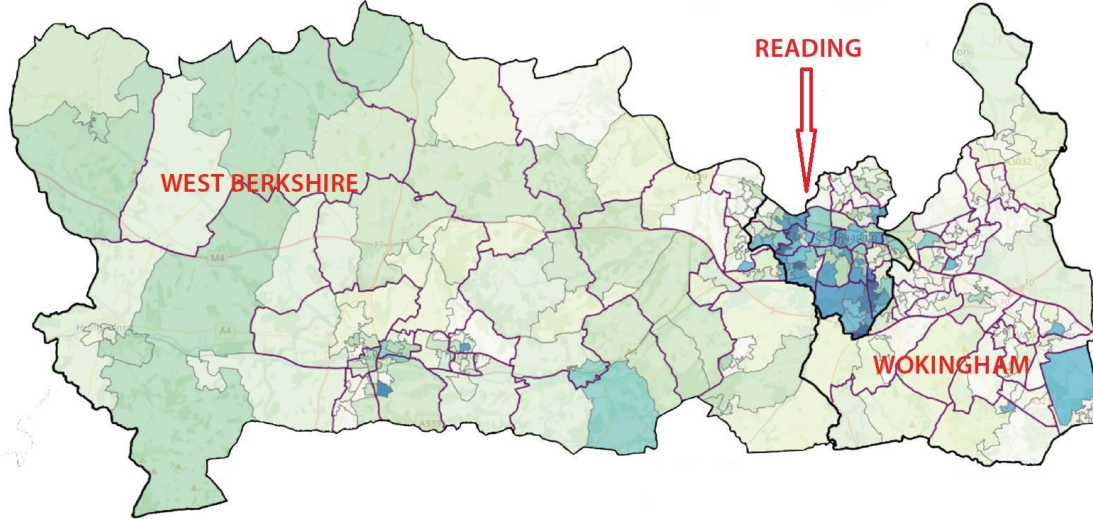


West Berkshire

Older People's Mental Health *Memory Clinic*

Suzanne Wilson & Susan Shelton
West Berkshire Mental Health Services





West Berkshire covers a large geographical area.

The Beechcroft Community Mental Health Team comprises several specialist services, including the Memory Clinic, Home Treatment Team, Community Mental Health Team, Psychology, Occupational Therapy, and Speech and Language Therapy.

In certain cases, it is clinically appropriate to conduct assessments or provide support in patients homes rather than at the clinic at Hillcroft House. While this approach promotes accessibility and person-centred care, it can also result in extended travel times for clinicians due to the region's size.

Urgent Memory Clinic Referrals



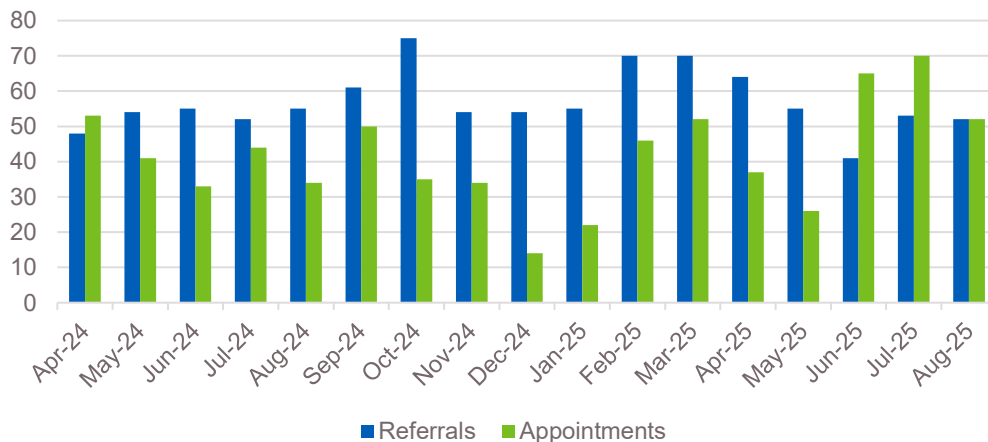
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Referrals are triaged on the day they are received to promptly identify individuals presenting with significant risk factors or acute symptoms, such as severely distressing low mood, anxiety, hallucinations, psychosis, or other concerning clinical features. These referrals are directed to the Community Mental Health Team for assessment and treatment, or to the Home Treatment Team if urgent intervention is required.

Routine Referrals / Appointments

	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25
Referrals	48	54	55	52	55	61	75	54	54	55	70	70	64	55	41	53	52
Appointments	53	41	33	44	34	50	35	34	14	22	46	52	37	26	65	70	52

Memory Clinic Referrals / Appointments Apr '24 to Aug '25 inclusive



This data shows that over the last 3 months we've been able to increase our memory clinic assessment appointments.

During June and July, we have seen more patients than the number of incoming referrals.

Support Provision for Routine Referrals

While waiting for a Memory Clinic Assessment

Support Available Prior to a Memory Clinic Assessment

When a person is accepted for a Memory Clinic Assessment their referral will be reviewed and risk assessed to support a safe, prioritised response. They will receive a letter advising them of the approximate wait time until assessment, contact details for the service in addition to other helpful contacts.

- *Next Steps*, which provides online advice in anticipation of a Memory Service appointment: www.nextsteps.org.uk
- If you have difficulty managing at home some people find it helpful to liaise with the Adult Social Care team. You or next of kin could contact or refer yourself, and this can be done by calling 01635 503050 or online: www.westberks.gov.uk/adultenquiry.
- Support for family members or carers can also be offered by the local AgeUK Carers Partnership: www.ageuk.org.uk/berkshire, info@ageukberkshire.org.uk, & 0118 959 4242.

A Duty Nurse and Duty Doctor is available Monday to Friday 9-5 pm for specialist advice and support if needed. If the person's presentation requires their assessment to be expedited or require input from our CMHT or Home Treatment Team, this can be arranged.

Our regular hours for our Home Treatment Team is Monday to Friday 9-7pm and Saturday and Sunday 9-3pm.

Support Provision

Post Diagnosis and Treatment

Support Available Post Diagnosis

Following Memory Clinic assessment, diagnosis and treatment the service offers:

A post diagnosis pack including resources and helpful information is provided to all patients.

A referral to the Dementia Care Advisor (Alzheimer's Society) is encouraged.

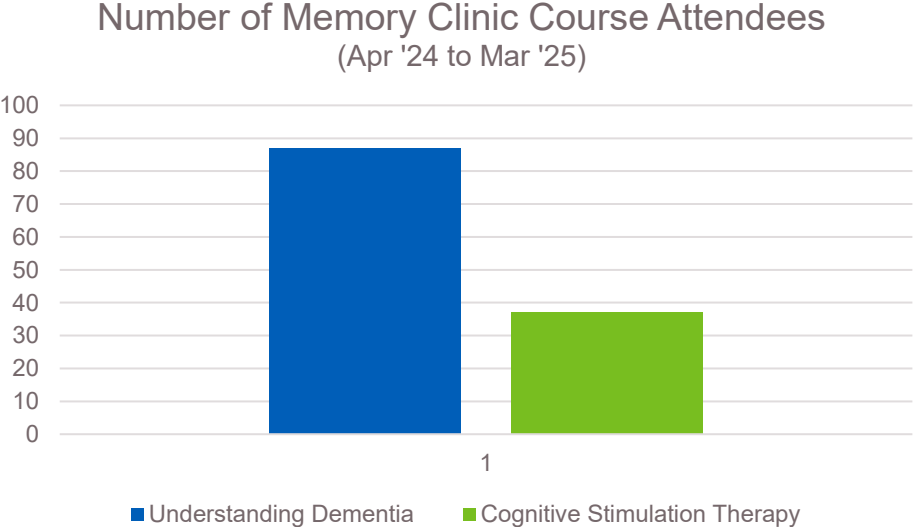
Understanding Dementia Course – This course is designed to support individuals caring for someone who has recently been diagnosed with dementia. It is delivered over six weekly sessions, each lasting two hours. The programme covers a range of essential topics, including an introduction to dementia, strategies for managing memory and communication challenges, understanding and coping with changes in behaviour, physical health considerations, legal matters such as driving and benefits, and planning for ongoing care. The aim is to equip carers with practical knowledge and emotional support to navigate the complexities of dementia care with confidence and compassion

Cognitive Stimulation Therapy

CST is a group aimed at people who are beginning to experience difficulties with some complex brain functions such as: memory, planning organisation and attention. It is a recommended treatment for people with mild to moderate Dementia. The course is comprised of 2 hrs and is run for 8 weeks aiming to exercise parts of the brain to help with memory and thinking skills

Extended assessment and treatment is also available in our wider service including input from: CMHT, Home Treatment Team, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Psychology.

Service Support



Memory Clinic Course	Total Number Attendees
Understanding Dementia	87
Cognitive Stimulation Therapy	37

Key Areas of Work

The Service has worked collaboratively with other Older People's Mental Health (OPMH) teams within Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (BHFT) to achieve MSNAP accreditation. Following the completion of our final submission, we are pleased to confirm that accreditation has now been awarded, reflecting our commitment to delivering high-quality, evidence-based care.

The service has been actively enhancing the knowledge and skills of nursing staff to enable them to conduct Initial Memory Clinic assessments under consultant supervision. This development has strengthened our ability to provide continuity of care for patients, while also expanding our capacity to deliver a greater number of assessments.

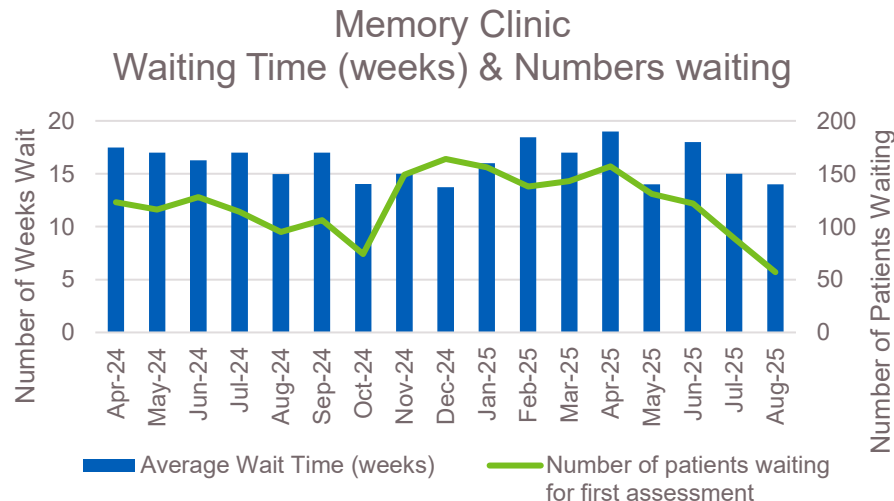
We are currently engaged in discussions to participate in the development of a new Dementia Hub. This initiative presents the potential opportunity to utilise clinic and meeting rooms in collaboration with other dementia services, fostering a more integrated and accessible model of care. While the project remains in its early stages, progress is steady and promising.

With support from the Trust, we have successfully reduced our patient wait list to 57 individuals as of the end of August 2025—down from 164 in December 2024.

Our mean wait time has improved, decreasing from 18 weeks in April 2025 to 14 weeks in August 2025.

Wait Times for Routine Appointments

	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25
Average Wait Time (weeks)	17	17	16	17	15	17	14	15	14	16	18	17	19	14	18	15	14
Number of patients waiting for first assessment	123	116	128	114	95	106	74	149	164	156	138	143	157	131	122	89	57



This chart shows a steady decrease in the number of patients waiting for first assessments since April 2025.

The mean number of weeks wait is sitting at 14 which is the lowest since October last year.

BHFT Memory Clinic Review: Objectives



Berkshire Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

BHFT commenced a collaborative review of Memory Clinic services across Berkshire in September 2024, largely driven by waiting times and variations between our Memory Clinics in different localities.

The Review aims to:

- Understand more about our **variation** between our locality-based memory services
- To make sure that our Memory Clinic offers are **effective, productive** and provide **positive patient and carer experience**
- **Ensure** alignment with **what is needed locally and national best practice**.
- **Consider** where **best practice** in memory services can be more **consistently shared** and **implemented** between localities
- Explore aspects could be **streamlined** or **delivered differently** to **improve patient, carer and staff experience**
- Undertake the review using a **collaborative approach** with staff, carers and patients, and partners

BHFT Memory Clinic Review: Priorities



Berkshire Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

A QI- informed approach has been used to identify the key issues impacting on waits and variation across services. This has been undertaken with stakeholder engagement through a collaborative workshop and ongoing engagement with carer groups and networks.

several key themes have emerged which are being followed up through workstreams:

Standardisation:

Mapping of all our services to identify where we have the the most effective and efficient processes

Clinical variation:

Review of clinical pathways to ensure best evidence-based practice is consistently offered

Strong Leadership:

Ensuring Memory and older adult services have parity with all service areas, and the older adult MH specialism is effectively represented in wider developments.

Access to accurate data:

We are working on accessible and accurate dashboards to enable more accurate monitoring of the memory clinic pathways.

For more information on the review, please contact susanna.yeoman@berkshire.nhs.uk

**Thank you
any questions?**
