

**Haringey Memory Service
Victoria Unit**

For more information about the START Programme please
contact

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Haringey Memory Service
Victoria Unit
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Strategies for Carers

START

Supporting people who care for someone with dementia



Are you caring for someone with dementia?

Would you like to know more about...

Managing stress and feeling down?

Dealing with your worries about caring?

Improving your communication skills?

Learning ways to relax and improve your own well-being?

If so – we would like to help you!

Introduction

Caring for someone with dementia can be stressful. The difficulties of managing the behaviours associated with dementia might leave you feeling worried, down, confused or frustrated. You might feel you don't know how to solve problems, or that you aren't looking after yourself very well.

START is a programme created especially for carers to help them to develop strategies for managing these difficult emotions and behaviours.

What does START involve?

START involves up to 8 hour-long sessions with one of the team at Haringey Memory Service. You will be encouraged to talk about recent problems that have arisen while helping the person you care for with dementia. Together, you will come up with some ways of dealing with these issues. We will also help you find ways to relax.

Topics covered in START include:

- Introduction to dementia and memory loss
- Managing stress and unhelpful thoughts
- Dealing with difficult behaviours
- Improving assertiveness
- Communicating with someone with dementia
- Planning for the future
- Relaxation and pleasant activities

You will also be given some short exercises to do between sessions, for example, keeping a mood diary.

Where are START sessions held?

Appointments will be held at the Victoria Unit at St Ann's Hospital. If this is likely to be difficult for you, we can discuss other options that could suit your needs.

Will what I say remain private?

We work within strict codes of practice which means that everything we discuss remains confidential, unless we believe that you or others may be at risk of harm. In this case, we would try to talk to you about this and would liaise with your GP and other professionals as necessary.

How can I access the START programme?

If you like the sound of START and wish to take part, please speak to your doctor, nurse or psychologist at Haringey Memory Service who can make the referral.

What will happen then?

You will be contacted by telephone and we will talk to you in more detail about the difficulties you are experiencing. We will complete a brief assessment to see whether START would meet your needs. After this, we will contact you to arrange up to eight hour-long appointments or we will provide some information about help available from other local services.

You need to be able to commit to all 8 sessions to access the START programme but if this is likely to be difficult for you, please call to discuss how we can best support your needs.