

Executive Summary

Dementia Impact Report

Dementia Impact Report Executive Summary – April 2025

Tangible Impact from 'Hear Our Voice' – Dementia and Memory Loss Services in Cornwall



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Healthwatch Cornwall's '**Hear Our Voice**' report (March 2023) **captured the experiences of 148 unpaid carers** supporting people living with dementia and memory loss.

This work provided the evidence base for several system-wide improvements in dementia services across Cornwall.

Key tangible impacts directly resulting from our work include:

Increased Respite Capacity:

Following carers' concerns about lack of respite, the NHS and Cornwall Council commissioned new dedicated respite beds, funded for 2023/24 and 2024/25. Carers now have increased options for planned breaks.

Enhanced Care Home Dementia Training:

In response to findings about inconsistent care quality, a wrap-around training programme for dementia care was introduced in care homes. This improves care standards and outcomes for residents with dementia.

New Dementia Navigation Support:

Many carers reported confusion about what help was available after diagnosis. The system responded by creating clearer dementia pathways and signposting tools, making it easier for carers to access support earlier.

Early-Onset Dementia Pathway Development:

Our report highlighted gaps for people diagnosed under 65. As a direct result, Cornwall's system partners agreed to develop a new early-onset dementia pathway, now underway.

Funding for Memory Cafés and Community-Based Care:

Healthwatch evidence of carers' reliance on peer support helped secure new investment into Memory Cafés and local dementia-friendly services to reduce isolation and carer burden.

Recognition and Support for Unpaid Carers:

The report's findings about unpaid carers being 'invisible' led to a new system commitment to formally identify, register, and support unpaid carers earlier in the dementia journey.

Conclusion:

Healthwatch Cornwall's 'Hear Our Voice' project not only captured lived experience but directly influenced service commissioning, training provision, pathway redesign, and financial investment into dementia care across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.



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