

Dementia Awareness Stage One Tool Kit

Are you interested in becoming more dementia aware at your venue? Chapter, Clywd Theatr Cymru and Pontio's shared Dementia Officer has put together this handy guide for venues exploring the possibilities of running dementia friendly screenings. Here are some the essentials things you might need to know when organizing and running a simple, cost effective dementia event.

1). Dementia Friends Training: <https://www.dementiafriends.org.uk/>

This is a free 45 minute information session provided by the Alzheimer's Society. It would be useful for one key member of staff to undertake the 'Dementia Friends Champion' training which then enables that person to deliver the information sessions more frequently, and to ensure all staff/volunteers become Dementia Friends.

2). Volunteers

Having more hands, especially Dementia Friends would provide a more welcoming atmosphere for people with dementia, especially upon greeting at the venue. They can welcome people, chat to them, help with directions, or guide them through purchasing tickets. They may need help with refreshments, getting seated, and with any questions about the day.

3). Building Audit: <http://www.innovationsindementia.org.uk/HowToDoAnAudit.pdf>

This can be kept quite simple, the main points you need to consider are:

- Signage - Are all the main areas signposted (toilets, box office, stairs, lifts, cinema and refreshments)? Don't forget to make them clear, and a different colour to the wall,
- Ensure spaces are clear and clutter free for access,
- Lights - If your venue is slightly darker in places, make sure the lights are up, to ensure the best possible visibility,
- All glass doors should be clearly marked,
- Even flooring is important, with no trip hazards,
- Colours should also be considered, e.g. a big black mat can look like a big black hole to people with dementia. Likewise, a patterned floor can cause confusion,
- Seating - Are there seating areas for people to rest if they get tired, or arrive early?

4). Dementia Friendly Screenings:

- Lighting - There should be low level lighting in the screening, to allow people to come in and out of the cinema as they please without the risk of falling over. The lights should not be so bright that they distract from the experience of the cinema,
- Sound - The sound levels should be quieter than for a standard screening, especially if there are loud scenes, such as shouting, racing, music, shooting etc,
- Subtitles - Where possible and if appropriate, the use of subtitles are helpful to people with harder hearing, so that inaudible phrases or comments are not missed,

- No ads or trailers - This will enable people with dementia to hopefully enjoy the whole film without having the added time,
- Greeting - This is optional, but it can feel welcoming for a member of staff to introduce the film and make any health and safety or general announcements beforehand,
- Social/refreshments - Again, this could be optional but it has been fed-back frequently, that people enjoy making a social occasion of coming to the cinema. Providing refreshments as part of the ticket price, gives people with dementia and their carers an opportunity to talk with their peers and enjoy their experience.

Outside organisations:

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk>

<http://www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru/>

<http://www.crossroadscaresw.org.uk/>

<http://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/>

There may be many other organisations in your local area who would be happy to share information about Dementia Friendly Screenings, such as the NHS Mental Health Team, local care homes and GP surgeries. You may also like to try and reach out to community groups and the county council:

<https://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-councillors>

Engagement & Feedback

Quite often people make assumptions on what people with dementia would like to watch at a cinema. If you want to know what genre of film would be appropriate, consult with your audience. Alzheimer's Society may be able to facilitate a visit to your local group or meeting to discuss any programming ideas or suggestions, to get an idea of what people with dementia would come to watch.

Likewise, after a Dementia Friendly screening, try to gather information, such as what they liked or disliked and contact information for future screenings. This can be done in a number of ways and will depend on what you think would best suit your venue and your audience.

Further Information

There is a fountain of information and resources out there, but here are a few recommended links:

[Becoming a dementia-friendly arts venue: a practical guide](#)

[Empowering people with memory loss through artistic stimulation](#)

[Dementia Engagement and Empowerment \(DEEP\)](#)

[West Yorkshire Playhouse Guide to Dementia Friendly Performance:](#)

[The Duke's Lancaster; A life More Ordinary Project](#)

For more information on the FHW Dementia pilot, ran by Clywd Theatr, Chapter and Pontio, including testimonials from audiences, please visit our [website](#)