

For more information please contact Dementia and Delirium Team on: 0151 676 5253

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) provides information for people about delirium.

[www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG103](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG103)

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## Delirium Prevention Programme: Using volunteers to enhance patient care

This leaflet can be made available  
in alternative languages / formats on request.

如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式  
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona  
w innych językach/formatach.

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## What is delirium?

Delirium is a state of mental confusion. It is also known as acute confusion. Delirium is a common condition that can come on suddenly, or over a few hours / days. It is a sign that someone is physically unwell. It usually lifts when the condition causing the delirium is treated. Sometimes it can be prevented, but individual circumstances can make you more susceptible to experiencing delirium.

## What are the features of delirium?

### Features of delirium can include:

- Restlessness and being upset
- Not making any sense
- Poor concentration
- Forgetfulness
- Sluggishness
- Slurred speech
- Seeing or hearing imaginary things
- Mixing up day and night
- Having trouble staying awake
- Being quiet and withdrawn
- Being more alert than normal

## Who is at risk of delirium?

### People are at risk of delirium if they:

- Are 65 or older
- Have difficulties with memory or understanding (known as cognitive impairment) or have dementia
- Have a broken hip
- Are seriously ill

“Prevention of Delirium” Volunteers are trained to help ward staff to try and prevent / reduce a patients risk of delirium.

The volunteers play an invaluable, complementary role to that of the ward staff in the work of delirium prevention.

### They do this by:

- Encouraging you to eat and drink
- Befriending, orientation and mental stimulation
- Making sure you can use your glasses and hearing aid and they are in reach
- Helping with activities to make hospital less boring

Some volunteers have received training in wheelchair use. In agreement with both the patient and nurse in charge, they can escort the patient to agreed areas in the hospital.

