

## More support for people with dementia in Walsall



A £323,956 support service for the thousands of people living with dementia in Walsall has been guaranteed for another two years.

Pathways 4 Life, a partnership between the Accord Group and Age UK Walsall, will continue to run seven free dementia cafes across the borough after receiving funding from NHS Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group and Walsall Council. The contract also includes four hospital support workers, being employed by Age UK Walsall.

The unique services will continue to offer people in Walsall with dementia, their carers and family, specialised support and advice from different bases across the town.

Seven café-style support groups will be held in Walsall town centre, Aldridge, Pelsall, Brownhills, Willenhall, Pleck and Bloxwich, all providing people with free advice about the condition and an opportunity to socialise in an informal setting.

In addition, four dementia support workers will continue to work on hospital wards to improve dementia care for patients during their stay. By working alongside ward staff and the older peoples' mental health team, the support workers will provide advice, guidance and signposting to services and information.

Nicole Beeching, Head of Service Development at the Accord Group, said: "With so many people in Walsall being affected by dementia it is vital that we continue to offer support.

"Our dementia cafés and dementia support workers are also crucial to the wider family network and carers as we offer a range of social activities as well as opportunities to share experiences and coping mechanisms."

â€œWe really hope as many people as possible come along and benefit from the service.â€

More than 3,000 people in Walsall are believed to have dementia and two thirds of these have a diagnosis. This figure is set to rise with the increase of older people.

Symptoms of the condition, which affects 850,000 people across the UK, commonly include memory loss, confusion and problems with speech and understanding.

Michael Hurt, Head of Older People and Dementia for the Clinical Commissioning Group and council said: â€œWe are pleased to commission this service for the people of Walsall. Supporting people with dementia and their carers is a priority for NHS Walsall CCG and Walsall Councilâ€.

Pathways 4 Life operate a number of weekly services - funded by NHS Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group and Walsall Council - to support people with dementia and their carers.

---