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**CONFERENCE ABSTRACT****The development and evaluation of an online dementia supports directory  
for Primary Care**17<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Integrated Care, Dublin, 08-10 May 2017

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**Introduction:** Carers of people with dementia (PwD) frequently have poorer physical and emotional health than carers of people with other chronic conditions (1). Support services can assist caregivers to continue to support people at home (2) (3, 4). Poor uptake of social support services by carers of PwD is often due to a lack of awareness of their existence (5). Service directories of support services for people with dementia are a rare entity due to the challenges inherent to collating and appropriately disseminating this information. As a result stakeholders in community dementia support services often work on their own and without co-ordination with other services (6), information on them is spread by word-of-mouth, health professionals are often unaware of their existence and consequently carers and PwD are often unaware of their existence. To address this gap in the integration of health and social care services we developed an online service and supports directory that allows primary care teams to appropriately signpost patients and their families to locally available supports.

**Practice Change Implemented:** An online resource called [dementiathways.ie](http://dementiathways.ie) was developed. Stakeholders with knowledge of existing local services available were identified and interviewed as part of the information gathering process. This resulted in the creation of a database of services and supports for people with dementia and their carers in every county in the country. By working with a software development company we were able to display our service directory online.

**Targeted Population and Stakeholders:** The target population is healthcare professionals working in Primary Care with PwD and their carers. The online resource is also freely available to PwD and their carers.

**Timeline:** The online resource is complete but is being constantly update to ensure data integrity. We plan to further evaluate the impact of the service directory qualitatively and quantitatively in the coming months.

**Highlights:** To our knowledge this is the first such resource for GPs and PCT members nationally or internationally.

[Dementiathways.ie](http://Dementiathways.ie) is currently being demonstrated as an educational resource during nationally run workshops with Primary Care physicians. When asked to evaluate the importance

of the online resource to their daily practice the median likert scale rating given by 71 GPs that have participated to date was '5' (strongly agree). Future research planned will involve other primary care professionals.

Analysis of the use of the online resource during its first three months since going live (1/7/16 to 31/09/16) reported that in total there were 1,241 unique visitors, predominantly these were healthcare professionals working in Primary Care but also included PwD and their carers.

The qualitative feedback to date from Primary Care healthcare professionals, people with dementia and their carers has been excellent.

**Sustainability and Transferability:** The online facility allows us to constantly update our service directory in order to maintain the accuracy of the information displayed. We are currently in talks with the HSE who plan to incorporate our service directory into the wider HSE website. This will ensure continued data integrity beyond the life of our research project.

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**Keywords:** dementia; supports; services; primary care; carers

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