

A project under our mental health theme focuses on [improving the care of Black African and Caribbean people with memory problems](#), which can be an early warning sign for dementia. We know that Black African and Caribbean elders develop dementia earlier, and seek help later than their white peers.

This delay can greatly impact access to care and support, and reduce the independence of dementia patients prematurely.

We have carried out extensive engagement work within this community – running focus groups and conducting interviews to find out the perceptions and beliefs that prevent people visiting their GP when memory problems first arise.

As well as disseminating our findings we have concentrated all the learning from the project into a new leaflet “[***Getting help for forgetfulness***](#)”.

We co-designed this leaflet with patients and the public and it aims to encourage health-seeking behaviour among elders encountering memory problems.

It answers questions about symptoms, sets out what help is available and why you should visit your GP, and provides useful information and contacts.

We trialled the leaflet in patients without a diagnosis of dementia in several GP practices and they liked it.



Getting help for forgetfulness

Forgetfulness is common, particularly as we get older. Often this is nothing to worry about.

However, forgetfulness that interferes with your daily life is not a normal part of getting older.

"I used to leave the keys in the door. Sometimes I forget that I am cooking and I just go."

Regardless of your age, frequent memory lapses could be a sign of physical illness, stress or dementia.

If you or someone you know is more forgetful lately, it is important to see your GP.

We can provide printed copies to the NHS, community and voluntary groups and charities - just contact us with your needs.

Email Moïse Roche to order copies of the leaflet - m.roche@ucl.ac.uk