Food and Drinks Guide on our website, or ask the office to send you a copy.

A sudden or marked change in confusion, alertness, mobility, behaviour, eating or drinking should not simply be assumed to be dementia. Contact the GP or NHS 111; call 999 in an emergency.

Who can help with what?

A dementia diagnosis and a care needs assessment are different things. You can ask the local council for an assessment when everyday tasks such as washing, dressing, cooking, shopping, staying safe or getting out are becoming difficult.

Prepare these three things

- Real examples of what happens on a difficult day—not only how things look during a short visit.
- The unpaid help already being provided and what would happen if it stopped.
- What matters to the person: staying at home, continuing a hobby, eating properly or seeing friends.

Your area	Starting point
Bristol	Care Direct: 0117 922 2700 or Bristol City Council's Adult Care referral form.
South Gloucestershire	Request care and support online, call 01454 868007 or email CSODesk@southglos.gov.uk.
Bath & North East Somerset	Use the B&NES Adult Social Care Portal Referral Form. Community Wellbeing Hub: 0300 247 0050.

Other useful routes

- GP or memory service: changes in health, medication, mood, sleep, behaviour, swallowing or mobility.
- Occupational therapy: equipment, adaptations and safer ways to manage daily tasks.
- Carer organisations: assessments, advice, groups and emotional support.
- Alzheimer's Society: 0333 150 3456. Dementia UK Admiral Nurse Helpline: 0800 888 6678.

Contact details checked 3 August 2026. Services can change, so please verify them before a future reprint.

YOUR ONE-PAGE FAMILY PLAN

Make next Monday feel more manageable

Choose one priority. You do not need to solve the whole future today.

The part of the day causing most worry is...

One thing that is still going well is...

Our first practical priority is...

The person or service we will contact is...

One regular point of support we could try is...

We will review this on...

A helpful first step One consistent visit, one regular day or one honest conversation can be enough to make the week feel less uncertain.

Want to talk it through?

Contact Your Care for an informal conversation about home support or Your Care Dementia Day Club.

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Thoughtful care from our family to yours.