Improving dementia diagnosis rates in London

NHS
London Clinical Networks

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Background

The aim of the London Dementia Clinical Network is to provide leadership and advice to shape London's dementia services so that people with dementia receive an effective diagnosis, treatment and care
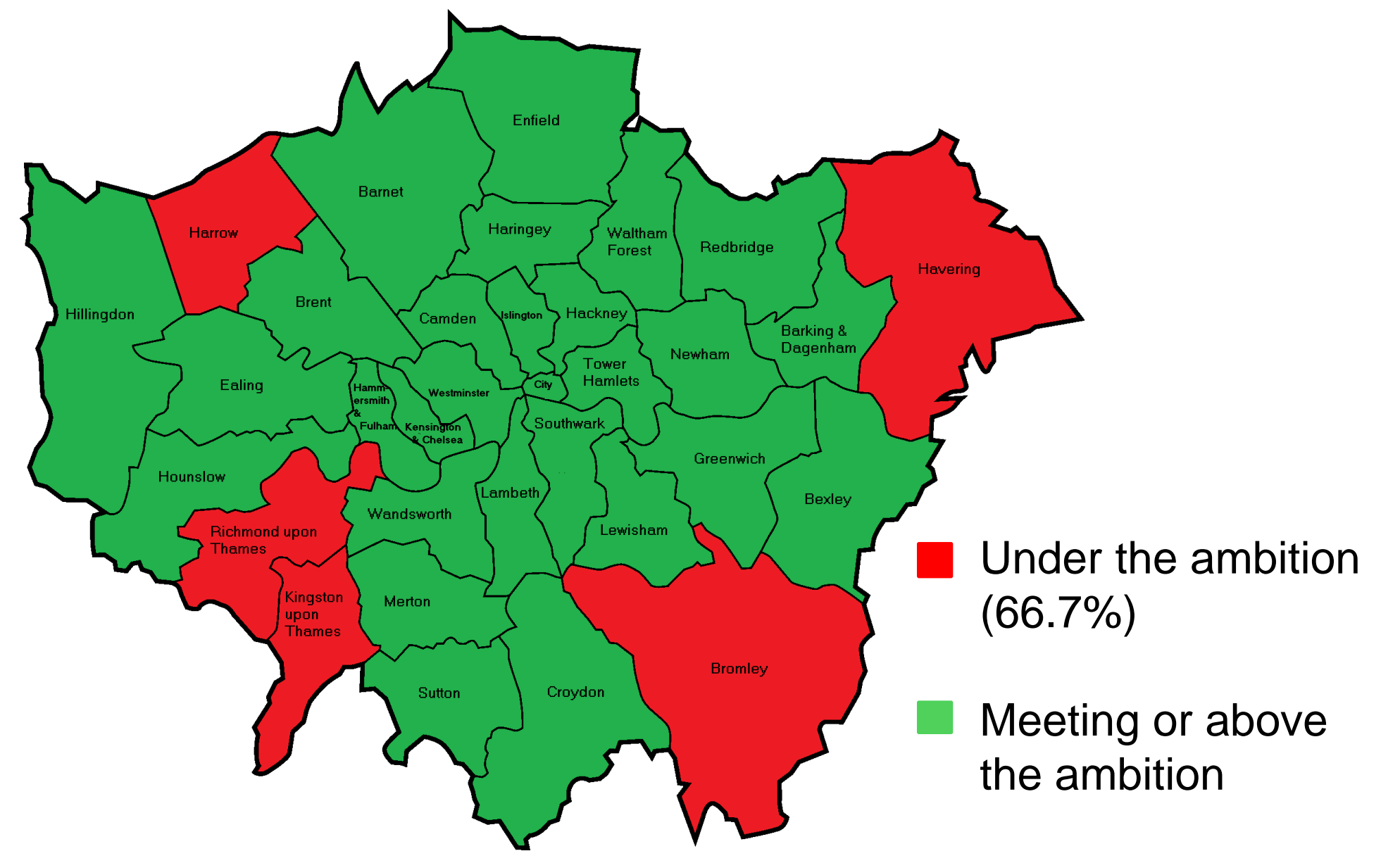
The Prime Ministers Challenge on Dementia 2020 set a vision to create a society where every person with dementia receives high quality, compassionate care from diagnosis through to end of life.

In 2013 NHS England set a national ambition that at least two thirds of people predicted to have dementia will have a formal diagnosis.

In London, there are just over 72,000 people living with dementia, with an annual overall cost to the economy estimated at £2.4 billion per year (Alzheimer's Society, 2014).
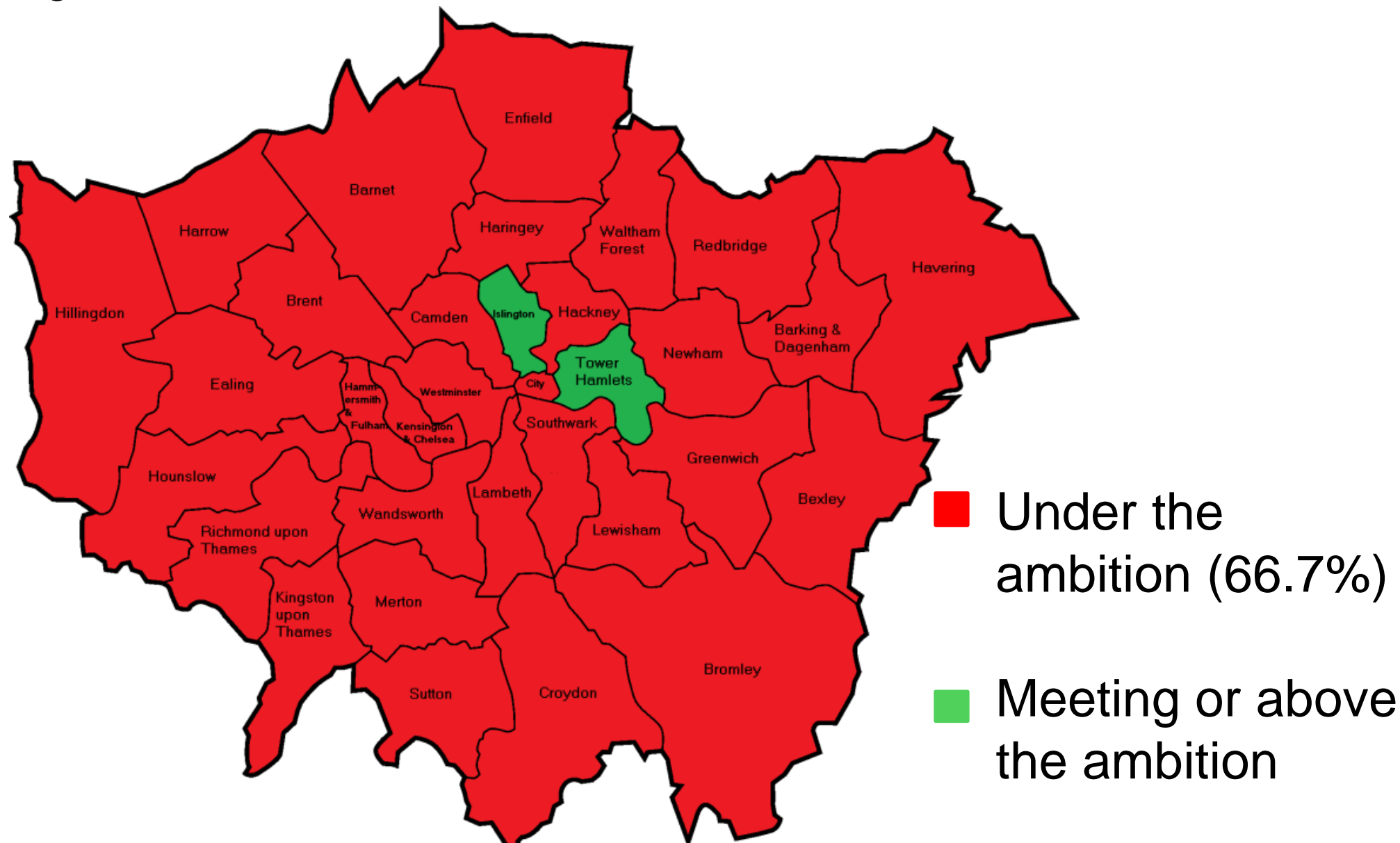
Diagnosis rates August 2014

Map of London clinical commissioning groups dementia diagnosis rates - August 2014

- 🟥 Under the ambition (66.7%)
- 🟩 Meeting or above the ambition

What did we do?

Meetings with dementia commissioner and GP dementia leads in each area to give clinical advice on improving diagnosis rates and sharing best practice.

Published a "coding clean-up" exercise for GPs to improve dementia coding and increase diagnosis rates.

Liaised with areas with largest improvement in diagnosis rates and shared their success stories

Meetings with areas under the ambition working with NHS England assurance to put into place specific local action plans

The success story

Map of London clinical commissioning groups dementia diagnosis rates - September 2017

- 🟥 Under the ambition (66.7%)
- 🟩 Meeting or above the ambition

Note Ealing is below the ambition on published data for September 2017 which was due to a data submission error, therefore it has been left green on the above map

Missed diagnoses

We found similar common areas where people were not receiving a formal diagnosis;

Coding	Ensuring that everyone with dementia has been 'coded' on the GP system
Care homes	Areas need to have a systematic approach to ensure that every care home resident who has dementia has a diagnosis and care plan
Mild cognitive impairment	People with mild cognitive impairment are at higher risk of developing dementia, therefore people should have a yearly review either in the memory service or in primary care, as clinically relevant.
Physical health conditions	People accessing physical health services maybe be at risk of dementia. It is important that memory is considered during clinical contact- especially for very high risk conditions, for example Parkinson's Disease.

References:
Alzheimer's Society (2014) Dementia UK Update.
https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/download/downloads/id/2323/dementia_uk_update.pdf

London Dementia Clinical Network (2017) "Coding clean up" Exercise Guidance to GPs to improve dementia coding, and raise diagnosis rates http://www.londonscn.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/dem-gpcoding-july17.pdf

Prime Minister's challenge on dementia 2020 (2015)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414344/pm-dementia2020.pdf