

**find**<sup>®</sup>  
Memory Care



Supporting independence in dementia with well designed and well-placed signage.

# WE FAIL TO APPRECIATE HOW SIGNIFICANT SIGNAGE IS IN OUR EVERYDAY LIVES. IT ALLOWS US TO INTERPRET, UNDERSTAND AND MANAGE BOTH NEW AND FAMILIAR ENVIRONMENTS.

Every person has a 'cognitive map', which is a mental picture of the places that are familiar to us. When an environment isn't familiar, however, we become reliant on signs to help us navigate. Living with dementia makes any new environment very daunting and even familiar places can become unfamiliar leading to distress and agitation.

With the clever use of signage, you can help those with declining cognitive abilities to make the right decisions when finding their way around, as well as helping to maintain independence.



THE CARE ENVIRONMENT CAN BE MADE MORE SUPPORTIVE AND ENABLING WITH QUITE SIMPLE ADDITIONS. THE FIRST IS TO MAKE SURE THAT WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS HIGHLY VISIBLE.

*Outlined by University of Stirling research*



Under these circumstances, signage fulfils a crucial role. By installing appropriate signage in clearly visible places, many of these issues can be alleviated or dismissed altogether. **Stirling DSDC asserts that "well designed and well-placed signage can play a fundamental role in reducing distress, maintaining independence, and improving overall wellbeing."**

## So what depicts good dementia-friendly signage?

As mentioned a person with dementia is more likely to become disorientated. They may have a problem in distinguishing relevant information from irrelevant information, screening out visual clutter and/or a tendency to either not notice signs at all or to read the signs indiscriminately.

To ensure your signage is dementia friendly the first thing is to make sure that what's important is highly visible and the best way to do this is with good colour contrast and recognisable images.

Secondly, remember the signage should be clear and easily visible.

And lastly, the sign should not be surrounded by other signs and information and ideally positioned at eye level or lower to compensate for the downcast gaze of many people with dementia.

## Does your environment promote orientation?

Check your signage today to ensure your care environment promotes orientation

1. Are signs of a good size?
2. Are signs a contrasting colour?
3. Do signs use both pictures and words?
4. Are signs hung at a height that makes viewing easy?



**Case Study : dementia signage used at Wakefield Hospice**

## New signage aids hospice in creating a dementia-friendly environment

Wakefield Hospice is a purpose-built specialist palliative care unit providing high-quality end of life care. The hospice opened in April 1990 and consists of a 16 bedded In-Patient Unit (IPU) - with 8 single en-suite bedrooms and 2 four-bed ward areas, as well as a Day Therapy Unit.

Committed to providing an environment that is welcoming and safe for everyone, the Hospice wanted to improve their In-patient Unit. The IPU seemed difficult to navigate causing some problems for visitors especially those with cognitive impairments such as dementia and hindered simple actions such as finding the toilet or the way out of the IPU.

Some of the main challenges for a person with dementia are disorientation, impaired memory and learning. By using dementia-friendly signage, anxiety is reduced and independence maintained.

Working closely with [Find Memory Care](#) the Hospice introduced clear, contrasting signage to create an environment that facilitated independence and created a supportive environment for both patients and visitors to the unit.



The feedback from the changes has been so positive, that the Hospice Day Therapy Unit is now looking at the same enhancements.



# Why Find Signage works in dementia care environments

Find is the creator of the original and most widely used dementia-specific signage in the world. Using the latest thinking on communication, Find provides clear dementia-friendly signage for care facilities across the UK to help reduce confusion and aid daily orientation for people living with dementia.

Find's signs have been designed by identifying key issues relating to dementia and how cognitive abilities and an ageing eye makes things difficult to interpret, or even to see at all.

The appearance of Find's designs is unique and so is the construction. Sophisticated production techniques and high-quality materials create robust, non-reflective, anti-bacterial, tactile signage which withstands the rigours of the most demanding care environments.

Uniquely, Find signage is an investment in the environment - being the most cost-effective, long-term solution for providing reliable, visual orientation aids - providing tangible returns on the outlay. Less durable solutions will require regular replacement and an ongoing cost.



## The Benefits of Find's dementia signage

- Aids orientation for those with dementia, reducing stress and anxiety
- Supports independence, confidence and wellbeing
- Meets all required standards for hygiene

[A full range of find signage can be found here](#)



# Why Find Signage works in dementia care environments

Even a home in which a person has lived for many years can become a strange and confusing place for a person with dementia.

This can cause the person to feel frustrated and anxious, especially when they cannot complete everyday tasks without being reminded of what they are doing.

By introducing simple visual cues you can help reduce the need for help from others and improve confidence and independence.

## Highlight key areas around the home

Keeping essential items in plain view is always the best option but not always practicable. By labelling drawers and drawing attention to essential items everyday tasks can be made easier.

The labels should have a picture and be clear and easy to read using both upper and lower case text.

**Helpful tip:** - Reduce unnecessary clutter to make things easier to see.

## Draw attention to important rooms

If every door in the house looks the same, remembering which room is which can be hard for a person with dementia. This can cause problems such as incontinence if the person cannot remember which door is the toilet. Using labels to distinguish the different rooms will help the important rooms stand out.



# Why Find Signage works in dementia care environments

## Finding the light switch

Light switches often blend into the wall and can be difficult to see. By highlighting the light switch with a contrasting label positioned around, the switch becomes easy to see.



## Re-usable self-adhesive labels

Finds re-usable, self-adhesive labels are perfect for the home. Supplied in a folder, the product uses an ingenious, re-usable adhesive allowing the labels to be used and removed as required.

For more information please head to our website:  
[www.findmemorycare.co.uk](http://www.findmemorycare.co.uk)

