

Dementia Awareness Week

14th to 20th May 2017



Aron Jarvis

Research Psychologist

What is your role at RICE?

I am a research psychologist. Part of my role is working in the memory clinic. I also work in research; we do a mixture of clinical and academic research. At the moment, I'm working on a project that looks at how a tablet computer can help with peoples' day-to-day living.

Are you involved in any drug trials at the moment?

Yes, quite a lot of them. In a drugs trial, we are trying to see if there's a change in people from the beginning of the drug trial to the end; as psychologists, we assist with that.

How do you recruit people for the drug trials?

It is usually done through the memory clinic. People come and get a diagnosis and are asked at their appointment whether they would like to take part in research. There are a lot of exclusion criteria for drug trials, your blood values and memory test scores have to be in a particular range for example. If someone is not eligible for a trial, we can then keep them on our records and assess them for future trials.

Is there a typical day in your role?

It varies, our memory clinics usually run on three afternoons and one morning per week. We run the support groups on a Friday afternoon. In the meantime, I recruit for my academic studies.

What support services are available at RICE?

We have the living well with dementia group

(LivDem). The focus of that group is for patients to adjust to their recent diagnosis. We are helping people to acknowledge that they have got a memory problem, whilst enabling them to feel more comfortable to talk about their dementia. At the same time we run a group for the carers. It's about the same sort of topics, adjusting to change, but carers have their own challenges that are different to the person with dementia. We offer both practical and emotional advice.

We run a cognitive stimulation group as well. The focus of that is being stimulated. We may play some word games, number games and talk about things that are quite nostalgic; like the cost of things thirty years ago compared to now. It's all about getting people to engage.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your role?

I'd say the most rewarding aspect of my role are the support groups. We are providing emotional support for something that is a big change in the patient and carers' lives.

What does Dementia Awareness week mean to you?

I feel there can still be a stigma around dementia, and any initiative that tries to tackle that in any way is important. It is important to raise awareness. There is a lot of research going on, and even though we have some funding, it's still underfunded compared to other illnesses.

To find out more please contact us at:
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