

NEWS IN BRIEF

Dementia

Of the top 10 causes of death, dementia is the only one we cannot prevent, cure or even slow down, and the scale of the problem is significant. Every three minutes, someone develops dementia, and it is set to be the 21st century's biggest killer.

Dementia imposes huge emotional, social and financial costs on the person, their families, carers and society. It slowly strips people of their memory, relationships and connection to the world, and many will seek help from their trusted law firm on legal matters. Getting the right legal help can make a huge difference to a family and their ability to plan for the future.

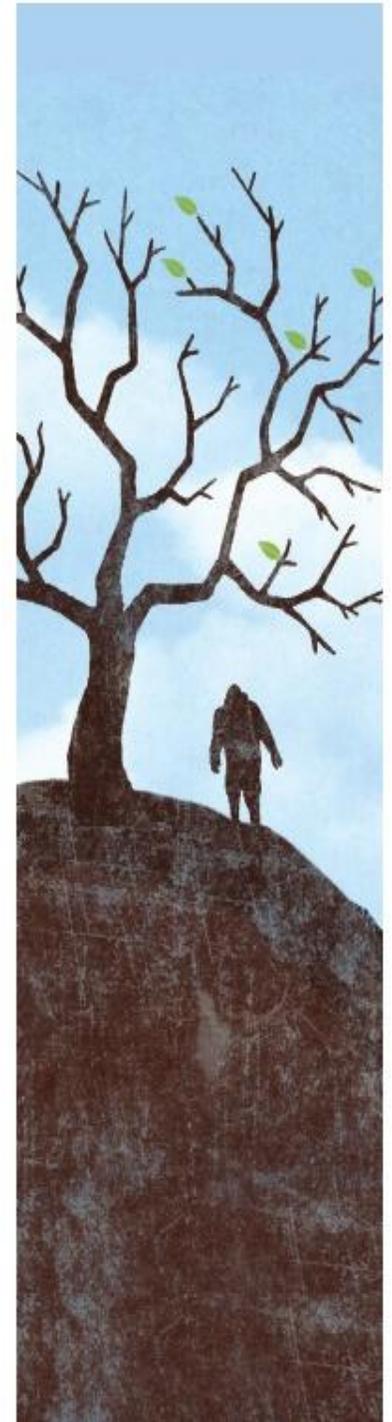
THE FACTS ON DEMENTIA

Dementia itself is not a disease; it is an umbrella term that is used to describe a set of symptoms that occur when the brain is damaged by certain diseases. The diseases affect a person's memory, thinking, problem-solving, concentration and perception. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia – but there are also other types including vascular dementia, dementia with Lewy bodies and frontotemporal dementia. Whatever its form, dementia is progressive and will cause a decline in a person's ability to think, communicate and process new information.

PLANNING AHEAD

Diagnosis rates have increased by 24 per cent over the past five years, from 44.2 per cent in 2011/12, to 68.2 per cent in August 2017, due to a range of factors. Alzheimer's Society has worked hard to increase awareness of dementia and reduce the stigma attached to it which hinders people from seeking help. National monitoring of diagnosis and setting targets to reach a two-thirds diagnosis rate, along with initiatives to improve identification and referrals, have also helped.

All of this means that more people are diagnosed in the earlier stages of the condition when they can make informed decisions,



which means they have more time to plan for their future.

Making legal plans in advance is important for several reasons. It allows the person with dementia to be involved and express their wishes about their future care arrangements and decisions. This eliminates guesswork for families, and allows the person with dementia to designate decision-makers on their behalf. Early planning also allows time to work through the complex legal and financial issues that can be involved in long-term care.

We know that receiving a dementia diagnosis can be a devastating and extremely confusing time, but we encourage people affected by the condition to think about doing things that can help them take control of their lives. One way they can do this is by seeking legal help for making:

- plans for finances and property
- wills and third-party mandates
- lasting powers of attorney (LPAs) for property and financial affairs
- LPAs for health and welfare
- advance decisions to refuse treatment and advance statements.

If you would like a free initial consultation to discuss your situation and options open to you then contact me Chris Berry at:

Address: Berrys Solicitors
247 Church Street
Blackpool
FY1 3PE

Phone: 01253 620 022

Email: berrys.mail@btconnect.com

Website: <http://www.berrys-solicitors.co.uk>

Solicitor: Christopher Berry Principal

Berrys Solicitors is Authorised and Regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority
Firm No: 261147