

Relative/Carers Experiences

'Don't over-plan and don't expect too much. Above all else, don't do anything more unless you have extra help and support on the day.'

'Keep it to close family on the day and try to keep to tradition, if there is one within the family. And always remember the person with dementia might be rude to family members and react unexpectedly, but it's the dementia causing it and they don't really mean it. Most of all try and make it fun for all!'

'Remember to schedule periods of rest in throughout the day. When my dad overdoes things, he gets tired and poorly the next day, so we try and keep things reasonably low key.'

'My mum has mixed dementia and loves Christmas. She does get tired and confused about who close relatives are, but you have to be patient to stop them getting distressed. I even turn the page of the newspaper, as she locks on to the one article. There are lots of laughs too.'

'Don't expect too much. Keep things simple and enjoy what you have.'

'My mum lives with me on a permanent basis. She loved Christmas when she was well and still loves it. Last year her grandchildren decorated her zimmer with flashing lights. We try to keep it as normal as possible, but remember it's only one day. Do what you are able to do within the restraints that you have.'

'Simplicity is the best way. Everybody is different, but photos may be a good thing, items that hold good memories for that person (not you) and cuddles, lots of cuddles.'

Useful Contacts

Police

There are 13 Community policing teams operating in Rossendale. They can be contacted on 0845 1 25 35 45.

Alzheimer's Society National Dementia Helpline

Telephone 0300 222 1122 Open 9am - 8pm Monday to Wednesday; 9am - 5pm on Thursday and Friday ; 10am - 4pm on Saturday and Sunday

Rossendale Minor Injuries Unit (MIU)

The MIU is open 7 days a week, 365 days a year from 8am to 8pm.

Pharmacy Openings

Friday 25 December 2015 (**Christmas Day**)
Nearest Pharmacy—Accrington Late Night Pharmacy,
188 Blackburn Road, Accrington
Monday 29 December 2015 (**Boxing Day**)
& Friday 1 January 2016 (**New Year's Day**)
Asda Pharmacy, Rawtenstall

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY ROSSENDALE

Contact details:

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Dementia Friendly Rossendale

DEMENTIA AND CHRISTMAS



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East Lancashire
Clinical Commissioning Group

In the home on Christmas Day

Plan ahead

If the house is unfamiliar to your guest, putting labels on doors could help, for example, the bathroom, the kitchen.

Think About Safety

Make sure you leave lights on and doors open so the person with dementia is less likely to get confused if they are up at night. Remind people to close outside doors securely if needed.

Food and Mealtimes

Don't overload your guest's plate. Although many people eat large amounts of food at Christmas, a full plate can be quite daunting for someone who has difficulties eating.

The person with dementia may feel self-conscious at a large dinner table, so avoid making them feel the centre of attention.

Drink

Drinking excessively can cause arguments and accidents. Ensure drinking stays within sensible limits.

Remember your needs

Congratulate yourself for coping, and for being there for someone who needs you. Try to pace yourself and set realistic goals and remember to take time for yourself.

Quiet Room

If the house becomes very busy, designate a 'quiet room' and agree not to watch television or listen to music in there.

Emotional needs

Think of some activities the person may enjoy doing in quieter moments. Do you have any old photos you could look at together? Try to involve people in your own activities, such as walking or cooking and cleaning.

Religion

Think about their usual or past religious attitudes. Would they like to go to church or listen to hymns?

Singing

It might be enjoyable for the person to sing carols. It's good to do something jointly with other people but singing also stimulates both mind and body.

Relative/Carers Experiences

'My Mum struggled with too many visitors at once and their expectations of her. We suggested people staggered their visits, and explained that Mum was not always able to open gifts or understand them. We kept things very simple and although we would still buy gifts we would introduce them to her environment slowly and without fuss. Mum treasured people and the time they gave her, right up until the day she died, even if she could not remember who they were. Enjoy your special times together.'

'Last year I put all the decorations up at once, which really upset Dad. The decorations are important for Mum (his main carer) and need to stay, but this year I'm going to introduce them over a few days.'

'Enjoy Christmas in their world, whatever that world is on the day. So what if they don't pull a cracker or eat Christmas pudding? It doesn't matter, just enjoy it while you can.'

'It is possible to live well with dementia'