IN TOUCH
THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF ALZHEIMER’S AUSTRALIA NSW

AUTUMN 2013, ISSUE 84

SPREAD THE LOVE
HOW WE SHARED OUR MESSAGE ON VALENTINE’S DAY

10 WAYS WE SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA, CARERS & FAMILIES

MIND YOUNG MINDS
INSIDE THE NEW REPORT ON YOUNGER ONSET DEMENTIA

NATIONAL RECOGNITION
ALZHEIMER’S AUSTRALIA PRESIDENT ITA BUTTROSE NAMED AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR

+ NEWS • EDUCATION • FUNDRAISING • RESEARCH

TALKING ABOUT ALZHEIMER’S ACROSS AUSTRALIA
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27/02/13 3:45 PM
IN TOUCH
The quarterly newsletter for members of Alzheimer’s Australia NSW
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Registered as a Print Post Publication
Number PP: 234077/00008
ISSN: 1038-7854

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Published on behalf of Alzheimer’s Australia NSW by Mahlab Media
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The year has got off to a great start with our National President Ita Buttrose named Australian of the Year. What a welcome and very well-deserved honour.

The Award is a wonderful recognition of all the work Ita has done for people with dementia during her lengthy involvement with Alzheimer’s Australia and the enormous contribution she has made through her work in the media and in championing other social and health issues.

Ita is not only National President of Alzheimer’s Australia, but would also be well-known to members here in NSW as an Ambassador for AlzNSW and as a member of our Advisory Committee.

She is a vocal and tireless advocate for people with dementia and we are very pleased she has been so honoured.

Ita has helped raise awareness of the issues facing people living with dementia, their carers and families to an unprecedented level. This has helped the organisation achieve historic changes in dementia policy, including the designation of dementia as Australia’s ninth National Health Priority Area.

I have passed on our congratulations on members’ behalf and we look forward to a very busy year as Ita continues to advocate for us and raise important issues, such as the lack of investment in dementia research.

We are also pleased to welcome our new Chair Jerry Ellis AO, who has settled into his new role quickly and is very keen to learn about the organisation and the issues facing our members.

Jerry has already visited our Port Macquarie office to meet staff and clients, and he speaks very highly of our people and our work. I know that he will be a strong asset to our organisation.

The Hon. John Watkins, CEO, AlzNSW

Jerry Ellis AO, Chair, AlzNSW

Chair’s Message

A Growing Awareness

I am honoured to have been accepted by the Board to take over from Peter Baume AC as Chair. In the two months I have been a member of AlzNSW, I have been able to meet the senior management, the Advisory Council, the National Board of Alzheimer’s Australia, one of our founders Professor Henry Brodaty, the Executive Director of The Brain and Mind Research Institute Professor Ian Hickie, and a number of people living with dementia and their carers.

I have learnt from these meetings that we are blessed with a Board of skill and commitment, from diverse backgrounds and with a clear dedication to the task.

I am also most impressed with the team John Watkins has established — a great credit to John, Peter Baume and the Board.

In listening to John and his team, I am heartened in the belief that the chosen strategy can be successful.

That is, we will push the peak body quality boundaries so that we have the expert capacity to enable the development of a sufficient number of well-trained counsellors and educators to meet this growing demand.

I envision us as a relatively small, highly qualified group focused on ensuring maximum awareness in the community, maximising our independent funding sources, and staffed by high-quality personnel who deliver services and build programs and products for those many organisations providing support to carers and those living with dementia.

To this end, we need wide community engagement, not only to help raise awareness and deliver training, but also to test constantly the relevance and effectiveness of our work.

I am delighted to be a member of the AlzNSW team and look forward to working with the Board, management and community in encouraging governments to allocate more resources to research the causes and possible cures, while doing everything we can to help those living with dementia have the best quality of life possible.

I would also like to offer my warm and sincere congratulations to Alzheimer’s Australia’s National President Ita Buttrose, who has been named Australian of the Year. This is a wonderful recognition of Ita’s many achievements and we are so pleased she is part of the Alzheimer’s Australia team.

Jerry Ellis AO, Chair, AlzNSW

CEO’s Message

National Honour

The year has got off to a great start with our National President Ita Buttrose named Australian of the Year. What a welcome and very well-deserved honour.

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The Hon. John Watkins, CEO, AlzNSW
HUNTER BARBECUE

The team from our Hunter office held their best-ever fundraising barbecue over the Christmas break. Staff and volunteers helped raise more than $1100 in an awesome effort. Thanks to the team and to Bunnings Kotara for the opportunity to raise funds and awareness.

COUNSELLING VIA SKYPE

The AlzNSW free counselling service is now being offered via Skype online video calling. AlzNSW offers free face-to-face counselling for people with dementia, their families and friends at our North Ryde, Hunter, Liverpool, Mt Druitt, Coffs Harbour, Wagga Wagga and Orange offices. For those not able to attend any of our offices in person, telephone counselling is available, and now Skype will further extend our reach into remote and regional areas of the state. For more information or to book a Skype counselling session, phone the National Dementia Helpline: 1800 100 500.

JACK LAMONT

Jack Lamont, long-time volunteer and member of the AlzNSW Speaker’s Group, passed away in December. Jack cared for his wife Daphne, who had dementia, and became a very active volunteer with AlzNSW to help other carers.

We are very grateful for the work Jack has done and pass on our sympathies to his family.

DEMENTIA CES

People with dementia and carers meet monthly throughout the state to share information and ideas. Bookings are essential.

TORONTO
When: Fourth Thursday of the month 10-noon
Where: Toronto Workers Club
Contact: Clare Coyle
T: (02) 4962 7000

NELSON BAY
When: Second Thursday of the month 9.30-11am
Where: Little Nel Cafe at The Nelson Resort
Contact: Miriam Law
T: (02) 4962 7000

WARNERS BAY
When: First Wednesday of the month 10-11.30am
Where: Warners at the Bay
Contact: Bev Watson
T: (02) 4962 7000

BATEMAN’S BAY
When: First Wednesday of the month 10.30am-12pm
Where: Bateman’s Bay Community Centre
Contact: Gaye Finch
T: (02) 4474 3943

MERIMBULA
When: Second Tuesday of the month 10-11.30am
Where: Club Sapphire Merimbula
Contact: Samantha Joyce
T: (02) 6492 6158

YOUNGER ONSET DEMENTIA REPORT RELEASED

New research commissioned by the NSW State Government has outlined the enormous differences in the needs of people with younger onset dementia (YOD) compared with those with dementia who are older than 65.

Ageing, Disability and Home Care engaged AlzNSW, which partnered with the University of NSW’s Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) and UnitingCare Ageing to research the support needed in NSW by people with YOD and their families.

Service and Support Requirements of People with Younger Onset Dementia and their Families, released December 2012 by the NSW Minister for Ageing and Disability Services, The Hon. Andrew Constance MP, looks at the specialist needs of non-Aboriginal people aged 65 years and younger, and Aboriginal people aged 50 years and younger who have dementia.

The CEO of AlzNSW, The Hon. John Watkins, said the report will help service providers develop targeted and relevant services for people with YOD.

“People with YOD are often still working and caring for dependent children, and many are planning for a retirement they will never experience,” John said.

“It is important that the different needs of people with YOD are recognised and that service providers work to meet those needs.”

It is estimated that in NSW there are approximately 8000 people under the age of 65 who have dementia. People with YOD need easy access to information relevant to their life stage.

“Families need to make immediate adjustments after diagnoses to secure their wellbeing,” SPRC’s Associate Professor Karen Fisher said.

“Coordinating information and support through organisations like Alzheimer’s Australia was a relief to those people who had found that resources were scarce.”


YASS VALLEY
When: Third Monday of the month 10-noon
Where: Rollinon Cafe, Bowning
Contact: Robyn Rutherford
T: (02) 6241 0881

SUTHERLAND
When: Fourth Tuesday of the month 9.30-11am
Where: Camellia Gardens Teahouse
Contact: Julie Sinnis
T: 0418 815 041

TORONTO
When: Third Wednesday of the month 10-11.30am
Where: Shearwater Restaurant, The Promenade, 321 Harbour Drive
Contact: Marg Coutts
T: (02) 6651 7101

COFFS HARBOUR
When: Third Wednesday of the month 10-11.30am
Where: Salt ‘n’ Pepper Cafe Brasserie, Beverley Park Golf Club
Contact: Julie Sinnis
T: 0418 815 041

COFFS HARBOUR
When: Third Wednesday of the month 10-11.30am
Where: Shearwater Restaurant, The Promenade, 321 Harbour Drive
Contact: Marg Coutts
T: (02) 6651 7101

ST GEORGE
A culturally and linguistically diverse program.
When: Third Tuesday of the month 10-11.30am
Where: Camellia Gardens Teahouse
Contact: Julie Sinnis
T: 0418 815 041

UNE QUAY
When: Fourth Monday of the month 10-noon
Where: Salt ‘n’ Pepper Cafe Brasserie, Beverley Park Golf Club
Contact: Julie Sinnis
T: 0418 815 041

THE SIXTH SENSES
A culturally and linguistically diverse program.
When: Second Wednesday of the month 10-11am
Where: Tea Tree House, 80 Promenade, North Batemans Bay
Contact: Julie Qin
T: 0418 815 041

STANWYCK
When: Third Tuesday of the month 10-noon
Where: The Station Tea Room, Camden
Contact: Julie Qin
T: 0418 815 041

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Contact: Julie Qin
T: 0418 815 041
The 2013 Memory Walk & Jog events will be even bigger than last year because AlzNSW aims to raise $500,000. Registrations are now open for:
• Sydney: Sunday 5 May at Leichhardt Oval #3 in Lilyfield
• Hunter: Sunday 8 September at Speers Point Park in Lake Macquarie
• Illawarra: Sunday 13 October at Stuart Park in North Wollongong

We are proud to launch three initiatives to take the events to the next level.
• The new Corporate Team Challenge will allow three participants from any organisation to compete as a team in the 7.5 km run. Individual finishing times will be combined in a team time, with winners announced at day’s end.
• A new Memory Walk & Jog Facebook page with all the latest news, event information, hints and tips, fundraising leader-boards, race results, personal stories and fun facts will spread the word further than before.
• Updated layout and functionality of our website to allow users to enter the race, create their own fundraising page, sponsor a friend or manage a team.

We are again grateful for enthusiastic support from Bupa aged care in 2013.

We welcome back Katy Fitzgerald, who has returned to AlzNSW as a Group Work Facilitator Early Intervention, and introduce new staff who have joined us:
• Rachel Peak: Corporate Partnerships and Events manager
• Kiri Pedersen: Fundraising Events Assistant
• Nina Cataliano: Group Work Facilitator Early Intervention
• Katie McGrath: Group Work Facilitator Early Intervention
• Teresa Cane: Administration and Community Liaison Officer Mid North Coast
• Maree Flemming: Administration Assistant Hunter
• Andrew Austin: Education Team Leader
• Libby Palmer: Educator
• Janna Taylor: Educator.

As part of AlzNSW’s ongoing effort to increase dementia services and ensure equity of access to them in the Tweed Shire, Project Officer Chris Vannucci has accepted an appointment to the Tweed Shire Council’s Equal Access Advisory Committee.

With 22% of its population aged over 65 – a figure set to increase to 25% by 2031 – and being part of the electorate with the highest prevalence of dementia in NSW, Tweed Shire has an obvious need for a quality dementia care sector.

Since early 2011, AlzNSW’s Dementia Sector Development project has worked with a growing network to improve the coordination and integration of dementia support services.

Chris Vannucci’s position on the Committee will further help raise awareness of the issues faced by people living with dementia, their carers, families and friends.

The Equal Access Advisory Committee is appointed to advise Tweed Shire Council of community and organisational perspectives about access issues.

Membership includes eight community representatives, including people with disabilities, carers and/or representatives of peak organisations, plus a Councillor and senior Council officer.

The Equal Access Advisory Committee was considered the most relevant to the aged care, community and dementia sectors, and Chris will use this opportunity to represent the sector, raise specific issues and develop closer links to the wider community during the four-year term of her appointment.

Aboriginal Health staff (left to right) Beverley Crowther, Joy Steep, Shane Venables and Kay Stewart completed the AlzNSW accredited dementia education course.
FINANCE IN AGED CARE

The decision to move a loved one into aged care can be difficult. To talk through the various issues involved in this decision, you can call the National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500. A step-by-step approach can result in a good financial outcome for the carer and the person with dementia. This could include:
1. A Centrelink assessment of current financial position. This may affect the fees charged by the aged care facility.
2. An assessment of eligibility for entrance to an aged care facility by the Aged Care Assessment Team, which is funded by the government.
3. An assessment of the cost of a residential aged care facility. The Federal Government provides some funding, and those who can afford to contribute to their care do so.
4. Consider Social Security implications. A move into an aged care facility may affect entitlements.
5. Consider tax implications, particularly in relation to the principle place of residence of the person with dementia as well as the carer.
6. Consider estate implications. Some of these considerations can be quite complex. The costs of accommodation bonds and charges, daily fees, daily income-tested fees, and extra services fees require careful consideration. Strategies can be implemented to reduce the impact of some of these charges and fees.

A financial planner with experience and expertise in aged care can assist with these considerations, particularly in relation to the various costs and charges in residential care and the strategies that can be implemented to reduce some of these costs.

Phillip Cormack FNIA; SF Fin, Financial Planning Specialist
Godfrey Pembroke Limited
T: 02 9231 5611
E: pcormack@godfreypembroke.com.au

Phillip Cormack is a Financial Planning Specialist with Godfrey Pembroke Limited. Phillip has had a long association with AlzNSW as a voluntary member of its Investment Advisory Committee. The views expressed in this column are those solely of the author. Readers should consider their own personal situation before seeking financial planning advice. Any advice in this communication has been prepared without taking account of your objectives, financial situation or needs. Because of this you should, before acting on any advice, consider whether it is appropriate to your objectives, financial situation and needs. Godfrey Pembroke Limited ABN 23 002 336 264, registered office 105 - 153 Miller Street North Sydney NSW 2060, is an Australian Financial Services Licensee and member of the National Australia Bank group of companies. From time to time Godfrey Pembroke, members of the National Australia Bank group of companies, associated employees or agents may have an interest in or receive pecuniary and non pecuniary benefits from the financial products and services mentioned herein.

LIFE AFTER LICENCES GRANT

The local Life after Licences team on the mid-north coast, comprised of representatives from Community Care Options, Community Transport, AlzNSW and an occupational therapist, has recently received an NRMA Community Grant.

The Grant will go towards developing materials and running workshops assisting people through the process of driving retirement. Giving up driving can be an emotional or difficult experience. Although it is virtually inevitable that everyone will need to give up driving as they age, it should not mean the end of leading a fulfilling and meaningful life.

The workshops will outline warning signs that people may need to heed to give up driving, activities that seniors can undertake to safely extend their driving life as they age, tips on starting conversations with people who may need to give up driving, and how to access support and transport alternatives if you or a loved one has to cease driving.

The first workshop will be held in Coffs Harbour in March, with more following in Bellingen in April and Nambucca Heads in May.

For more information, contact Marg Coutts.
E: marg.coutts@alzheimers.org.au
T: (02) 6651 6415

NEW COFFS HARBOUR OFFICE

The Coffs Harbour AlzNSW office has a new location in Lyster Street. AlzNSW staff continue to share the office with Carers NSW, which has been beneficial to both staff and carers seeking support and advice.

The Coffs Harbour office has a Dementia Advisor who provides information, support, counselling and referrals for people with dementia and their families, friends and carers on the Coffs coast, and a Dementia Educator who covers the North Coast region.

The new office is at 2/2 Lyster Street, Coffs Harbour, next door to Australian Hearing.

To contact the Coffs Harbour office, call Judy or Marg.
T: (02) 6651 7101

MEMORY VAN ROAD TRIP

The Memory Vans are hitting the road in March, tripping around northern NSW with the support of the Aussie Farmers Foundation to raise awareness of the importance of brain health and dementia risk reduction.

You can visit the van and find out about brain health at the following destinations during March:
- Gloucester: 11 March
- Walcha: 12 March
- Glen Innes: 13 March
- Tenterfield: 14 March
- Boralbino and Lismore: 15 March
- Murwillumbah and Byron Bay: 16 March
- Grafton: 18 March
- Coffs Harbour: 19 March
- Nambucca and Kempsey: 20 March
- Port Macquarie: 21 March
- Forster: 22 March

For more information, contact Clare Coyle.
T: (02) 4962 7000
VALENTINE’S DAY ACTION

Hundreds of people in NSW shared their favourite memories on Valentine’s Day to help call for investment in dementia research. AlzNSW staff and volunteers hit the streets on 14 February asking members of the public to plant memories that will last a lifetime, in support of a call for $200 million to be directed to dementia research over the next five years.

The event showcased a six-foot memory tree that came to life as people customised leaves with their favourite memories.

Alzheimer’s Australia’s National President and 2013 Australian of the Year Ita Buttrose said the event was about raising awareness of the need for a much greater investment in dementia research.

‘Research into the causes and treatments for dementia, and better care for people living with the condition, are grossly underfunded,’ Ms Buttrose said. ‘Australia has some of the world’s leading dementia researchers, but the sector lacks the capacity of long-established health research areas, so vital research into new treatments and interventions is falling behind.’

‘An investment of $200 million over five years is the only way Australia will have a chance at working towards a world without dementia.’

In 2012-13, the National Health and Medical Research Council allocated $21.5 million for dementia research, compared with $162.4 million for cancer research, $93.6 million for cardiovascular disease research, $63 million for diabetes research and $55.1 million for mental health research.

- To learn more about the Fight Dementia campaign visit www.campaign.fightdementia.org.au
- For a copy of Alzheimer’s Australia’s pre-budget submission visit www.fightdementia.org.au
- ‘Like’ the Fight Dementia Facebook page at www.facebook.com/fightdementia

MEN’S BRAINS MATTER

AlzNSW Dementia Advisor Verity Jackson, who supports people living in the Cooma-Monaro, Snowy River and Bombala shires, was guest speaker at the recent Snowy River Men’s Group’s annual four-wheel-drive trip into the high country in Kosciuszko National Park.

Verity delivered a ‘Your Brain Matters’ presentation to more than 50 men to raise awareness of how to maintain brain health. Other presenters on the day included ambulance officers, police and the Rural Fire Service.

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ITA BUTTROSE: AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR WINNER

ITA BUTTROSE, ALZHEIMER’S AUSTRALIA NATIONAL PRESIDENT, WAS NAMED AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR FOR HER WORK IN THE MEDIA AND AS A CHAMPION OF MEDICAL CAUSES.

Alzheimer’s Australia’s National President has been named the 2013 Australian of the Year. Ita Buttrose was honoured in recognition of her groundbreaking media career and the commitment she has made to championing medical education and health care.

“The men and women we honour are our tall poppies, who have grown high in achievement and stature,” said Prime Minister Julia Gillard at the presentation.

“Through the Australian of the Year Awards, we don’t cut them down, we lift them up, honouring in them all that is best about our nation, our values and ourselves.”

Ita is the first female to be named Australian of the Year since Dr Fiona Wood was honoured in 2005, and joins the ranks of Dr Wood, plastic surgeon, ‘spray-on skin’ pioneer and one of the main figures in disaster management following the 2002 Bali bombings; Australian test cricket captains Allan Border, Steve Waugh and Mark Taylor; Australia’s first Indigenous senator Neville Bonner; opthalmologist and humanitarian Professor Fred Hollows; scientist and author Professor Tim Flannery; and winners of the Nobel Prize for Medicine, Professor Peter Doherty and Sir John Eccles.

The CEO of AlzNSW, The Hon. John Watkins, said that joining such luminaries is a very well-deserved honour for Ita.

“We are thrilled that Ita has been recognised so appropriately for all she has done,” John said. “Ita has not only had a trailblazing media career, she has done an enormous amount in the health and charity sector.

“Ita has had a long association with us here at AlzNSW as a member of our Advisory Council, a group of eminent supporters who kindly give their time and expertise to advise the organisation across a range of strategic issues.

“Ita has also been an Ambassador for AlzNSW since September 2010. Since taking on the role of President of Alzheimer’s Australia, Ita’s leadership in the organisation’s Fight Dementia Campaign contributed to the April 2012 announcement of the ‘Living Longer. Living Better’ aged care reform package by the Prime Minister Julia Gillard and the Minister for Mental Health and Ageing Mark Butler, and to dementia being named a National Health Priority Area.”

Ita has great compassion and dedication to the cause. “Ita is a very worthy recipient of such an honour,” John said. “On behalf of all our members and people living with dementia across NSW, I would like to congratulate Ita and thank her for ongoing commitment and devotion to our organisation.”

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As well as working in the spotlight to garner support for dementia research and care, Ita hits the streets to talk to the public at AlzNSW events.
EDUCATION COURSES

THE AlzNSW EDUCATION PROGRAM OFFERS COURSES FOR CARE WORKERS, FAMILY CARERS AND VOLUNTEERS.

SUPPORT GROUP LEADERS’ WORKSHOP
Introduction to Group Work Leadership
Coffs Harbour 25 and 26 March
Queanbeyan 3 and 4 June

Advanced Group Leadership
North Ryde 6 and 7 May

Loss and Grief in a Carer
Support Group
Coffs Harbour 20 and 21 May
Mt Druitt 8 and 9 July

Group Leaders’ Forum (for current, experienced group leaders)
Queanbeyan 9 April
Mt Druitt 22 April
North Ryde 17 June

For additional locations, more information or to register, contact Monica Cole.
E: groupdevelopmentnsw@alzheimers.org.au
T: (02) 8875 4682

CARER EDUCATION
Family carers and friends are invited to attend a free course conducted by AlzNSW (excludes professional health care workers). Workshops will be held in various locations.
E: nsw.education@alzheimers.org.au
T: (02) 8875 4640

CARE WORKER COURSES
Person-Centred Care and Communicating with a Person Living with Dementia
North Ryde 15 April

Unlocking the Silent Prison – Using visual cues to communicate with persons with dementia
North Ryde 18 April

Elder Abuse and Dementia
North Ryde 1 May

Experiencing Dementia
North Ryde 29 May

Palliative Care and Dementia for AINs
North Ryde 20 June

Meaningful Engagement in Leisure Activities
North Ryde 25 June

Palliative Care
Forster 18 April

VOLUNTEER EDUCATION
If you are a volunteer supporting people who are frail, aged or living with dementia you are invited to attend free interactive workshops in various locations.
E: nsw.education@alzheimers.org.au
T: (02) 8875 4640

WORKSHOP
UNLOCKING THE SILENT PRISON: USING VISUAL CUES TO COMMUNICATE WITH PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA

AlzNSW is running a workshop to help professionals and family carers communicate more effectively with people with dementia. Strategies using written and graphic cues will be described, including the use of memory wallets, memory books, and reminder cards to modify problem behaviours and to maintain conversation skills.

The workshop will be presented by Professor Michelle Bourgeois from the Department of Speech and Hearing Science at Ohio State University.
When: 18 April, 9.30am – 4.00pm
Where: North Ryde RSL Community Club, cnr Magdala and Pittwater Rds, North Ryde
Cost: $150

For more information, visit the Fight Dementia website.

To register, download and complete a registration form, and email or fax it back.
E: nsw.education@alzheimers.org.au
F: (02) 8875 4665

FAMILY CARER EDUCATION

Three-day carer course
Sylvania 20 and 27 Mar, 3 April
Camden 8, 15 and 22 April

Sons & Daughters, Family & Friends
North Ryde 23 April

Four-evening carer course
North Ryde 7, 14, 21 and 28 May
Sylvania 13, 20 and 27 May, 3 June

Living with Dementia
Forster 16 May

PHYSICAL DISABILITY AND DEMENTIA

Wollongong April
Armidale May
Central Coast June

Dates and locations may be subject to alteration. Fees apply for some courses.
For more information or to register:
E: nsw.education@alzheimers.org.au
T: (02) 8875 4640 or (02) 8875 4651
RESEARCH

RECENT STUDIES

THE NEED FOR DEMENTIA-SPECIFIC TRAINING FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS, AND GREATER FOCUS ON THE USE OF ANAESTHETICS AND BENZODIAZEPINES IN OLDER PEOPLE.

DEMENTIA-SPECIFIC TRAINING
New Australian research from the Dementia Collaborative Research Centre – Carers and Consumers suggests that understanding of dementia among health care staff could be improved, particularly in relation to medical aspects such as risk reduction and the course of the disease.

“The study clearly showed that those who had had dementia-specific training had better knowledge and understanding,” says study author Dr Elaine Fielding. “Our primary recommendation is making dementia-specific training a component of clinical practice.”

Read more: goo.gl/R9wGO

ANAESTHESIA RISK
Research led by Associate Professor David Scott from St Vincent’s Hospital in Melbourne has found that older people who already have mild cognitive impairment before anaesthesia are more likely than others to suffer increased cognitive dysfunction after surgery.

“Patients with post-operative cognitive dysfunction may experience a longer stay in hospital, have a reduced quality of life and even have an increased mortality,” says Dr Scott. “We need to be able to identify patients susceptible to postoperative cognitive dysfunction and modify how we treat them.”

EARLY DETECTION
More than 10,000 Australians are participating in a study led by the Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health in Melbourne. The Trajectory-Related Early Alzheimer’s Database (TREAD) project will assess the memory and cognitive function of healthy over-50s over the next three-and-a-half years.

“Our research aims to detect the earliest possible signs of dementia in otherwise healthy people even before significant symptoms are noticed,” said project leader Associate Professor David Darby.

If you are aged over 50 and healthy, you can volunteer.

Find out more: tread.florey.edu.au

BENZODIAZEPINES AND DEMENTIA
Recently published results of a 15-year French study have found a 50 per cent increase in the risk of developing benzodiazepines in older people.

Benzodiazepines are commonly used to treat anxiety, insomnia, agitation and, less commonly, seizures, muscle spasms and alcohol withdrawal. Previous studies focusing on a link between dementia and benzodiazepine use have had conflicting results.

The results emphasise the importance of monitoring the use of anxiety and sleep treatments, says UK Alzheimer’s Society Director of Research Professor Clive Ballard.

Read more: goo.gl/pHLdD

BRAIN HEALTH STUDY
Researchers from Alzheimer’s Australia and the Australian National University are working together to assess Australians’ commitment to improving brain health.

“The particular focus is on lifestyle choices that impact the health of the brain,” says project leader Dr Maree Farrow.

The team is looking for participants who:

• are over 18
• can read and write English
• have daily access to email and internet
• have a smartphone or tablet
• undertake moderate physical exercise
• can commit to four weeks of regular participation and three surveys over four months

Find out more: brainhealthstudy.org.au
Q & A

Q WE HAD CHRISTMAS WITH MY GRANDFATHER WHO HAS DEMENTIA. UNUSUALLY FOR HIM, HE WAS VERY WITHDRAWN AND GOT UPSET OFTEN. WHAT IS HAPPENING?

A Every person’s experience of dementia is unique. Difficulties communicating thoughts and feelings are common, especially around Christmas. To make things easier for you and your grandfather, contact a counsellor on the National Dementia Helpline: 1800 100 500.

Q MUM HAS ALZHEIMER’S AND LIVES INTERSTATE. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

A Dementia does not automatically mean that a person cannot care for themselves. Helping your mum stay for as long as possible in the familiar surrounds of her home is the ultimate goal. To support her independence, access our Helpsheets at www.fightdementia.org.au or call the National Dementia Helpline: 1800 100 500. The counsellor that you speak with can give you a number to call to talk with someone in the state your mother is living.

SERVICES

10 WAYS ALzNSW CAN HELP

ALzNSW IS HERE TO SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA, THEIR FAMILIES AND CARERS. LET US COUNT THE WAYS!

1 Support at time of diagnosis helps you and your family to make sense of the diagnosis and the next steps.
2 Practical advice helps you minimise the impact of dementia.
3 Living with Memory Loss programs for people in early-stage dementia increase knowledge and confidence for managing memory loss.
4 Individual and family consultations help you plan for the future.
5 Education programs help you understand and live well with dementia.
6 Up-to-date information and resources about dementia and access to the members’ lending library keeps you and your family informed.
7 Connections with other people living with dementia enable you to share information and experiences.
8 Social and creative activities provide opportunities for meaningful participation.
9 Recommendations and advice about dementia support services in your area ensure suitable care.
10 Our provision of information to GPs and other health care providers helps them improve their care and support for you.

NEED ANSWERS?
Do you have a question for AlzNSW? Contact the National Dementia Helpline.
E: nsw.helpline@alzheimers.org.au
T: 1800 100 500

↑ Courses and special events increase knowledge about dementia risk reduction and treatments.
↑ AlzNSW campaigns rally the public and lobby the government to improve dementia funding and care.

TAP

The Tailored Activity Program

We are currently recruiting for participants

This study being run from the University of Sydney is a trial to test a program aimed at improving the quality of life of people with dementia by providing meaningful activities tailored to their abilities.

For more information, please contact:
Tara-Lea McAleer Tel: (02) 9351 9594
or Email: tara.mcaleer@sydney.edu.au

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FUNDRAISING

LIFE SUPPORT

DONATE, BEQUEATH A GIFT IN YOUR WILL OR FUNDRAISE THROUGH ACTIVITIES. NO MATTER HOW YOU DO IT, SUPPORTING ALZNSW FINANCIALLY WILL HELP THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE.

BEQUESTS
As our population ages, we need to extend our services to meet growing demand. Leaving AlzNSW a gift in your will can give us the long-term financial confidence to maintain and extend our vital support services, continue to educate carers and health professionals, and invest in research to stop this deadly disease.

Make a will or update your existing will and include a bequest to AlzNSW. You should always seek the services of a solicitor or trustee company to prepare your will to ensure that it is correctly drafted and is practical in meeting your wishes. To find out more about how you can help AlzNSW by leaving a gift in your will, contact Diana Waring.

T: (02) 8875 4631
E: diana.waring@alzheimers.org.au

IN MEMORIAM DONATION
By making a donation in memory of a loved one, you ensure his or her memory lives on by helping others. You can also celebrate the life of a loved one by asking for a donation to AlzNSW in lieu of flowers.

In memoriam envelopes can be made available at a funeral, church, wake or service where friends and family can make a donation to AlzNSW.

A receipt will be sent to the donor and, with their permission, a letter will be sent to the family to advise them of the kind gift. The amount of the gift will remain confidential and gifts $2 and higher are tax-deductible.

T: (02) 8875 4673
E: marina.agostino@alzheimers.org.au

SEND US YOUR STORY
Some members help our fundraising and awareness-raising efforts by sharing their stories of dementia, whether funny, tragic, empowering, uplifting, inspirational or sad.

If you would like to help our fundraising and awareness-raising efforts by telling your story, please contact Karen.

T: 1300 636 679
E: karen.carran@alzheimers.org.au

BRING IT TO THE TABLE
We are bringing the fight against dementia to the nation’s tables with a get-together with a difference. Members of the community, carers and supporters will host events, such as high teas or board-game dinners, and raise the conversation about dementia while raising much-needed funds for Alzheimer’s Australia. Bring it to the table will be launched in April with events throughout June. If you would like to know more about this great fundraising initiative please contact Donor & Community Development Executive Megan Thomas.

E: megan.thomas@alzheimers.org.au
T: (02) 8875 4625

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING
Planning a fundraiser in your local community or workplace? We are revitalising our community fundraising program and are looking for support from passionate fundraisers. We can guide and support you in preparation for your event, from morning teas to gala balls.

T: 02 8875 4625
E: megan.thomas@alzheimers.org.au

STAY IN TOUCH
If you are not already on our email database and would like updates about all the news on our upcoming events, please contact Megan.

T: (02) 8875 4625
E: nsw.events@alzheimers.org.au

DEMENTIA AND DRIVING RESEARCH
AlzNSW is participating in a dementia and driving project with the University of Wollongong and the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District.

If you have dementia and drive a car, researchers at the University of Wollongong would like to invite you to participate in a telephone survey.

All participants will be mailed a free information booklet on driving and dementia. The aim of the study is to seek your feedback on this booklet.

If you would like to learn more about joining this study please contact Dr. John Carmody MRCPI FRACP, Staff Specialist Neurologist, Wollongong Hospital.

E: john.carmody@sesiaws.health.nsw.gov.au
T: (02) 4253 4430 or 0427 468 544
Post: Neurology Department, Level 4, Block C, Wollongong Hospital, Wollongong NSW 2500
IN MEMORIAM

WE OFFER OUR CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILIES WHO HAVE LOST THEIR LOVED ONES. WE ALSO THANK THEIR FRIENDS AND FAMILIES WHO HAVE DONATED TO ALZHEIMER’S AUSTRALIA NSW.

William ‘Bill’ Adamson
Angela Amendolia
Anthony Arapidis
John Balkouras
Hilda Mary Beaumont
Wiltbur Nash Bedford
Nola Grace Bennett
Alisa Brady
George Lawrence ‘Lawrie’ Bretnall
Alice Ellen Brooks
Marjorie Burns
Ann Carol Carlisle
John Chamberlain
Ross Craig
Patricia Joan Cristini (nee Cummings)
Michael Crowley
Joe Cunningham
Alison Daisy
John Desmond Dart
Laurie Davey
William ‘Bill’ Davies
Constantine Drakos
Valerie Dumbrell
John Eaton
Margaret Ann ‘Maggie’ Eaton
Patricia Joan Edginton
Heather Ellen Margaret Emery
Ronald Charles ‘Ron’ Evans
Fay Evans
Betty Evans
Theresa Farruja
Ian Gray Fell
Francis Patrick ‘Frank’ Fitzsimmons
William Charles Leonard Fletcher
Josephine Flynn
Benjamin Francis-Jones
Gordon ‘Mick’ Freeman
Emily Ruth Gallard
Hazel Jean Gerrard
Antony Rodwell Green
Richard Hammond
Peter Stott Harrison
Elizabeth Hatzimihalakis
Margaret ‘Peggy’ Hedges
Jean Muriel Hewitt
June Higgins
Muriel May Hill (nee Strathen)
Eva ‘Eve’ Himes

James Arthur Holdaway
Doris Jean Irvine (nee Lane)
Luis Itzcoyvich
Peter Jenkins
Mary Johnson
Neville Johnson
Norma Joan Jordan
Aina Maude King Kellett (Tommie)
Arthur Kurts
Antonio Lava
Norma Ellen Lewis
Yvonne ‘Bonnie’ Lickerman
Edward St. Anslem ‘Eamon’/‘Ted’ Lucey
John William Macris
Sonja Maghrabi
Graham Henry Neill Martin
Alexander John Mathieson
Norman Thomas Matthews
Margaret Constance McIntyre
Jean Kathleen McMaster
Peter Robert Mead
George Michael
Patricia Marion Milgrove
Florence Gertrude ‘Flo’ Miller
(formerly Sevester)
Arthur George Mison
Leonard Morgan
Sante Murer
Gaetano Natoli
Bartolo Natoli
Antonia Nesai
Eva Margaret Noble
Richard Llewellyn Parker
Marianna Passafaro
Edward Charles ‘Ted’ Pearce
Robert Allan Pennock
Rion Edward Phipps
Enny ‘Anne’ Raaymakers (nee Perery)
Nellie Rae
Maria Rapisarda
Carmela Raso
Alfred Oliver Reardon
Wendy Ruth ap Rees (nee Holroyde)
Robert Reid
The Hon. Joseph Martin Rioddan AO
Wilfred Harper ‘Bill’ Roberts
Antonina Salvagio
Desa Sardelic

Joseph Sciberras
Barbara June Severn
Beryl Skyes
Gladys Slater
Oliver Alfred Smart
Zvonko ‘Sam’ Sostaric
Irene Barbara Spence
Stuart Staziker
Max Edward Tapply
Ida Taylor
Andrew Theos
James Harold ‘Jim’ Trimble
Nicholas Tsoukalas
Joy Vinson
Harold Ronald Volk
Thomas Wade
Theresa Wainwright
Stephanie Sybil Joy Waley
Valerie Walker
Edith Watters
Janet Galbraith Webster (nee McCleary)
Norman Charles Westbury
Irene Phyllis Wheeler
Ernest Kelvin Whitfield
Allan Williams
Betty Jean Yabsley

Alzheimer’s Australia would like to acknowledge and thank the families and executors of recently received bequests from which people with dementia, carers and their families have received lasting benefit.
RESOURCES

**AlzNSW Library**

Library and Information Services Coordinator Michelle De Mari reviews the new additions to the AlzNSW Library.

**Journal**

Counsellors and Psychotherapists Association of NSW Journal Issue 4: Dealing with Dementia

Several articles in this journal were written by AlzNSW staff, including ‘Supporting people with younger onset dementia and their families’ by Kylie Sait and Lyndell Huskins, ‘Counselling the carer’ by Helen Carswell and ‘Working with dementia: the counselling needs of professional carers’ by Georgene McNeil.

Other articles in this issue include ‘Conversations: Sinking slowly into the darkness of dementia – an interview of Noel Hackett’ by Roberta Parrott, ‘Hearing the voices of dementia: A person-centred approach’ by Kirstin Robertson-Gillam and ‘Persons with dementia from other cultural backgrounds and their carers’ by Lee-Fay Low.

**Books**

**Learned optimism: How to change your mind and your life**

By Martin E.P. Seligman PhD

Offering many simple techniques, Dr Seligman explains how to experience the benefits of a more positive interior dialogue. These skills can help fight depression, boost the immune system, better develop potential and make you happier. Learned optimism is both profound and practical, and valuable for every phase of life.

**Leisure in later life**

By Michael J. Leitner and Sara F. Leitner

This book covers topics such as senior day care centres, recreation in facilities, nursing homes, leadership principles, program evaluation, leisure counselling, intergenerational activities, exercise, dance, sexuality, global perspectives and leisure in later life.

**Playfulness and dementia: A practical guide**

By John Killick

John Killick explores the nature of playfulness and the many ways in which it can enrich the lives of people with dementia. Specific approaches already in existence are described, and personal accounts of playfulness offer first-hand insights into its transformative potential.

The importance of spontaneity and being in the present moment with the person with dementia is emphasised, and the reader is encouraged to develop a playful mindset.

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**Crossword**

ACROSS
1. Unchanged
6. Scraped (out a living)
10. French heroine, Joan ...
11. Tortilla with chilli sauce
12. Found repugnant
14. Potter’s turning device
16. Truth
18. Biblical wise judge
20. Experienced person
22. Scoundrels
23. Barely sufficient
25. Change premises
28. Securely fixed
29. Zigzag (through traffic)
31. Young children
32. Investigated

DOWN
1. Alien spacecraft
2. Battery size
3. Common-law spouse, de ...
4. Plainly
5. Puts into cipher
7. Rogue
8. Lethal quality
9. Petroleum pits
13. Trademark
15. Witch’s transport
17. Passive
19. Implied
21. Made to last
22. Alleviate
24. Intended
26. Cringe
27. Family war
30. Cigar dust