

Dementia is a syndrome (a group of related symptoms) that is associated with an on-going decline of the brain and its abilities. While it is not possible to prevent all cases of dementia, there are some measures that can help prevent vascular dementia

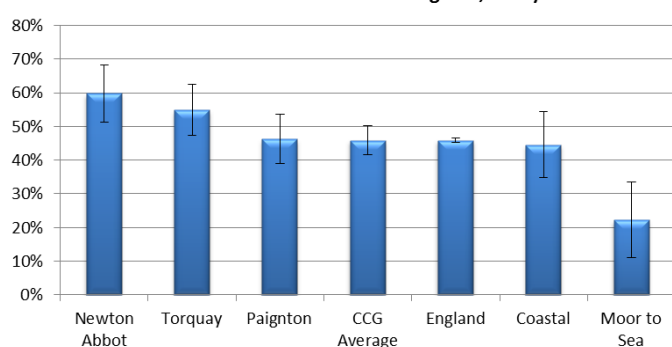
An early diagnosis can help people with dementia get the right treatment and support, and help those close to them to prepare and plan for the future. With treatment and support, many people are able to lead active, fulfilled lives.

As society ages, the number of people with dementia is expected to increase. Across South Devon there are around **2,300** registered patients on a dementia disease register (around 3.6% of the over 65 population). However, population level prevalence estimates suggests the actual number of persons with dementia is nearer **5,000** (around 7.8% of those aged over 65).

This difference represents a potential level of unmet need in the population of around **2,700** (around 4.2% of those aged over 65).

Around half of those that are estimated to have dementia are known to their GP within the South Devon area. This is a similar to the national proportion; however there are noticeable variations across the South Devon community.

Figure 1: Estimated dementia diagnosis
Estimated proportion of persons with dementia, diagnosed and on the dementia disease register, 2011/12



Source: QOF, POPPI and Torbay Council

Figure 1 suggests that within the Newton Abbot area, around 60% of those with dementia are known to their GP. This figure is considerably lower for the Moor to Sea community, where only around 1 in 5 people with dementia are potentially known to their GP.

There could be some bias within the variations. Bias could derive from practices that have higher numbers of patients in care homes or perhaps diagnosis coding differences across practices or localities.

There are different forms of dementia; Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia. The proportions of those with different forms of dementia can be broken down as follows:

- Alzheimer's disease (AD): 62%
- Vascular dementia (VaD): 17%
- Mixed dementia (AD and VaD): 10%
- Dementia with Lewy bodies: 4%
- Fronto-temporal dementia: 2%
- Parkinson's dementia: 2%
- Other dementias: 3%

Alzheimer's Society

Alzheimer's disease: is the most common kind of dementia with around 62% of people

with dementia having Alzheimer's disease. The two main risk factors for Alzheimer's disease are **age** and **family history**. These risk factors also feature for the other forms of dementia.

Vascular dementia: is caused by problems with blood circulation resulting in parts of the brain not receiving enough blood and oxygen. Risk factors associated with vascular dementia include, **age, high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes** and **smoking**.

The South Devon community has an older population compared to the national average. With almost 1 in 4 aged over 65 in South Devon.

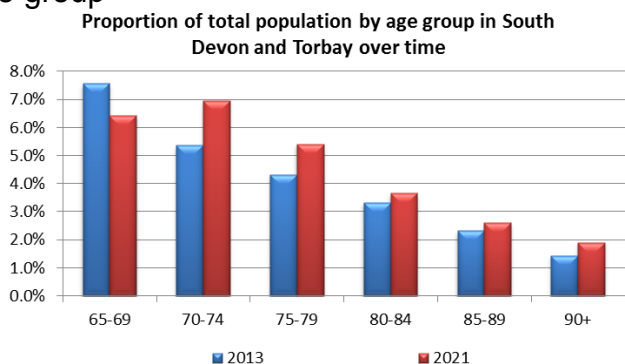
Table 1: Proportion of population aged 65+

Proportion aged 65+	2013	2021
England	17.2%	18.7%
South Devon & Torbay	24.4%	27.0%

Source: ONS, Torbay Council

Based on demographic change alone, the increase in the over 65's suggests that the number of people with dementia in the South Devon area will be nearer **6,250** in 2021; or around **1,250 more than today**.

Figure 2: South Devon's aging population by age group

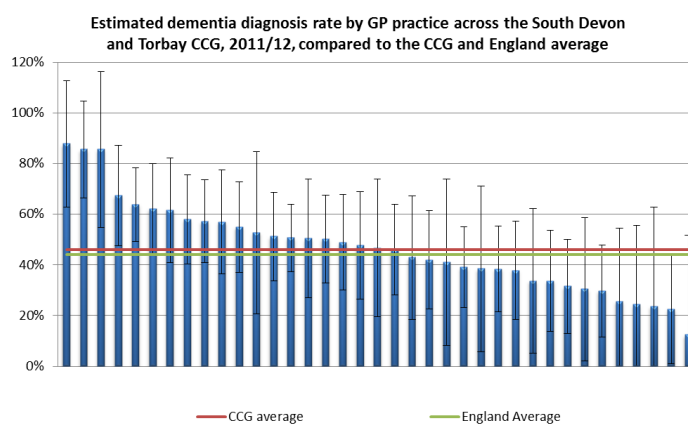


Source: ONS, Torbay Council

The variation in estimated diagnosis rate for people with dementia is more pronounced at GP practice level across South Devon.

The variation ranges from a maximum diagnosis rate of 88% to a minimum of 12%. However numbers in some practices are relatively small and the confidence intervals are relatively wide.

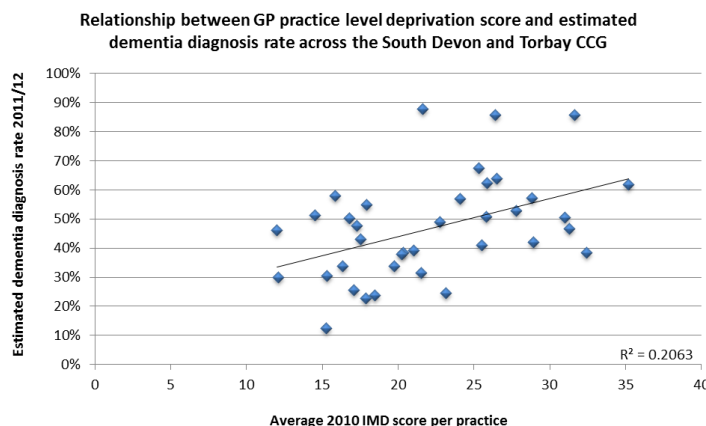
Figure 3: Estimated diagnosis by practice



Source: QOF, POPPI and Torbay Council

Understanding the variation at practice level is not straight forward. A linear regression analysis of dementia diagnosis against average practice level deprivation suggests that there is not a strong relationship between deprivation and dementia diagnosis.

Figure 4: Dementia diagnosis and deprivation



Source: 2010 Indices of multiple deprivation, 2011/12 QOF and prevalence estimates