Introducing Ayla at Bryn Edwin Hall

Supporting cognition, connection and wellbeing through Ayla

At Bryn Edwin Hall, we are committed to helping every resident live well, feel connected and be recognised for the person they are. As part of this commitment, our Activities Team introduced Ayla to support residents living with dementia through structured Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST).

Since staff training began in November 2025, our team has delivered two CST groups, with the first running from December 2025 to January 2026 and the second during summer 2026. Ayla's September 2026 year-in-review report gives us an opportunity to reflect on our first year.

What is Ayla?

Ayla is a Class I medical device registered with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Its web-based application and dedicated training help care teams deliver Cognitive Stimulation Therapy in a structured, consistent and accessible way.

The standard CST programme involves 14 sessions, generally delivered twice a week over seven weeks. Activities are adapted to residents' interests, abilities, backgrounds and preferences, with a focus on conversation, choice, shared experiences and enjoyment.

What is Cognitive Stimulation Therapy?

CST is an evidence-based group intervention for people living with mild to moderate dementia. Through themed activities, discussion and social interaction, it aims to support thinking, communication and connection. The purpose is not to test residents or concentrate on difficulties, but to create opportunities for each person to contribute and feel included.

A diagnosis is not a full stop

At Bryn Edwin Hall, we believe a dementia diagnosis does not take away a person's identity, knowledge, personality or potential. Ayla provides another way to celebrate residents' life experiences, stimulate conversation and encourage confidence. We listen to residents' own perspectives on how they feel, rather than judging success solely by whether a session was completed.

Our first year with Ayla

Ayla's report covers October 2025 to September 2026 and records 149 platform logins and 50 completed sessions at Bryn Edwin Hall. Three staff members were trained in November 2025, and facilitation has been shared across the Activities Team.

Sessions lasted an average of 67 minutes, with approximately nine activities viewed per session. Residents gave an average session rating of 4.86 out of 5, while facilitators rated sessions 4.92 out of 5. These are positive indications of the experience of taking part, although they should not be confused with clinical outcome measures.

The first group completed 14 out of 14 planned sessions. The second group finished over the summer, with 13 out of 14 sessions logged on the platform. At the time of the September report, its separate outcome analysis was still being compiled.

What our results showed

Ayla

The following before-and-after findings relate to our first CST group, rather than all residents who attended Ayla sessions during the year. The year-in-review report describes complete quality-of-life data for five of seven residents.

Quality of life

Residents' self-reported scores showed improvements in mood and memory, with mood the most improved area. Energy and self-perception scores dipped slightly. This mixed picture is important: no single programme will affect every aspect of wellbeing in the same way, and maintaining abilities may also be meaningful for someone living with a progressive condition.

Changes in cognition

Across the cognition measures reported for Group 1, 57% of scores improved and 43% remained steady, with no recorded decline in those scores. The strongest improvements were in finding familiar objects and remembering things residents meant to do, with 80% showing improvement on each of these measures.

These are the outcomes observed in this small group; they should not be taken as evidence that Ayla will produce the same results for every resident.

Mood and positive outlook

The first group's mood measures also provided encouraging results. Sixty per cent improved in their reported ability to adapt, while 40% improved in recalling happy times. Other measures were more mixed, and some residents rated an item one step lower after the programme. These findings help our team identify what supports each person rather than assuming that all outcomes must improve.

Social life and connection

Conversation and shared experiences are central to Ayla sessions. Although the September report does not provide before-and-after social-life scores, relatives described noticing more conversation with other residents. This feedback complements the high session-enjoyment ratings, without being presented as a measured improvement in social-life scores.

What our residents said about their CST experience

> *"I feel happier. I can't always remember what I did in the groups, but I feel better in myself."*
> — Resident, Group 1

What relatives said

> *"Her short term memory seems a little better."*
> — Relative, Group 1

> *"(Resident) seems to talk to other residents a bit more."*
> — Relative, Group 1

What our team said

> *"It made me a better facilitator. The structure is clear, so I could guide residents through the sessions."*
> — Facilitator, Group 1

A moment that mattered

One comment from a resident in our first group particularly captures why this work matters: although they could not always remember what they had done during the sessions, they described feeling happier in themselves. For us, that is a reminder that the value of an experience is not limited to what someone can recall afterwards. Feeling included, reassured and connected in the moment matters too.

This is a reflection on the resident's feedback recorded in the Ayla report, rather than a separate case study.

Continuing our Ayla journey

We are encouraged by residents' enjoyment of sessions, the positive changes measured in the first group and the way our Activities Team has embraced delivering CST. We will review the second group's outcome report when available and use it to refine how we tailor future sessions.

Our facilitators have already identified that familiar references and a clear ending to activities can help residents feel more comfortable and engaged. We will continue learning from this feedback, supporting additional facilitator training and exploring whether the Bryn Edwin Hall approach could be shared with Stonebow House.

Most importantly, Ayla has created another space in which residents living with dementia can share their knowledge, express their personalities and build meaningful relationships. At Bryn Edwin Hall, we will continue to see the person beyond the diagnosis.

Source: Ayla, Amber Care / Bryn Edwin Hall — Usage & Outcomes Year in Review, October 2025–September 2026 (report issued September 2026).