The 30th International Conference of Alzheimer’s Disease International was held in Perth from 15 - 18 April and attracted a large field of international guest speakers and dementia care experts. Held in conjunction with Alzheimer’s Australia and Alzheimer’s Australia WA, Alzheimer’s Disease International’s Care Cure and the Dementia Experience - A Global Challenge the conference attracted over 1000 delegates from 60 countries.

Graeme Samuel, Alzheimer’s Australia National President welcomed delegates to the conference. In his opening speech he said that he welcomes the current investment of $200 million by the Australian Government and hopes to see this funding increased in future years.

“Research in the areas of prevention, detection and potential treatments are vital but just as important as building capacity in the research sector and bringing our best and brightest minds into the field.”

Alzheimer’s ACT sponsored 10 delegates including our President, 5 senior staff and 4 consumers to attend the Conference.

The general consensus was that the three days were inspirational and a valuable learning experience. The delegates attended a wide range of sessions, took in all the information stands, displays including a dementia-friendly apartment and poster presentations from organisations and projects in Australia and around the world.

Alzheimer’s ACT was well represented with 3 posters being selected. To read more about the Conference and these posters go to page 7.
MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Our new Strategic Plan for 2015 – 2018 is nearing completion. We want to thank our consumers, staff and stakeholders for participating wholeheartedly in focus groups to create a plan that is responsive to the needs of people living with dementia and those involved in their care and to the opportunities and challenges that the aged care reforms and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will bring.

In partnership with the Commonwealth Department of Social Services we will be running courses for consumers over the coming months on the aged care reforms that will affect you – so keep your eyes out for invitation flyers.

An important element of the Strategic Plan is to position ourselves for future growth if we are to meet the needs of a growing number of people living with dementia in the ACT and surrounding region.

Our structure as an association constrains our growth and operation in a number of ways, so the Board has decided to convert to a company structure that will enable us to work across borders with our partners to provide a comprehensive suite of services in the ACT and NSW. To this end the Board will call a special general meeting of the membership in June to adopt a new company structure and Constitution. Included with this newsletter is the latest Alzheimer’s Australia Fact Sheet that brings home the compelling facts and statistics about dementia in Australia.

As I write this message, I am getting excited about our Winter Celebration on Thursday 14 May 2015. Staff are busily planning a venue, menu, and entertainment that will make you feel that you are in a winter wonderland. So please come along and enjoy this very special mid-year event.

Another terrific event will be our Charity Fundraising Trivia Night on Friday 29 May 2015. ACT politician, Steve Doszpot, Shadow Minister for Ageing, has given generously of his time and talent to ensure that this evening will be full of fun, prizes, auctions and trivia galore to test your brain! Please take a table – bring your family and friends – and offer a raffle or auction item, prize or just donate – it’s for a great cause, Alzheimer’s ACT! One hundred percent of the profits will go towards improving our facilities and services for you, the consumer.

I look forward to seeing you at these wonderful events.

Jane Allen
CEO
Alzheimer’s Australia ACT
STEVE DOSZPOT MLA
ANNUAL CHARITY FUNDRAISING TRIVIA NIGHT
IN SUPPORT OF ALZHEIMER’S AUSTRALIA ACT

Tables are going fast for this fabulous fundraiser. Join us for a wonderful evening of trivia, prizes, auctions, delicious finger foods and complimentary first drink.

FRIDAY
29 MAY 2015
Hellenic Club
Matilda Street, Woden
6.30pm for 7.00pm
$60 pp or $500 a table

MC:
Greg Bayliss
666 ABC Radio

Quizmaster:
Steve Doszpot MLA
Shadow Minister for Ageing

BOOKING FORM
Complete all details and fax to 02 6255 0499, email act.admin@alzheimers.org.au or post PO Box 7100, Kaleen ACT by Friday 22 May 2015

ALZHEIMER’S AUSTRALIA ACT & STEVE DOSZPOT MLA
Charity Fundraising Trivia Night – Friday, 29 May 2015

I would like to purchase: ☐ Tickets at $60 each or ☐ Table of 10 @ $500

I am unable to attend but would like to donate $ ______

Please ask your family and friends to join us for this fun event.

Mr/Mrs/Ms/other .........................................................................................................................
(First name) (Family name)

Company Name ...........................................................................................................................

Address ........................................................................................................................................
(Suburb) (Postcode)

Phone ........................................ Email .........................................................................................

Payment Options
☐ Direct Deposit ☐ Mastercard/Visa ☐ Cheque ☐

Account Name: Alzheimer’s Australia ACT Inc Fundraising Trust Account
BSB: 082 902
Account Number: 947710718
Reference: Surname, First Initial

Card number — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — —— Expiry ___/___

Name on Card ............................................................................................................................
Signature .................................................................................................................................
AMYLOID OR TAU? RESEARCHER’S ONE STEP CLOSER TO UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRESSION OF ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE

It is an ongoing debate as to which toxic protein is primarily responsible for Alzheimer’s disease onset – is it amyloid beta or is it Tau?

Analysis of 3,618 donated brains has suggested that malfunctioning Tau proteins are the main driver of Alzheimer’s disease symptoms, such as memory loss and cognitive decline. Amyloid beta, another toxic protein involved in Alzheimer’s disease onset is suggested to build up as the disease progresses, but according to this new research, published in the Journal Brain by researchers from the Mayo Clinic in the USA, it might not be considered the primary culprit.

Amyloid or Tau – the background

Alzheimer’s disease is generally agreed by researchers around the world to be caused by the malfunctioning of two proteins – Amyloid beta and Tau. Unfortunately it is not as simple as suggesting that researchers just develop something which can completely remove these proteins from the brain. While some animal research suggests that the absence of amyloid beta may not lead to any loss of physiological or brain function, the Tau proteins are actually important in maintaining the structure of brain cell and its function.

Really, it is when these proteins malfunction, deform and get to toxic levels that they do damage. For example, amyloid beta proteins can clump together and form plaques which attach themselves to brain cells causing significant damage. When Tau proteins malfunction they form protein tangles inside the cell which lead to a breakdown in the brain cell’s ability to communicate with other brain cells and eventually to cell death.

Dr Melissa Murray, neuroscientist based at Mayo Clinic, USA and researcher on the study said in a press release that the Tau protein can be compared to railroad ties that stabilise a train track.

"In Alzheimer’s disease, changes in the tau protein cause the tracks to become unstable in neurons of the hippocampus, the brain’s memory centre. The abnormal tau builds up in neurons, which eventually leads to the death of these neurons. Evidence suggests that abnormal tau then spreads from cell to cell, disseminating pathological tau in the brain’s cortex. The cortex is the outer part of the brain that is involved in higher levels of thinking, planning, behaviour and attention - mirroring later behavioural changes in people with Alzheimer’s disease," said Dr Murray.

Why is this important?

The current debate focuses around which protein needs to be targeted when developing treatments for dementia. It doesn’t just stop there however, the researchers also want to know which protein causes more damage, when the damage is caused, how it is caused and most importantly how can it be detected?

In their study of over 3600 brains the researchers were able to look at the impact of Alzheimer’s disease pathology at various stages (i.e. early-late stages) and their findings are leaning towards the Tau protein being a major target for Alzheimer’s disease treatments and as such should be considered a prioritised target for future research developments, in both the areas of diagnosis and treatment.

Written by Dr Ian McDonald
Alzheimer’s Australia Dementia Research Foundation
Dementia News #6 2015
ALZHEIMER’S ACT WORKING TO CREATE A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY CANBERRA

At a recent face-to-face meeting of the Alzheimer’s Australia Dementia Friendly Working Group, the ACT representative, Petrea Messent, gave an overview of the activities happening here in Canberra. Alzheimer’s ACT is proud that despite being a small size we are definitely achieving fantastic results with some really worthwhile projects.

Alzheimer’s ACT staff are working with community services and facilities to improve and maintain dementia oriented services. This includes:

- **Consultation services on dementia friendly environment** through education using the Dementia Training Study Centre and Dementia Enabling Environments Project resources – offered to local residential aged care facilities.

- **Social programs** regularly use local services who demonstrate willingness to provide flexibility for people with dementia and their carers
  - ACT Taxi services – regular use of particular taxi drivers who have been willing to assist and go the “extra mile” with people with dementia
  - Local cafes in numerous locations in ACT welcome social groups from Alzheimer’s ACT
  - Australian National Gallery – have been particularly welcoming and encouraging participation by enabling regular visits by Alzheimer’s art group/social groups.

- **Greening Australia project** – Alzheimer’s ACT’s Younger Onset Dementia Key Worker (YODKW) has organised clients to participate in Greening Australia projects to provide meaningful occupational and individualised activities and support

- **Mens Sheds** – assistance in the development of new Men’s Sheds in the ACT, focusing on inclusion for and servicing the needs of people with Younger Onset Dementia.

- **Involvement in partnerships including ACT Government initiatives**
  - Appointment of Alzheimer’s ACT CEO to the Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing by the ACT Minister for Ageing. The role of the committee is to keep the Minister informed of ageing issues and developments and raise awareness of dementia.
  - The ACT Government is committed to making Canberra an age friendly city and has dedicated 2 suburbs (Ainslie and Weston) as trial sites for age friendly transport, facilities and environments. The key organisations involved are keen for input from Alzheimer’s Australia ACT to include and guide around dementia friendly aspects. The development of the Men’s Shed in Weston will be included in this process.

Alzheimer’s Australia ACT have offered to be part of this collaboration, including distribution of information about these initiatives to client networks, and encouragement of people with dementia and their carers to participate in the consultation/survey process.
KARMA AND JIM
HIT THE AIRWAVES FOR ALZHEIMER’S ACT

In March Alzheimer’s ACT received a request from 666 ABC Radio’s Lish Fejer about the possibility of getting a couple of our clients to come in for a chat on the Sunday Brunch morning radio program.

Alzheimer’s staff put on their ‘thinking caps’ as to who would be suitable and willing and managed to persuade Karma and Jim to turn up at 10.00am on Sunday morning for the interview.

The interview went extremely well, it was light-hearted but at the same time gave a valuable insight into the difficulties faced by someone with a diagnosis as well as giving the carer a chance to talk about their point of view. The segment was also complimented by an introduction by Karen Cmiel, Alzheimer’s ACT Education Manager, on the difference between dementia and forgetting which is a question Alzheimer’s Australia ACT is often asked.

Interviews such as these are invaluable in raising public knowledge and breaking down the stigma experienced by people living with dementia and their families.

Thank You Karma and Jim for your bravery and willingness to help Alzheimer’s ACT in our role of ‘Understanding and Educating’.

Alzheimer’s Australia ACT occasionally receives requests from the media for interviews or comments from people living with dementia, their carers and families on topical issues. If you would like to be a Dementia Advocate like Karma and Jim please phone Deanne Ballard (6255 0722) for more information.

MEMBERSHIPS
It is that time again ...

Alzheimer’s ACT memberships are due for renewal at the end of the financial year.

Memberships are essential to the survival of Alzheimer’s Australia ACT; the fees and donations received each year enable us to continue providing valuable services to our members and the broader community to assist those living with dementia, their families and carers.

Alzheimer’s ACT members receive a subscription to our Newsletter, access to the Library and Information Service and invitation to events. Memberships are $10 for individual/family and $50 for organisations.

We have enclosed a membership form and we thank you for your continued support.
ACT POSTERS
AT ADI CONFERENCE

Tony Schumacher Jones PhD, Senior Behaviour Advisor with the ACT Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Service (DBMAS), had two poster proposals selected for presentation at the recent Alzheimer’s Disease International (ADI) Conference in Perth. It was quite a coup to have two posters chosen from among the hundreds submitted for presentation at this prestigious conference. Alzheimer’s ACT were proud as one of the smaller organisations to be represented in such a forum.

The first poster presented was about a previous project of ACT DBMAS to create an information resource around detecting the symptoms of a delirium.

Delirium is a serious medical condition for elderly people and symptoms can produce changed behaviours which can be misunderstood and misdiagnosed.

The Older Person With a Delirium poster was created as result of a collaborative effort between the DBMAS and the Rapid Assessment of the Deteriorating Aged at Risk Program, Aged Care & Rehabilitation Service and ACT Health.

The poster was created in 2009 and distributed throughout residential aged care facilities, hospitals, some ACT medical centres as well as other DBMAS teams around Australia. Word soon spread and it was not long before orders were coming in for the poster from all around Australia. Orders are still being received and last year two posters were delivered to the International Research Station in Antarctica.

For the ADI Conference ACT DBMAS organised for the poster to be translated into 5 languages common to the ACT for distribution to culturally and linguistically diverse communities. It could be that the poster will be seen by an even more diverse audience!

The second poster was around the subject of Person Centred Care which is a subject Tony explored during his Churchill Fellowship Study Tour in 2014. Tony travelled to the Netherlands and England and studied various aspects of Person Centred Care which included volunteering for a week at the dementia-village in De Hogeweyk.

Southern New South Wales Local Health District Aged Care Evaluation Unit (ACEU) also developed and presented a poster at the ADI conference on the Play Up Program which is being funded by ACT DBMAS into a local aged care facility for a 26 week period. The Play Up Program is a humour therapy program run by the Arts Health Institute in which specially trained Play Up valets engage with RACF residents and staff using comedic improvisation techniques. The valet works directly with clients and mentoring staff in the techniques of creative engagement, including music, dance, magic tricks, humorous conversation and other “fun” activities.

The ACEU has been engaged by Alzheimer’s Australia ACT to evaluate the effectiveness of the Play Up Program as a potential intervention for clients of DBMAS. We are interested in whether it impacts directly and positively on the behaviours of people with dementia and their engagement as well as on the staff perceptions and engagement with residents.
FAREWELL
‘JOHN THE TAXI DRIVER’

John Plemenuk has been one of Alzheimer’s ACT’s trusted taxi drivers for over 6 years. Our clients have benefitted from John’s cheerful personality and thoughtful service and he will certainly be missed. We all wish John ‘Good Luck’ in his new life in sunny Queensland.

MEN’S SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUP OUT AND ABOUT

The bravery of members of the Men’s Group was to be commended during their visit to the National Zoo and Aquarium in April - they did not hesitate when asked to feed the lions - albeit with very long metal tongs.

INFORMATION SESSION FOR CEO’s

An information session was held for Executive’s of residential aged care facilities. The well attended session which included a light lunch was held at the Federal Golf Club and attendees were given presentations by Alzheimer’s ACT CEO and Program Managers.

THANK YOU GRILL’D BELCONNEN

Micheal Wootton, Alzheimer’s ACT Office Manager, (below right) collecting our winner’s cheque for $300 from Grill’d Belconnen.

Grill’d also generously offered to treat our Men’s Social Support Group to a free lunch which was greatly appreciated and enjoyed by all.

WHAT’S BEEN HAPPENING AT THE ALAKARA GROUP?

The Alakara Social Group have been treated to a pair of Scottish bagpipe musicians - who played to the group outside. Elizabeth Burness also paid the group another visit to talk about historic clothing which she demonstrated in various creative ways.
FUNDRAISING

There are many ways you can help Alzheimer’s ACT. Fundraising is becoming more and more vital to the sustainability of our organisation. See below for some ways you can contribute to the work of Alzheimer’s ACT .... you can even donate a percentage of your online shopping to support people living with dementia and their carers in the ACT.

You can donate to Alzheimer's Australia ACT by shopping online. 100s of big name retailers such as ASOS, Adairs, Styletread, Deals Direct, Expedia, Hotels.com, Booktopia, Avis and Insure & Go will donate to us a percentage of every purchase you make when you visit Shopnate.


Alzheimer’s ACT are again participating in the People’s Choice Community Lottery. Tickets are only $2 and 100% of the proceeds from tickets sold by Alzheimer's ACT come straight back to us.

There are hundreds of prizes in the $360,000 prize pool including cars, travel vouchers and a $35,000 Harvey Norman spending spree. Tickets can be bought online at www.communitylotterycu.com.au - don’t forget to nominate Alzheimer’s Australia ACT as your charity!

Paper Lottery tickets will be available from the Alzheimer’s ACT office (6255 0722) from 15 May 2015, and both online and paper tickets will be on sale until 18 September, with the draw taking place on 20 October 2015.
UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENT

PALLIATIVE CARE AND DEMENTIA
18 JUNE 2015
1.30pm to 4.30pm
Canberra Southern Cross Club, Corinna Street, Woden
$10

Professor Colleen Cartwright was Foundation Professor of Aged Services and Director of the ASLaRC Aged Services Unit at Southern Cross University until April 2014. She is now Principal Director of Cartwright Consulting Australia Pty Ltd. Professor Cartwright has extensive teaching and research experience in ageing, ethics and medical decisions at the end of life, at national and international levels, with publications in major journals.

Roslyn Kirk
Manager, ACT Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach.

In the ACT, what access do people with dementia and their families have to appropriate palliative care? What is happening in the ACT to improve accessibility for these people and increase the capacity of the ACT healthcare sector to provide appropriate palliative care?

Roslyn’s presentation will provide a local response to these questions.

RSVP essential. Please phone 6255 0722 to register.

BOOKS IN OUR LIBRARY

Dementia Beyond Drugs – Changing the Culture of Care by G. Allen Power, M.D.
Shows why we must change the way care is provided to our elders and how it can be accomplished. Embracing humanistic, enlightened practices that address all the common challenges in dementia care, this book reveals what it takes to effect real culture change within residential care settings while reducing the administration of unnecessary psychotropic drugs.

Always My Grandpa – A story for children about Alzheimer’s disease
Daniel and his mum spend every summer with Grandpa at his cottage by the sea. Daniel loves these times – playing baseball, walking on the beach and hearing Grandpa’s stories of his days and nights on the fishing boat. But this summer is different. Daniel’s grandpa has Alzheimer’s disease and Daniel is about to learn what that means for both Grandpa and himself.

Chicken Soup for the Soul – Living with Alzheimer’s & Other Dementias by Amy Newmark and Angela Timashenka Geige
101 stories of caregiving, coping and compassion
COMMUNITY

Alzheimer’s Australia ACT delivers a comprehensive range of community information sessions. We can come to you and can tailor a talk to suit the specific requirements of your community group, club or service.

Our educators are available to speak to your group on topics such as understanding dementia, memory changes, introduction to dementia, our support services and Your Brain Matters™ risk reduction program.

We have created a brochure of Community Education for July - December 2015 and have included it in this Newsletter for your reference.

Care for the Carer Program
A range of topics covered over two Saturdays. For family and friends assisting with the daily care of a person living with dementia.

Thursday 9 July & Thurs 16 July
9.30am - 3.00pm & 9.30am - 1.00pm
159 Maribyrnong Ave, Kaleen
$15

Worried About your Memory
What is dementia?
This session for the general public covers the definition of dementia, the causes, prevalence and impacts.

Tuesday 8 September
9.30am - 12.30pm
159 Maribyrnong Ave, Kaleen
$10

Montessori Method and activities for family carers
The Montessori Method emphasises the importance of keeping the person living with dementia as independent for as long as possible.

Monday 12 October
1.00pm - 4.00pm
159 Maribyrnong Ave, Kaleen
$10

DBMAS CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM
EDUCATION FOR PROFESSIONALS

The course is aimed at up-skilling, developing knowledge and supporting staff who deliver frontline care to the person with dementia, presenting with behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD).

Target audience
Staff working in all care settings - residential, community and health.

Dates 3 Tuesdays - 26 May, 2 June, 9 June
Time 9.30am – 4.00pm. Lunch and morning tea will be provided
Location The Tradies Quality Hotel, 2 Badham St, Dickson
Cost $120 per participant

Participant Registration
Bookings are essential. To register call 02 6255 0722 to obtain a Booking Form. Invoicing can be arranged for employers. Please register by no later than Monday, 18 May 2015.
## Professional Education

**RSVP Essential for all sessions - Call 6255 0722 or email act.admin@alzheimers.org.au**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing dementia workshop</td>
<td>Thursday 28 May</td>
<td>9.30am - 12.30pm</td>
<td>159 Maribyrnong Avenue, Kaleen</td>
<td>$60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disability and dementia workshop</td>
<td>Thursday 11 June</td>
<td>9.30am - 12.30pm</td>
<td>159 Maribyrnong Avenue, Kaleen</td>
<td>$65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive dementia care for professional staff</td>
<td>Thursday 25 June</td>
<td>1.30pm - 4.30pm</td>
<td>159 Maribyrnong Avenue, Kaleen</td>
<td>$60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Montessori method and activities</td>
<td>Tuesday 30 June</td>
<td>9.30pm - 3.30pm</td>
<td>159 Maribyrnong Avenue, Kaleen</td>
<td>$120 (light lunch included)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keeping safe in the workplace</td>
<td>Thursday 23 July</td>
<td>9.30pm - 12.00pm</td>
<td>159 Maribyrnong Avenue, Kaleen</td>
<td>$65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on the fellas workshop</td>
<td>Thursday 13 August</td>
<td>9.30pm - 3.30pm</td>
<td>159 Maribyrnong Avenue, Kaleen</td>
<td>$100 (light lunch included)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Younger Onset Dementia</td>
<td>Thursday 27 August</td>
<td>9.30am - 12.30pm</td>
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<td>$65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity Building Course</td>
<td>3 x Tuesdays 26 May</td>
<td>9.30am - 4.00pm</td>
<td>The Tradies Quality Hotel</td>
<td>$120</td>
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<td>2 June 2015</td>
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<td>2 Badham Street, Dickson</td>
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To find out more information about any of these courses you can visit the Alzheimer’s Australia website at act.fightdementia.org.au/events, email act.admin@alzheimers.org.au to request a flyer or ring 6255 0722.

Alzheimer’s Australia ACT offers a Dementia Consultancy Service. We can assist you to achieve high quality dementia care, we will come to your workplace to observe and analyse the care environment and offer suggestions for any improvements. Types of consultation we provide include the services of an experienced dementia consultant, tailored education sessions and organisation-specific reports containing observations and suggestions.

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*A caring heart that listens is often more valued than an intelligent mind that talks*

- Michael Josephson

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The National Dementia Helpline is a Australian Government Initiative

**National Dementia Helpline**

**1800 100 500**

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12 AUTUMN 2015