



All-Party **Oireachtas Group**
on **Dementia**

MISA @ St James' Hospital, Visit on 24 May, 2017

Clinic bringing together Psychiatry of Old Age, Neurovascular Services, Bone Health, Falls & Syncope, Memory Clinic

Tertiary care

Part of St James Hospital though with national remit

116 inpatient beds

20,000 outpatients/year

Range of medics + allied (physio,OT,SLT,SW, Psy) and social care, nursing

34 years in development

Opened 2016

Host: Mathew Gibbs, Senior Social Worker with Dr Kevin McCarroll, Dr Rosaleen Lennon and Ann Kenny also present

Attendees: Senators Devine, Hopkins & Kelleher

Notes and reflections

Memory Clinic under leadership of Dr Brian Lawlor main focus of visit

- Admission and referral via GPs. Takes referrals from all over Ireland to offer diagnosis
- Referrals triaged
- Main interest : growing group of unusual/complex cases including people with early onset
- Big research focus and interest
- Waiting times up to 3 months for appointments
- 500 people seen annually
- In-depth questionnaire follows referral being accepted
- Care taken with referral process, signage and directions to clinic and diagnosis experience with family member encouraged to attend as well. Receptionist key to positive experience. Environment key to success and clinic well appointed
- Appointment commences with session with Neuro Psychologist who undertakes bespoke tests tailored for each person with information from questionnaire and other sources. This session can take up to 1.5 hours
- Brain scan and blood tests also part of diagnosis process
- Diagnosis can take up to 1 year depending on complexity

- Following diagnosis, disclosure given with great care with medication and strategy to manage condition
- Around 20 Memory Clinics in Ireland although each different in scale, offer etc.

Improvements for people with dementia?

- Opportunity to develop more 'satellite' Memory Clinics from hub of excellence like St James'
- Standardisation of what something called a 'Memory Clinic' should offer
- Purpose built environment critical as well as sensitive and thoughtful diagnostic process
- Access to post diagnosis after care including GP with knowledge, Dementia Adviser and Home Care key to enable people to live well with dementia at home and avoid hospital admission.
- St James' hospital has 'Home First' programme focusing on people over 70 years. Social Work and social care under resourced with Home Care providers and Home Care workers hard to recruit and retain in Dublin
- A specific strategy for under 65s diagnosed including employment & appropriate care setting
- Also need to develop protocols for specific groups i.e. people with Down Syndrome
- Mentioned parts of country where big gaps in support for people with dementia i.e. Athlone