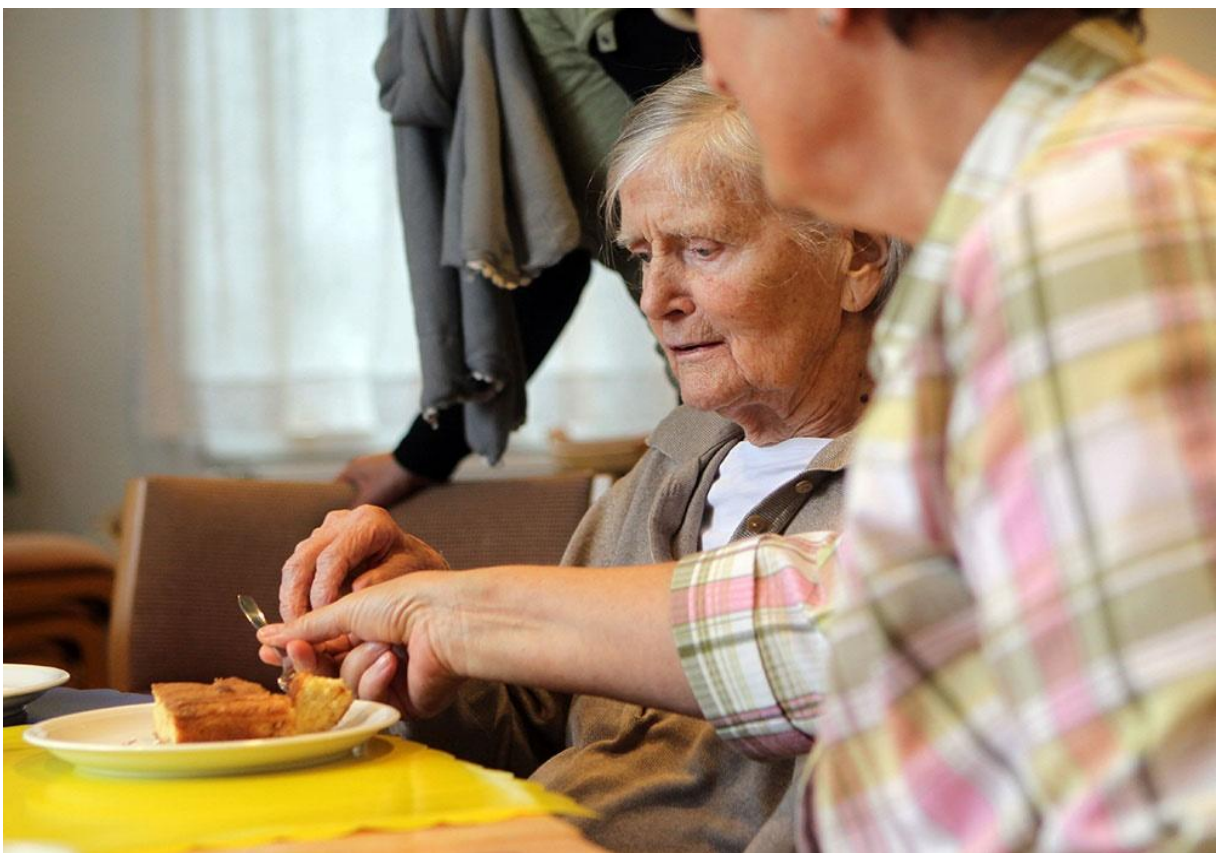


# New dementia training package for nursing staff

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BY **STEVE FORD** News Editor for Nursing Times



A free training package aimed at educating health and social care staff about dementia has been launched by Health Education England.

The [training package](#) provides a basic introduction to dementia and how it affects people and their loved ones.

It was launched today by Health Education England through a collaboration with the University of Bedfordshire, Oxford Brookes University, University of Northampton and University of West London.

The two-year project was commissioned by HEE's Thames Valley branch, with the aim of improving professional knowledge, service delivery and provision for patients with dementia.

Part of it included a review of existing dementia awareness training, with the findings then used to develop the subsequent training package.

Melsina Makaza, senior lecturer in mental health nursing and dementia lead at Bedfordshire, jointly led a pilot of the package involving 1,500 clinical and non-clinical staff from a variety of health and social settings in 2015.

She said: "People often have this misconception that when someone gets dementia, that's it, the person is gone. It's sometimes seen as a death sentence.

"But that's not true," she said. "The person is still there and we need to make sure health and social care professionals at every level know how best to help them in a person-centred way."

The package can be delivered to any health and social care staff group, including doctors, nurses, GPs, midwives, social workers, porters, administrative staff and cleaners, according to HEE.

It also includes videos featuring the lived experiences of people who have dementia, talking about their experience and how the dementia affects them.

"This training package aims to give people with dementia, and their carers, a voice," added Ms Makaza.

"The package is free to access and it has been designed with busy health and social care staff in mind," she said.

"It is user friendly, can be undertaken in a short amount of time and it takes into account the different ways in which people learn," she said. "You can undertake the training at your own pace."

The next stage of the project is to adapt the package so that it can be used to train carers, as well as the building of an interactive website where the training can be accessed at any time.