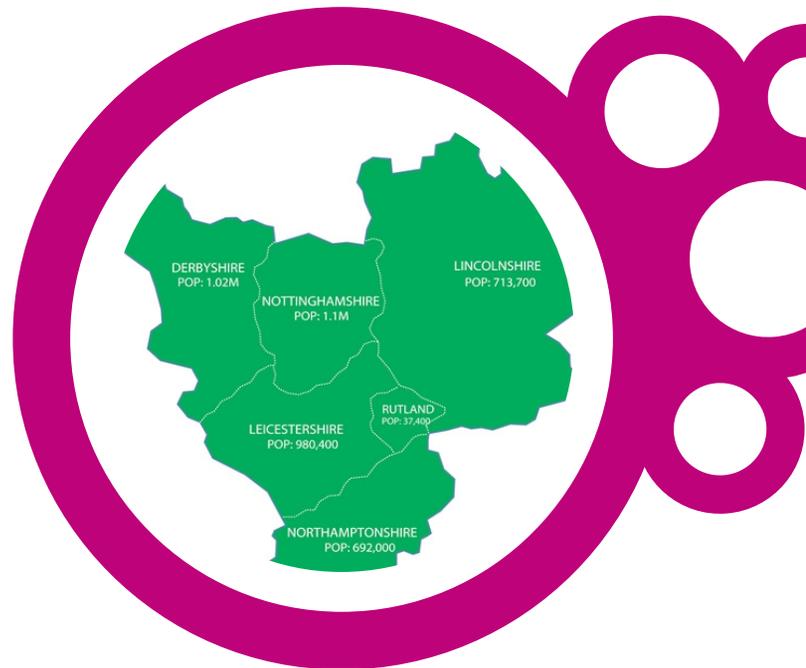


PROMOTING JOIN DEMENTIA RESEARCH ACROSS THE EAST MIDLANDS

Following the Prime Minister's Challenge on Dementia 2020, urging increased accessibility to dementia research opportunities and a greater number of people participating in this research, the Clinical Research Network (CRN) East Midlands appointed a Dementia Challenge Project Manager. Working to promote the number of volunteers signed up to Join Dementia Research and facilitate the use of the Join Dementia Research service as a recruitment tool, the role continues to generate an increased awareness of research, both amongst the regional partner organisations and with the general public.

As a result, the CRN East Midlands has supported a variety of dementia research awareness campaigns, promoting Join Dementia Research across the region. This includes a widespread media campaign, attracting the attention of the local newspaper and BBC East Midlands. Having a chain of collaborative relationships has also allowed the network to work closely with other organisations. Some examples include joining the Alzheimer's Society's Community Roadshow and working in partnership with the University of Nottingham to encourage a dementia-friendly university. The Network is also working with local memory clinics, focusing on supporting research participation among people with dementia.



Collaboration and Communication

The key to a successful Join Dementia Research awareness campaign often lies in effective collaboration and communication. Having a committed research network and a role designed specifically to tackle the Dementia Challenge allows the CRN East Midlands to exhibit this. A multitude of CRN East Midlands teams from primary care, industry and research as well as senior staff and partner organisations are closely involved in supporting the promotion of Join Dementia Research in the East Midlands. This dedication means collaborative working is extremely effective and Join Dementia Research awareness campaigns are very well supported across the region. Raising the profile of dementia research is already a priority in the Network and support for dementia research campaigns is strong.

Communication Campaigns

This collaborative approach gave rise to two extremely successful campaigns to raise awareness of Join Dementia Research, where the CRN East Midlands worked in partnership with Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust and Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust. Working together, they explored the different channels they had available to raise awareness of Join Dementia Research, which



included through the Trusts' channels, Social Media and mainstream media.

Trusts' channels

At Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, Join Dementia Research leaflets can be found in waiting areas, an article about the service appeared in the Trust's newsletter and staff from the local Clinical Research Network also attend events to promote the service as well as Join Dementia Research featuring on their intranet.

The local network are also working with the Trust's Dementia Matron to explore ways to include Join Dementia Research in the dementia clinical pathway and Join Dementia Research is now included in training Dementia Champions, who help to raise awareness about dementia with staff.

At Leicestershire Partnership Trust, a Join Dementia Research leaflet is being included with every staff payslip and the service promoted internally asking

staff to both sign up themselves as well as help promote the service to patients and the wider public. This approach has also been used in another Trust in the East Midlands, Derbyshire Community Health Services NHS Foundation.

Social Media

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust decided to create their own YouTube video, raising awareness of Join Dementia Research with Trust staff and senior leaders. The video incorporated the Trust's own research team and used a volunteer who had been involved in dementia research.

Twitter was also utilised in the week-long campaigns, where the Trusts ensured multiple tweets promoting Join Dementia Research were sent out on a daily basis. Not only is Twitter an extremely rapid means of raising awareness, but it has the potential to reach a vast and varied audience.

Mainstream media

Dementia Challenge Project Manager Goiz-Eder Aspe Juaristi noted that media presence proves a major advantage for raising awareness. Both communication campaign plans with the Trusts (delivered at different times) included press releases. They were both successfully picked up by the local newspapers and both stories featured on BBC East Midlands. The Nottingham coverage included an interview with the Trust's Principal Investigator, Professor Rowan Harwood, Consultant Geriatrician. Not only did this raise awareness of Join Dementia Research within the region, but partner organisations also gained an understanding of Join Dementia Research and how it can be promoted.

Having the collaborative relationship with these organisations enabled the CRN to work closely with the NHS Trusts, planning and organising the most effective methods of raising awareness. It is hoped that campaign activities such as these will continue with other NHS Trusts within the East Midlands and perhaps even nationally.



"It is important to consider how the memory clinics want to support Join Dementia Research. We discuss what resources we have available and how we can tailor them to each memory clinic".



Collaborating with Partner Organisations

A further advantage of having an established clinical research network and effective leadership is that it allows for valuable collaboration with partner organisations. The CRN East Midlands recently undertook multiple collaborative projects including:

Alzheimer's Society Community Roadshow

Alzheimer's Society set up a Dementia Community Roadshow, touring England, Wales and Northern Ireland, providing the public with information and support about dementia. Finding out about this initiative, the CRN East Midlands joined Alzheimer's Society as they passed through multiple locations across the East Midlands, including city centres, market squares and libraries. Staff wore Join Dementia Research t-shirts, distributed leaflets and posters and engaged with the public. The CRN East Midlands also took the opportunity to publicise the event on Social Media. The press also picked up on the roadshow, with articles about Join Dementia Research being published in a number of local newspapers. This was a chance to work with and create a relationship with Alzheimer's Society, which in turn, could lead to future opportunities to collaborate and promote dementia research together.

The University of Nottingham – a dementia-friendly university

The University of Nottingham took on the challenge of becoming a dementia-friendly university. This meant increasing the awareness of dementia with staff and students as well as encouraging people to become Dementia Friends and register with Join Dementia Research. An intranet page where staff and students could document their pledges to becoming Dementia Friends and signing up to Join Dementia Research was created. This also meant the impact of the campaign could be monitored, with public engagement visible through the intranet page. Events across the university promoting the campaign were established, often with the support of the university's professors.

Targeting students can often be quite challenging, particularly as dementia generally affects people

over the age of 65. Innovative ways to raise student awareness were therefore used such as the use of Social Media. A news release within the university magazine was also published. The campaign ended with dementia awareness week and a celebration, involving speakers from around the country. The celebration saw investigators, staff and students come together and was again an opportunity to build new networks, creating further prospects to work collaboratively in the future.

Being a three-month long campaign, Goiz furthermore highlighted the importance of having waves of activity in the communications plan to keep the momentum going.



Tailoring awareness campaigns

The CRN East Midlands is now focusing work to raise awareness of dementia research among people with a dementia diagnosis. To do this, the network is working with memory clinics and has begun discussing the most effective methods of working together in order to promote Join Dementia Research in these clinics.

Goiz adds, "It is important to consider how the memory clinics want to support Join Dementia Research. We discuss what resources we have

available and how we can tailor them to each memory clinic”.

Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust are including Join Dementia Research leaflets in all post-diagnosis packs given to people recently diagnosed with dementia within the Trust.

Top Tips

- Build collaborative relationships with partner organisations and work together to promote Join Dementia Research
- Find common aims with partner organisations to work effectively together to promote research
- Ensure awareness campaigns have a project manager or someone who can lead, support and supervise the project
- Utilise Social Media platforms – this is a rapid way of reaching a widespread audience
- Understand your target audience and tailor campaigns to suit them
- Liaise with partner organisations to work out the most effective ways of utilising and individualising resources to suit the specific project
- Invest in continued relationship with Trusts and partner organisations to explore new avenues for campaigns in the future
- Explore possibilities to engage with local universities to raise awareness of Join Dementia Research

For more information visit:

nhs.joindementiaresearch.nihr.ac.uk