

WENDY MITCHELL



On the 31st July 2014, Wendy was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's. She says "I may not have much of a short term memory anymore but that date is one I'll never forget." Wendy is 58, lives in York, has 2 daughters and currently in full time employment at St James hospital in Leeds. "I'm now in the process of taking early retirement to give me a chance of enjoying life while I'm still me", she says.

"I was perfectly placed to make something positive come out of such a distressing situation", so feeling able to make a valuable contribution to current research, she went searching for opportunities. After much searching, she found a study based at the University of the West of Scotland on 'Dementia in the Workplace', where she currently working with a researcher. She explains "I've been shocked and disappointed to discover the difficulty they had in finding enough volunteers to take part and how difficult it was for me to find local studies in particular. I'm confident that the launch of JDR will turn this situation around."

She adds "We need to attract researchers and volunteers alike to enable a brighter future for those diagnosed with this cruel condition."

Wendy is now also taking part in the MADE clinical trial, which is testing whether the antibiotic Minocycline, currently used for treating Acne, also has a positive affect for those with Alzheimer's.

You can follow Wendy on her blog: <http://whichmeamitoday.wordpress.com/blog/>

SUSIE HEWER



57 year old Susie Hewer from East Sussex was a full-time carer for her mother, Peggy, who lived with vascular dementia for many years. Since her mother's death in 2005, Susie has been a Champion of Alzheimer's Research UK, speaking out about dementia and the need for research. Known as the 'Extreme knitting Redhead' she has run 41 marathons to date and raised over £35,000 for vital research projects. She draws attention to her cause by various publicity stunts; in 2014 she crocheted whilst running to beat her own Guinness World Record for the longest crochet chain whilst running a marathon at the London marathon.

Susie has been involved in 'Join dementia research' from the very beginning, being part of the steering committee. She says "when my Mum died I was absolutely stunned that there was no way of linking people with dementia with researchers, and so it became one of my issues". She attended a ministerial debate on dementia research in 2010, "Fast forward a few years and I was invited by ARUK to represent them at DeNDRoN for what is now JDR."

She says "I like the word 'Join', because it's inclusive and it encourages you to actually make a difference. When you're dealing with dementia you can feel very isolated, which I know only too well from being a carer, and the idea of joining something makes you feel less alone, and it also gives you hope that you're actually making a difference."

Susie is in the PROTECT study, that is currently recruiting on 'Join dementia research' service. This study aims to improve understanding of the way our brains age, and why some people develop dementia, in order to develop better ways of treating and preventing it.

You can follow Susie on her blog: <http://www.extremeknittingredhead.blogspot.co.uk>