



How can the Alzheimer's Society support those with dementia in golf?

Key information and ideas for you to keep people active

This resource is to help you and the friends and family of those diagnosed with dementia to be able to continue to benefit from playing golf or to get these benefits by returning to playing the game and being active

So why golf?

Golf is a moderately intense physical activity and is likely to prevent the onset of cognitive decline and, in those with dementia, can reduce the decline of both mental and physical activity [Lutenschlager et al]

With those with dementia, golf has been shown to provide a suitable environment to:

- interact socially
- provide appropriate physical activity-encouraging strength and balance
- to provide respite for carers

For older people, it can provide memories and a focus for social interaction in a community environment

Golf and Health Project (www.golfandhealth.org)

Flexible formats and facilities – people can play 3, 6, 9 or 18 holes. Golf doesn't always have to mean getting out on the course, it can be just as beneficial to hit some balls at the driving range or get out on the putting green. Doing as much or as little as an individual is confident in.



Individuals

Asking someone what activities they used to do or what activities they would like to continue to do is a great way to find out if golf is something that they want support with.

If an individual would like to continue to play or to get back into playing then it is worth using the questions below to get a little more information:

- Are they still a member of a golf club? Or have they recently lapsed from membership? And why?
- What is it about golf that they struggle with?
- How often do they want to play? And who would they usually play with?
- Are there any other barriers such as transport stopping them from being able to access golf?

Having this information will allow you to look at some potential solutions, provided below or to seek support from England Golf.

Contact England Golf via clubsupport@englandgolf.org



Barrier	Potential solution	Who else could assist or further information
Still a member at a golf club but don't want to tell the club about their diagnosis	Encourage them to speak to the club manager or club captain or even a friend about their diagnosis, alongside a family member	Dementia Friends training – www.EnglandGolf.org/dementiafriends
Recently left their golf club due to their diagnosis	Support them to speak to the club and share why they left and consider how they could stay attached, for example social membership to start with	Social membership could also allow them discount for the driving range or use of the putting green to stay active even a little
Recently left their golf club due to costs	Support them to discuss with the golf facility about	England Golf Club Support Officer's can assist the club in implementing different



<p>being prohibitive</p>	<p>any flexibility they could have to keep the individual playing</p>	<p>membership packages and sharing good practice</p>
<p>Struggling to maintain their balance when taking shots</p>	<p>Encourage the person to speak to their golf club professional or a local golf professional and how things could be adapted</p>	<p>Guidance for golf professionals and key information on dementia available at: www.englandgolf.org/dementia</p>
<p>Tremors affect their putting stroke</p>	<p>Ensure they are receiving the right medication advice. This is also something they could speak to a golf professional about to adapt their putting stroke</p>	<p>Guidance for golf professionals and key information on dementia available at: www.englandgolf.org/dementia</p>



<p>Not allowed to use buggies or trollies on the course</p>	<p>Download the guidance from England Golf on how clubs should recognise the Equality Act in making its decisions on buggy and trolley policy</p>	<p>Use the guidance created by England Golf to help conversations</p> <p>https://www.Englandgolf.org/article/our-golf-traffic-buggy-policy/</p>
<p>Struggle with remembering or recording their score</p>	<p>Ask a playing partner to record their scores, explaining why they are struggling.</p> <p>Speak to the competition committee for club competitions and appoint a scorer for their group so they don't have to worry about recording</p>	<p>The R&A and USGA govern the rules of golf. Some committees may be concerned about making any changes that these bodies to not approve</p> <p>Clubs and committees can request advice directly from the Rules Department at the R&A</p> <p>https://www.randa.org/Rog/2019/Pages/The-Rules-of-Golf</p>



<p>Don't want to share their diagnosis with their friends or regular playing partners</p>	<p>Encourage them to speak to their friends, alongside a family member and focus on the positives that they want to continue to play golf</p>	<p>See how others real life stories can be shared and make a difference</p> <p>https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/blog/how-tracey-helping-sports-clubs-leisure-centres-inclusive-dementia</p>
<p>Don't want to explain to everyone that they play with</p>	<p>Encourage them to ask their competitions committee if they can play with people they know as a reasonable adjustment</p>	<p>If the club or committee would like support on this then they can contact England Golf's Governance department for advice</p> <p>compliance@englandgolf.org</p>
<p>Have left the club or relocated and don't have anyone to play with</p>	<p>See if there is anyone at their local club or volunteer from Side by Side who could play golf with them</p>	<p>The Side by Side volunteering programme could allow people to keep playing</p> <p>https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/dementia-together-magazine/aug-sept-2018/golfing-feel-good-volunteering-side-side</p>



Can't get to the golf club when they would like to	Could they leave their clubs in a locker and get a bus or taxi? Could friends pick them up and drop them off?	Side by Side may also assist Most clubs will have lockers available for use
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If the individual has relocated and doesn't know the local golf clubs then you could use the Find and Play tool on the England Golf website to help.

<https://www.Englandgolf.org/find-and-play/>

Alternatively if you want some further guidance then contact clubsupport@Englandgolf.org



For a group

You may work with or support a local peer support group that would like to try golf. This may be because some of them used to play or they are interested in taking up an activity that is lower impact, or that they can do together.

Getting started

Firstly you will need to find a local facility to approach. You can get an idea of the local facilities from our Find and Play section of the England Golf website

<https://www.englandgolf.org/find-and-play/>

Once you've got these and you would like some assistance in approaching them or which ones to approach then contact clubsupport@englandgolf.org and a member of our team will be in touch.

Planning

Ahead of the first meeting you might want to consider the questions or resources already in place before the initial meeting with the golf facility so that the activity will be successful

Questions to consider

- When are you looking to run your activity? Generally golf clubs are less busy during the week days
- Is there a Side by Side volunteer scheme running in your area that could help with the recruitment of volunteers to support golfers living with dementia to keep playing?
- Can family members accompany people living with dementia to coaching sessions or out on course when they play?



Resources

- Clubs have access to dementia friends training online – www.englandgolf.org/dementiafriends or this can be done as local course using the **GOLF1234** code to register the participants
- The dementia friendly sport and leisure guide will help clubs consider other elements of their experience that they can commit to improve

Create an action Plan

- Create a clear action plan and give yourself and the golf facility plenty of time to complete actions
- Planning ahead will also give you time to promote activity and ensure that people get the chance to attend

Other activities you could consider

Golf clubs will have rooms and spaces that could benefit local peer support groups. Even if you're not looking to run any golf activity for the group, the golf club could provide opportunity for:

- Coffee mornings
- Consultation meetings
- Seated exercise classes or yoga
- Sporting memories sessions