

DEMENTIA STRATEGY

2016–2020



Esbjerg
Municipality

Preface

Esbjerg Municipality takes the challenge of dementia seriously. We want to be an even more dementia-friendly municipality for the benefit of people with dementia and their caregivers. As the fifth-largest municipality in Denmark, we want to help develop services in relation to dementia in order to help people with dementia and their caregivers to enjoy the best possible quality of life.

Dementia Strategy 2016-2020 describes the ambitious vision and the action areas that will help to make that vision a reality. The strategy was prepared by Health & Care and is intended for members of the public, employees and politicians in Esbjerg Municipality.

The Dementia Strategy is based on Esbjerg Municipality's Vision 2020, Health Policy 2015-2020, Senior Citizens Policy and Dignity Policy. At the same time, the strategy is based on national recommendations from **the Danish Dementia Research Centre** and **the National Clinical Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Dementia** from the Danish Health Authority.

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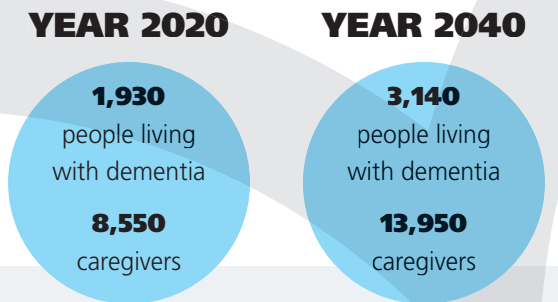


Vision

Esbjerg Municipality wants to be a **dementia-friendly municipality**. With that in mind, the municipality's Dementia Strategy 2016-2020 takes as its starting point the **latest knowledge and evidence**, while simultaneously inviting members of the public and partners to enter into a process of involvement. We are doing this with a view to securing the link between the latest technical knowledge and everyday living with dementia in order to create **the best possible quality of life for people with dementia and their caregivers**.

WHAT SORT OF CHALLENGES DOES ESBJERG MUNICIPALITY FACE HERE?

Dementia is a blanket designation for a number of cerebral disorders that increasingly impair memory as the disease progresses. The number of people with dementia will rise significantly in the next 30 years. As more and more of us live longer, and the incidence of dementia increases with age, by



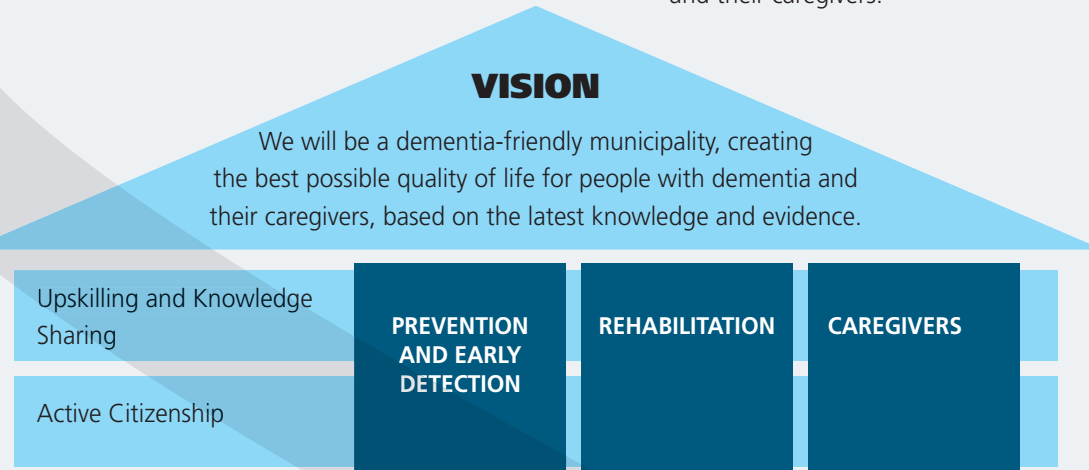
2020 Esbjerg Municipality will have approximately 1,930 residents over the age of 60 diagnosed with dementia and 8,550 caregivers, while by 2040 there will be approximately 3,140 people over the age of 60 diagnosed with dementia and 13,950 caregivers.

ACTION AREAS

Our vision for dementia services will be implemented via five action areas:

- Prevention and early detection
- Rehabilitation
- Caregivers
- Upskilling and knowledge sharing
- Active citizenship

These areas have been selected based on existing knowledge and experience from Denmark and abroad that indicates the particular relevance of these areas when it comes to creating the best possible quality of life for people with dementia and their caregivers.



The action areas of Upskilling and Knowledge Sharing and Active Citizenship permeate all the other areas, as they are the prerequisites for making the other three action areas a reality.

Dignity and Dementia

WE WANT TO PUT THE SPOTLIGHT ON DIGNIFIED LIVING CONDITIONS IN OUR SUPPORT OF PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR CAREGIVERS, WITH A VIEW TO CREATING THE BEST POSSIBLE QUALITY OF LIFE.

Dementia disorders entail massive human costs. People with dementia experience functional impairments with loss of capacity and skills, which means they may often experience unhappiness, anxiety and despair. Caregivers, too, may feel that the person they know and love is gradually changing and becoming lost to them.

Both parties experience the dementia sufferer's loss of dignity as a threat and an emotional burden, and caregivers are exposed to major practical and social burdens from living with someone who has dementia.

Many ethical questions are associated with being a dementia sufferer. What are the best ways to keep a person with dementia safe? For example, is it acceptable to lock someone with dementia indoors or to undertake surveillance? Where does the boundary lie regarding how much control you can take over a person to protect that person from himself/herself? Esbjerg Municipality maintains a steady focus on how best to support both sufferer and caregivers in a manner that enables a dignified life that is worth living.

People with dementia in Esbjerg Municipality must be cared for with dignity and respect. Some of the prerequisites here are knowledge of the person's social history, a positive relationship with caregivers, and the empathy to be able to put oneself in the dementia sufferer's shoes.

Esbjerg Municipality aims to work to the highest ethical and professional standards in relation to dementia. We do so by showing respect to patients, caregivers and professionals and, through involvement, by understanding and meeting the needs of the target groups. We show respect for the special ethical challenges associated with working with dementia sufferers whose autonomy and capacity to act are compromised by the disease. An important point here is for staff to be knowledgeable about and to respect the individual person's right to self-determination.



Prevention and Early Detection

WE WISH TO FOCUS ON A HEALTHY, ACTIVE LATER LIFE AND, IN SO DOING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, PREVENT DEMENTIA. IN ADDITION, WE AIM TO PROMOTE EARLY DETECTION OF DEMENTIA WITH A VIEW TO LESSENING ITS CONSEQUENCES. THE GOAL IS TO INCREASE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR CAREGIVERS.

The causes of dementia are many and varied. A whole raft of lifestyle factors such as exercise, smoking, diet, alcohol, depression and social involvement are associated with an increased risk of developing dementia. When it comes to preventing dementia, therefore, it is important to have a wide-ranging focus on physical and social aspects, just as in the prevention of other chronic conditions (Source: Danish Dementia Research Centre).

APPROACHING 2020 WE WILL:

☑ **Strengthen preventive efforts in relation to lifestyle factors such as diet, smoking, alcohol and exercise among senior citizens**

We must ensure that sufficient preventive initiatives are in place to contribute to reducing the risk of people developing dementia. In order to be relevant, it is important for such services to be tailored to the needs and wishes of elderly people. Additionally, we must support information campaigns designed to inform the public about the link between lifestyle factors and dementia, and what individuals can do for themselves to reduce the risk.

☑ **Boost cooperation for the early detection of dementia involving the municipality, GPs, the hospital and organised associations for elderly people**

In our existing cooperation with GPs, Southwest Jutland Hospital and local organised associations for elderly people, we must focus more on detecting dementia and make the effort to work together closely in this matter. We must also look inward and upskill our nursing staff to spot people with possible early symptoms of dementia.

TECHNOLOGY LIBRARY

The technology library provides advice and loans out technological aids to people with dementia and their caregivers. For example, these aids can help people to structure their everyday activities and tasks, to remember appointments and to help them to find their way around on their own using GPS. These aids support people with dementia in retaining or regaining a high degree of independence and independent living, enabling them to manage on their own in their own homes for as long as possible.

DEMENTIA TRAINING

Physical training for people with dementia living at home was trialled in 2014 in a pilot project at Esbjerg Sundhedscenter (Esbjerg Health Centre). The people involved felt an effect in a number of physical areas that helped them to be more independent in day-to-day living. Caregivers had the opportunity to share experiences and perceptions while the exercise classes were in progress, and that was a significant factor in the project. As a result of the good feedback, exercise classes for people with dementia are now a permanent fixture at Esbjerg Health Centre.

MYTH

TO A CERTAIN EXTENT, REGULAR EXERCISE AND HEALTHY EATING CAN HELP TO REDUCE THE RISK OF DEVELOPING DEMENTIA

TRUE

Rehabilitation

WE ARE KEEN TO SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR CAREGIVERS IN LIVING A LIFE THAT THEY FIND MEANINGFUL AND DIGNIFIED. CROSS-AGENCY COOPERATION FOCUSED ON THE PERSON IS IMPORTANT TO ENSURE CONTINUITY, AND TO ENSURE THAT INITIATIVES AND HOUSING ARE ADAPTED TO THE NEEDS AND WISHES OF INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR CAREGIVERS.

Rehabilitation of dementia sufferers ranges from the efforts required to support relatively well-functioning people in their own homes, to the nursing and care required by people with severe dementia in care centres. Irrespective of the person's rehabilitation needs, in our view a crucial factor is the ability to adapt rehabilitation efforts so that these are perceived as widely as possible as meaningful and dignified for dementia sufferers and their caregivers. Beyond this, going forward, we believe a stronger focus is needed on the organisation of urban spaces and homes to adapt them to the needs of dementia sufferers and their caregivers.

DEMENTIA – INDEPENDENT LIVING

Esbjerg Municipality has been involved in a project with partners including Varde Municipality and Southwest Jutland Development Forum (SVUF) with a focus on new knowledge about designing for people with dementia. The starting point of the project was those who know the most about dementia: the sufferers themselves, and their caregivers. Accordingly, the results are based on the insights derived from these discussions with members of the public.

COOPERATION WITH GERIATRIC PSYCHIATRY ON DEMENTIA

A successful partnership has been established to coordinate the pathway of initiatives for people with dementia and their caregivers.

KREBSESTIEN

This care centre will comprise approximately 100 sheltered housing units for people with dementia. The ground floor will have a health centre with a clinic, with nurses, exercise facilities, a café and a GP. The ambition is to implement the latest and most useful knowledge about dementia in the centre and in the individual home units. In addition, the centre will be open to the wider community, offering residents active everyday life as part of the local community. The surrounding homes will be elderly-friendly. The homes are planned as a mix of terraced houses and flats. We expect the care centre will open its doors in 2019.



APPROACHING 2020 WE WILL:

☑ Strengthen the focus on cohesive pathways involving relevant parties via pathway coordination

We must work towards people with dementia and their caregivers perceiving a more cohesive pathway both within the municipality and between the municipality, the hospital and GPs. Open dialogue is vital between the parties and, not least, with individuals, in order to create unambiguous, shared goals for the individual client pathway.

☑ Boosting collaboration with geriatric psychiatry for systematised referral to municipal dementia services for those who have been diagnosed

Successful collaboration is already in place between Esbjerg Municipality and geriatric psychiatry in The Region of Southern Denmark. We want to strengthen this collaboration even further and ensure that people with dementia and their caregivers are systematically referred to the array of municipal dementia services already in existence. The municipality's own staff play a key role here when it comes to making known existing and new services, to keep our partners up to date.

☑ Working to develop neighbourhoods to adapt them to the needs of people with dementia – (Krebsestien and Østerbyen)

As more and more people will have dementia as time goes by, we believe it makes the most sense not just to focus on optimising conditions at care centres but also to focus on optimising conditions in neighbourhoods where people with dementia live. This will make it possible for people with dementia to continue living in their own homes for as long as possible, whilst navigating their neighbourhood safely. This generates confidence and freedom, not only for the person with dementia but also for caregivers.

☑ Stepping up the development and use of welfare technology solutions to boost confidence and enable independent living

The development of welfare technology aids is progressing apace, and we need to be aware of these developments so that people with dementia and their caregivers can derive the fullest benefit from welfare technology throughout all phases of the progression of dementia. We must continue to prioritise thorough guidance for people with dementia, their caregivers and the municipality's care staff to boost confidence in the use of welfare technology aids that can contribute to better quality of life for people with dementia and their caregivers.

☑ Developing new local health centres with a focus that includes services for people with dementia

By 2019, five new health centres will open their doors in the municipality to ensure there are local services in matters including dementia for people living in the municipality. The new health centres will ensure that people with dementia and their caregivers are looked after in their neighborhood, which can be very important for people with dementia.



MYTH

DEMENTIA AND ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE ARE NOT THE SAME

TRUE

ALZHEIMER'S IS THE MOST FREQUENT CAUSE OF DEMENTIA

Caregivers

WE WANT TO SUPPORT DIGNIFIED, MEANINGFUL DAY-TO-DAY LIVING FOR CAREGIVERS OF PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA, BECAUSE CAREGIVERS OFTEN EXPERIENCE AN EMOTIONAL BURDEN AND MAJOR PRACTICAL AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES WHEN IT COMES TO LIVING WITH A PERSON WHO HAS DEMENTIA.

Dementia is often described as the caregivers' disorder, as the disorder affects not only the person with dementia but the whole family. There is greater mental strain involved in caring for someone with dementia than in caring for someone with purely somatic impairment. As the disease advances, it is common for caregivers to show signs of worry, sadness, reactions of strain and stress – the incidence of actual depression is therefore 2-3 times greater than normal. That is why we regard caregivers as a key target group in our dementia strategy.



APPROACHING 2020 WE WILL:

☑ Focus even more on services for caregivers so that they get help and advice about dementia early in the process, and support to cope with being a caregiver

We must continue to ensure there are relevant services for caregivers in order to create the best conditions to enable all parties to live positively with dementia. It would be beneficial for these services to focus on opportunities for de-stressing and socially inclusive associations, as this will often be a need experienced by many caregivers.

☑ Establish digital caregivers' groups in order to accommodate the needs of more caregivers

It can be especially difficult or awkward for caregivers who are of working age to participate in services outside the home. We must, therefore, trial digital caregivers' groups as a way of embracing more caregivers and perhaps a different type of caregiver from those we currently meet.

CAREGIVERS' GROUPS

Caregivers' groups are offered to caregivers who have a person with dementia living at home. These services give caregivers an opportunity to meet like-minded people in the same situation, which can be valuable when day-to-day living is perhaps mostly focused on the person with dementia. In addition to the opportunity to network, caregivers also receive training in various relevant matters. Experience shows that there is strong demand for caregivers' groups; this highlights the need to include caregivers as a significant target group.

MYTH

DEMENTIA ONLY AFFECTS OLD PEOPLE

FALSE

DEMENTIA DOES NOT ONLY AFFECT OLD PEOPLE. HOWEVER, ADVANCED AGE AND A DISABILITY ARE THE KEY RISK FACTORS FOR DEVELOPING DEMENTIA

Upskilling and Knowledge Sharing

WE WANT SKILLED, PROFESSIONAL STAFF AND SPECIALIST EXPERTISE IN THE FIELD OF DEMENTIA. THAT IS WHY WE ARE FOCUSING EVEN MORE ON UPSKILLING AS A MEANS OF CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF KNOWLEDGE-BASED, PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE.

Esbjerg Municipality has been focusing on developing staff skills in the field of dementia for many years now. It is important for staff to have a sound knowledge base in order to be able to offer people knowledge-based initiatives. This demands a common methodological and professional starting point. Upskilling from an experienced-based, practice-related perspective rooted in our employees' day-to-day relationships and contact with members of the public has proved particularly useful for further developing day-to-day practice. This approach helps to support a culture of caring at our care centres, treating the whole person rather than only the disorder, where people with dementia are given recognition and respect just like anyone else.

To ensure the best possible dissemination and application of the latest evidence when it comes to dementia – for the benefit of individuals as well as staff – knowledge sharing is a key element of our focus on dementia. Accordingly, Esbjerg Municipality has been working on disseminating knowledge via established networks among staff, and has hosted a number of public conferences about dementia, focusing on passing on the latest know-how to people with dementia and their caregivers.

DEMENTIA CONFERENCES

Esbjerg Municipality has hosted three dementia conferences with the focus on disseminating knowledge to people with dementia and their caregivers by means of expert presentations and debating.

APPROACHING 2020 WE WILL:

☑ **Raise the bar of expertise and specialised knowledge about dementia in care work**

With a view to retaining a high level of knowledge, it is important to focus constantly and continually on the professional skills of staff, applying the latest knowledge about dementia in their work and in relation to people with dementia and their caregivers.

☑ **Compile the latest knowledge from the Danish Dementia Research Centre and ensure this knowledge is disseminated to staff, the general public and our partners**

We must ensure that staff working with people who have dementia receive continuous professional and personal upskilling to equip them to do their job. At the same time, we must focus on ensuring that our staff have a shared knowledge base about dementia. We will do this in part by ensuring that staff participate in relevant, ongoing in-service training about dementia.



MYTH

DEMENTIA IS HEREDITARY

FALSE

DEMENTIA IS GENERALLY NOT HEREDITARY. IN ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE, ONLY 2–3% OF CASES ARE DIRECTLY FAMILIAL, WHILST THE CAUSES OF OTHER INSTANCES OF ALZHEIMER'S ARE LESS CERTAIN.

Active Citizenship

WE WANT TO WORK TOGETHER TO TACKLE THE CHALLENGE OF DEMENTIA BY INVITING ORGANISATIONS, INDIVIDUALS, AND BUSINESSES TO BECOME INVOLVED AND HELP TO GET THINGS DONE.

We often hear that public welfare is under pressure. However, pressure on welfare has also given rise to innovation in the ways we practise “welfare” – for example, by focusing on active citizenship and, much more than ever before, focusing on how, acting in concert, we can get things done for one another, by working together.

Esbjerg Municipality supports a dignified, meaningful life for people with dementia and their caregivers by working to involve the wider community in efforts to support individuals with dementia. We do this in part by collaborating with voluntary organisations – including the Alzheimer’s association, Aflastningstjenesten (relief service) and DaneAge Association (Ældre Sagen).

WORKING WITH DIFFERENT ORGANISATIONS

Esbjerg Municipality works with a number of voluntary organisations who offer education and dementia cafés, for example, and support networking opportunities.

APPROACHING 2020 WE WILL:

☑ Support the municipal and voluntary initiatives that offer people with dementia the opportunity to engage with the local community on a day-to-day basis

To create the best possible quality of life for people with dementia, it is important to support these people in their lives, enabling them to go on contributing the resources they do have to the life of the local community. One way of doing so is by starting dementia exercise classes under the auspices of DGI.

☑ Create greater acceptance and knowledge among the wider community with regard to symptoms of dementia

We will put the spotlight on breaking down the stigma and prejudices surrounding dementia by disseminating knowledge about dementia among the people living in Esbjerg Municipality.

☑ Focus more on collaboration with civic society – including the business community

To ensure future welfare for people with dementia and their caregivers, we will pool our resources and harness synergies by participating in partnerships and working closely with voluntary organisations, public institutions, businesses and individuals in the local community.

MYTH

THE WORD “SENILE” MEANS THE SAME AS HAVING DEMENTIA

FALSE

“SENILE” MEANS OLD, BUT IT WAS PREVIOUSLY USED AS A DESIGNATION FOR DEMENTIA

Progression of Dementia



The person who expresses the first suspicion and concern about the onset of dementia could be the person affected, a relative or a healthcare worker. An appointment with the GP is advisable.

The GP may choose to refer the person to the geriatric psychiatry outpatient clinic or the Department of Neurology, or make the diagnosis directly. The GP will make arrangements for a Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE), blood tests and a CT scan. It is advisable for the person to be referred to the geriatric psychiatry outpatient clinic, where he or she can be assessed using cognitive function tests and a CT scan carried out by specialists in this field. The diagnosis is made on the basis of the tests carried out and discussions with the patient.

Someone who is not yet in touch with municipal healthcare workers will be referred to a dementia consultant via Triage or directly from the Geriatric Psychiatry Outpatient Clinic. The dementia consultant will invite the person and caregivers to a pathway coordination meeting for guidance regarding available preventive and supportive initiatives. If intensive support is needed at home in relation to dementia, further triage will be arranged by the municipal dementia coordinator from Care Services. The dementia coordinator may monitor the patient and caregivers, even if practical and/or personal help at home is provided.

FACTS ABOUT DEMENTIA

- Dementia means there are signs of impairment in cerebral function.
- Some of the ways dementia is evident include poor memory and impaired capacity for activities of daily living.
- Dementia often creeps up gradually on people and particularly affects the elderly.
- More than 200 different disorders can result in dementia because they impair the brain.
- Causes of dementia can include Alzheimer's disease, multi-infarct dementia from multiple strokes, alcoholism, Parkinson's disease
- The most frequent cause of dementia is Alzheimer's disease; at least half of all dementia sufferers have this.
- Dementia is due to disease – not age.
- Dementia means the brain is affected:
 - Impaired short-term memory
 - Impaired concentration
 - Difficulty keeping on top of things
 - Difficulty expressing oneself
 - Changes in personality, mood and behaviour.
- Accurate, early diagnosis is important, as treatment to reduce symptoms should ideally be initiated at the start of the progression of the disease.
- Advising the patient and caregivers as well as practical support and relief are the key elements of treatment.

TEN SIGNS OF DEMENTIA:

1. Memory loss
2. Difficulty performing familiar tasks
3. Problems with language
4. Disorientation of time and place
5. Poor or impaired judgement
6. Problems with abstract thinking
7. Misplacing things
8. Changes in mood or behaviour
9. Changes in personality
10. Loss of initiative

Source: The Danish Dementia Research Centre

PARTNERS

