**Dementia Friendly Signage** January 2015

Alzheimer’s Society’s dementia friendly signage (DFS) has been developed as part of the Society’s commitment to promoting dementia friendly environments and communities. Initially developed by the Legacy & Recognition Giving Team to be used at Legacy events, dementia friendly environment experts, people living with dementia (PLWD) and their carers have been consulted as part of the project.

Using and promoting DFS will help PLWD orientate themselves in unfamiliar surroundings, and help to encourage use of DFS in the community.

  

**Guidelines for sign creation**

There are several aspects that need to be considered when creating DFS:

* Contrast – there should be a clear contrast between the background colour and the text and images on the sign. This is so the information on the sign is easily discerned. A white background is not advised as it can easily blend into its background, and the colour spectrum from light blue to dark purple can be difficult for some PLWD to see. Yellow is recommended as a strong colour that stands out, and can be easily perceived by PLWD. Black text and symbols on yellow creates a clear sign which PLWD can recognise.
* Text – text on signs should be in title or sentence format, and never all upper case. The easiest font to register for PLWD is Arial.
* Symbols and images – easily recognisable symbols and images should be used on signs to help PLWD to recognise what they are for, or example the male, female and disabled symbols plus a picture of a toilet on toilet signs, and a picture of a plate of food, a drink or cutlery for a kitchen, restaurant or refreshment room. Make sure the symbol used is recognisable – check with others and PLWD to ensure the symbols and images you use are appropriate.
* Size – for most situations A4 sized signs will be adequate. Signs in large areas or outdoors may need to be larger.
* Positioning – the position of your signs is as important as what is on them. If a sign is leading to a room or a toilet, there must also be corresponding signs to lead the way back. They should be spaced so as not to cause confusion, and it is important to note that a “way out” sign is important inside toilets, kitchens and other rooms which may have a closed door to pass through.

Remember, if a PLWD has to go through a door which does not have a window in it, they need to know what is on the other side. It is also advised where possible to make doors to areas PLWD may want to visit stand out – e.g. paint both sides of doors to meeting rooms or toilets (including cubicles) red so they can be identified.

In an enclosed space, such as a lift, a sign indicating where you are is helpful. Also in a corridor with doors without windows, where the doors lead should be signposted.

* Production – signs should be matt, as reflection can obscure or distort the information, and be confusing.

**Room signs**

If you have a meeting room or special event that may be attended by PLWD, it will help them to recognise where they are by informing them of the day, the date, the location and what they are there for. For one-off events these may have to be produced especially for the event, but a board that can be hung with space in the text where the relevant information can be hand written onto it (changing the day and date, for example) in a room regularly used for meetings, services or events will help PLWD to orientate and feel more comfortable.

Example:



Other examples of DFS available externally and used elsewhere:

  

Legacy Event signs [can be viewed here](file:///L%3A/Dementia%20Friendly%20Signage%20-%20Do%20Not%20Move).