A BREAKFAST THAT HONOURS OUR VETERANS

AGE SHALL NOT WEARY THEM

CONNECTIONS
SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA IN THE ACT

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF ALZHEIMER’S AUSTRALIA ACT
WINTER 2016

OUR STORIES • OUR SERVICES • HOW YOU CAN HELP
Our Vision
Alzheimer’s Australia ACT is committed to the prevention of dementia while valuing and supporting people living with dementia.

Our Purpose
Making a difference for those impacted by dementia by using our knowledge and expertise of dementia to provide leadership in quality services, and be a strong and credible voice for the creation of a dementia friendly ACT.

Our Values
Collaboration
Inclusion
Innovation
Integrity
Respect and Dignity
Professionalism

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fightdementia.org.au

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CEO
JAN CHORLEY
It has been a very exciting time for Alzheimer’s Australia ACT as we work tirelessly to ensure vital funds for the important health and wellbeing of people living with Dementia and their families.

Nearly every day I meet someone who has been impacted by Dementia. This happens anywhere, whether I am attending a social or charity event or paying a bill at the post office. People want to share with me their experiences of knowing a loved one or friend who has had a diagnosis of dementia. Most people have a story and they are keen to share it.

This newsletter details some interesting features including; information on some latest research and an important event on Friday 2 September with The Hon Dr Brendan Nelson AO, Director of the Australian War Memorial. This Breakfast will capture some of the extraordinary stories of our Veterans having experienced much suffering during their war service and have gone on to face the reality of a Dementia diagnosis. This Breakfast is a not to be missed event that acknowledges and honours these powerful stories of our Veterans.

You will also read that we are launching our new Arts in Dementia project. One of our standout projects for people living with Dementia are their visits to our iconic Arts and Cultural institutions based in the ACT. These activities are having a life changing impact for our people. We want to grow this project enabling more people to participate but we need your help to enable us to do this.

We thank you for your generous support and look forward to seeing you at our events.

Alzheimer’s Australia ACT is honoured to have Dr Brendan Nelson AO, Director of the Australian War Memorial (pictured left) as Keynote Speaker at our Business Breakfast on Friday 2 September QT Hotel, Canberra. Dr Nelson will use this opportunity to respectfully acknowledge and honour our veterans, their service experiences, post traumatic stress disorder and dementia. Don’t miss this powerful and unique experience read more about this event on page 2.

Don’t miss out! Ring to book your table now
Call us 02 6255 0722
A BUSINESS BREAKFAST THAT HONOURS OUR VETERAN’S

“The ‘downer’ occurs periodically and usually arrives after I am reminded of stressful, dangerous places or events. I have some pills which I take daily. They are supposed to harness these attacks. It feels as if the brain has closed and the vision impaired.” late Major Ivor Hodgkinson

The late Major Ivor Hodgkinson (pictured above left) and many other serving members will be honoured at our Business Breakfast. This event is about bringing together Canberra’s business and community leaders, politicians, health professionals and families to be part of a unique and powerful experience. This experience will be presented by our key note speaker for the event Dr Brendan Nelson, AO, Director of the Australian War Memorial. Dr Nelson will examine the stories of our veterans; the impact of war and dementia and by doing so respectfully honour our serving members both past and present. Through the collection of these stories we will shine a light on war experiences, post traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury and dementia and the issues and challenges faced by so many Australians.

We all need to be part of this important conversation and we need to work together to remove the stigma still attached to dementia. The real life stories from our veterans and their families will allow us to see that dementia doesn’t discriminate and it is everybody’s business. It is inevitable that we will all have a connection with someone in our community living with dementia. That’s why you need to join us for this incredibly empowering and poignant event.

Along with our nationally renowned and engaging speaker Dr Brendan Nelson AO entertainment will be provided by the RMC Duntroon Jazz Ensemble.

Alzheimer’s Australia Business Breakfast
Friday 2 September
QT Hotel, London Circuit Canberra
7am – 9am

Don’t miss out!
Book your table or ticket now through Eventbrite
Alzheimer’sAustraliaACTBusinessBreakfast

This major event wouldn’t be possible without the support of our generous sponsors

“Dementia – its everybody’s business. Make it your business to be at this event!”
For artsake!

An ACT Dementia and Arts Program

Dementia doesn’t erode curiosity we need to awaken this curiosity through creative pursuits.

Research shows that the arts and cognitive stimulation engage people with dementia, improve their quality of life and reduce depression and apathy, Woods et al 2012. Furthermore, when a person with dementia is meaningfully engaged he/she cannot at the same time exhibit problem behaviours so the engagement can also be considered a treatment, Zeisel, 2009.

Everyone needs access to experience the arts in its many rich and meaningful ways. It is also important for someone living with dementia to access and contribute to the creative fabric of society.

At Alzheimer’s Australia ACT we want to build on our existing art programs by creating and delivering an exciting and innovative Dementia and the Arts Program. Here in the ACT we have a wonderful opportunity to access and engage with iconic institutions and incredibly talented locals.

The Dementia and Arts Program will connect across our vibrant Arts community through dance, music, visual arts, theatre and drama. Our vision is to expand our partnerships with the National Portrait Gallery, the National Gallery of Australia, the National Museum of Australia, the National Botanical Gardens and the ANU to name a few.

We know first hand from our clients how our arts programs make a difference to the quality of life for people with dementia and the families that support them.

“I love attending art groups, I come to life when I view the artworks - I’ve always been connected to art. Being around art inspires me” Viv (participant in our art and National Gallery of Australia progam)

We can also see the enormous opportunities that a complete Dementia and Arts Program can offer the Canberra community as a whole. Such as reinvigorating public spaces through creative engagement. These activities provide meaning and purpose for people with dementia and connects their creations to the broader public making a more engaging, inclusive and vibrant place to live.

The first event to launch our Dementia and the Arts Program is our Music in the Gardens event pitched for 2 December 2016 at The Australian National Botanic Gardens.

Our Dementia and the Arts Program is exciting, fresh, organic and will be unique to the people of Canberra. We need your help to develop this vibrant progam for people living with dementia.

Find out how we can help you
Alzheimer’s Australia ACT
Supporting people with dementia and their families in the ACT
act.fightdementia.org.au
02 6255 0722
National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500

DONATE NOW
Help us to create a Dementia and the Arts Program
Call us 02 6255 0722
Alzheimer’s Australia ACT
Walk or jog this September and change lives

“My father had dementia so I am all too aware of the impact it has not only on the person with dementia, but also on those close to them.” Ita Buttrose, National MWJ Ambassador

This year is Alzheimer's Australia ACT's fourth annual Memory Walk & Jog.

Last year’s event was a great success with over 550 people attending. This September we want to double the amount of people involved in this fun, family event and raise much needed funds to make a difference to the lives of over 4500 people living with dementia in the ACT and the people that support them.

All funds raised assist Alzheimer’s Australia ACT to provide vital services such as counselling, social support groups and education to help family carers, people with dementia and health professionals across the ACT. These services reduce feelings of isolation and empower people with dementia and their carers to live with dignity, meaning and purpose.

With your help, we can make sure that our support is always available to people that need it across the ACT.

Canberra Memory Walk & Jog event could not be made possible without the generous support of our sponsors

2016 Canberra Memory Walk & Jog

Sunday 18 September
Lennox Gardens, Flynn Drive, Yarralumla ACT

The first 100 people to enter will receive a free Memory Walk & Jog T-shirt so register now!

We thank our valuable sponsors.

Register now memorywalk.com.au/act
Or ring 02 6255 0722
The term younger onset dementia is usually used to describe any form of dementia diagnosed in people under the age of 65.

The top 10 facts of younger onset dementia.

1. The term younger onset dementia is used to describe any form of dementia diagnosed in people under the age of 65.

2. The latest figures show that younger onset dementia affects approximately 25,100 Australians.

3. Dementia has been diagnosed in people in their 50’s, 40’s and even in their 30’s.

4. A person living with younger onset dementia is unique because the dementia appears at an earlier stage in life when they are more physically and socially active.

5. A person diagnosed with younger onset dementia may be in full time employment, they may be raising a young family, paying off a mortgage or actively planning for their retirement years.

6. Obtaining an early diagnosis is important as it allows for early planning, the early involvement of support services and perhaps medical treatment.

7. Diagnosis in a younger person may take some time as doctors must eliminate other possible causes of symptoms.

8. The sense of loss for the person with younger onset dementia and their family can be enormous.

9. Carers may have the added responsibility of supporting their partner or family member diagnosed with dementia as well as raising children and managing finances. Children may react differently to the disease, but are likely to have strong reactions.

10. Changed behaviours that are associated with dementia may be more difficult to accept and manage in a younger person. It may be very difficult to access programs or services tailored to suit the needs of people living with younger onset dementia.

Source Alzheimer’s Australia helpsheets

Alzheimer’s Australia ACT is strongly focused on raising the awareness of younger onset dementia in our community. It is important to our local community for us to be part of the solution in creating day programs and services tailored to support people living with younger onset dementia. One of the solutions is to develop a day program for people living with younger onset dementia. Our vision is to create greater access to quality programs for younger people living with dementia here in the ACT. We need assistance to acheive this goal. You can help by becoming a friend of the younger onset keyworker program through Alzheimer’s Australia ACT and help us to develop and deliver day programs that provide meaning and purpose for younger people living with dementia whilst also providing much needed support for their families.

Partner with us and transform lives
Younger Onset Dementia Keyworker Program
Call us on 02 6255 0722

MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO ACT FAMILIES
DONATE
act.fightdementia.org.au/act/support-us/donate-to-us
Looking after people with dementia in the busy hospital environment can be very challenging for the patient, their families and hospital staff.

The Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Service (DBMAS) has been working hard with The Canberra Hospital on projects to improve the hospital experience for people with dementia and their carers. Since March 2016 DBMAS staff have been delivering their Person Centred Mentoring Program, adapted for the hospital environment. DBMAS staff have attended weekly sessions in the acute medical aged care ward at The Canberra Hospital. Our DBMAS staff have been working with the hospital to develop ways to more effectively manage people with dementia and to prevent and minimise behaviours.

An exciting part of the project has seen dementia friendly environmental changes to the ward including the development of a dementia friendly garden. Bunnings Tuggerong have generously supported the creation of this garden through the donation of supplies and offering their hands on expertise. The result of this partnership has been the creation and rejuvenation of a dementia friendly garden that is fully accessible, inviting and safe for residents within this ward. The participants of our Art Group and Men’s Shed support groups recently completed the final touches on the welcome mosaic that features prominently in the new hospital garden.

The timing of the above project has been to compliment the work of the Dementia Care in Hospitals Program. This involves a targeted training program for hospital staff linked to a visual bedside alert called the Cognitive Impairment Identifier (CII) to assist aiding communication and improve experience of a patient. The Canberra Hospital is one of 4 hospitals in Australia piloting this program which has commenced in a number of wards.

The DBMAS team supports this program by reinforcing the key communication principles in working with the Canberra Hospital staff.

Irene is living with dementia and her initial hospital story is a familiar one. When Irene presented to the ward after surgery on a broken hip she was confused and distressed asking ‘Where is my mother? Why isn’t she here? Get her for me now. I want to get out of here. Why aren’t you helping me? What is going on?’

To turn Irene’s concerns around and provide a less fearful hospital experience for her staff were made aware that Irene had a cognitive impairment as she had been given the beside alert as part of the Dementia Care in Hospital Program. This resulted in staff spending more time with Irene such as asking her about her mother, reminiscing and building a rapport. Irene was then reassured and she became less anxious. Staff were then able to engage with Irene in reminiscing conversation about her childhood and also able to perform the observations and other tasks needed post surgery. Irene’s distress was replaced with calm and is cooperative with care activities. This example highlights how important it is to be aware of dementia, how to communicate positively and by doing so what a difference it can make to a hospital stay. This has potentially led to Irene having a better rehabilitation opportunity and overall better health outcome.
There was some very interesting news earlier this month about a possible vaccine for dementia. Flinders University researchers in South Australia have been working with colleagues from the United States at the Institute of Molecular Medicine and University of California to develop a vaccine that targets two proteins in the brain (beta-amyloid and tau) that have been linked to the development of Alzheimer’s disease and dementia.

Research suggests that beta-amyloid and tau proteins cause damage to the brain if they malfunction and get to toxic levels. For example, beta-amyloid 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.

The research team has developed a vaccine to address this problem and found that a vaccine against beta-amyloid seemed to work in mice if it is given before they get dementia but does not work so well once they have developed the disease. However, a vaccine targeting the second protein, tau, may reverse the disease once it has developed.

The researchers are yet to progress to human trials, but if the research translates in humans the same way it has in animal studies so far, they are optimistic that they might have something that can clear these proteins in the brain and prevent them from damaging brain cells.

Source Alzheimer’s Australia Dementia Research Foundation
Actual publication in Nature: http://www.nature.com/articles/srep28912#author-information

Have you considered leaving a legacy?

After providing for your family and friends, you may be considering how to support Alzheimer’s Australia ACT with a gift in your Will.

Every person is different; therefore gifts can take many forms. They may be:
- the residue of the Estate;
- a percentage of the Estate;
- a specific amount of money;
- a life insurance or superannuation policy;
- assets such as shares, property, works of art or jewellery;
- an investment in perpetuity.

If you are able to help Alzheimer’s Australia ACT through a donation in your Will, you may wish to consult your solicitor, trustee company or the Public Trustee regarding the wording.

Want to know more?

For more information about how you can leave a gift to Alzheimer’s Australia ACT in your will, or to find out if it’s right for you, call us:

Alzheimer’s Australia ACT
02 6255 0722
act.admin@alzheimers.org.au

MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO ACT FAMILIES
DONATE NOW
act.fightdementia.org.au/act/support-us/donate-to-us
Dementia vaccine possibly only years away?

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UPCOMING EDUCATION
Alzheimer's Australia ACT offers flexible education solutions to improve dementia practice

“Love your training sessions, they always give me great ideas and skills to work with”

Younger Onset Dementia
Date Thursday 25 Aug
Time 9.30am - 12.30pm
Cost $80
Venue Kaleen

Orientation to Dementia
Date Monday 8 Aug
Time 2.30pm - 3.30pm
Cost Free
Venue Kaleen

Date Monday 12 Sep
Time 1.30pm - 2.30pm
Cost Free
Venue Kaleen

Date Monday 7 Nov
Time 1.30pm - 2.30pm
Cost Free
Venue Kaleen

Life Stories and Reminiscence
Date Tuesday 15 Nov
Time 10.00am - 12.00pm
Cost $25
Venue Kaleen

Meaningful Engagement in Dementia Care
Date Tuesday 29 Nov
Time 10.00am - 12 noon
Cost $80
Venue Kaleen

Focus on the Fellas - Activities for men
Date Tuesday 30 Aug
Time 9.30am - 3.30pm
Cost $110
Venue Kaleen

Montessori Method and Activities
Date Thursday 31 Oct
Time 9.30am - 3.30pm
Cost $130
Venue Kaleen

Note: This course offers points towards professional education with the Diversional Therapy Association of Australia

Montessori for Family Carers
Date Monday 22 Aug
Time 1.00pm - 2.30pm
Cost $10
Venue Kaleen

Experiencing Dementia
Date Thursday 27 Oct
Time 9.30am - 12.30pm
Cost $80
Venue Kaleen

Design for dementia support clients
Date Tuesday 6 Dec
Time 9.30am - 12.30pm
Cost $80
Venue Kaleen

Want to book into a session?
Call us 02 6255 0722
act.admin@alzheimers.org.au

Save the Date - 29 October 2016

Honour, Celebrate and Reflect

Alzheimer's Australia ACT will host a Ceremony that acknowledges and pays respect to those who have died of dementia, those living with dementia, their family, friends, supporters, volunteers, health and community care professionals, researchers and advocates. There will be representatives invited to read a reflection and there will also be a candle lighting ceremony to honour those people affected by dementia and to celebrate their memories. Morning tea will be provided.

For more information call Mary-Ann 02 6255 0722
Max Lindenmayer, recently fundraised for Alzheimer’s Australia ACT. His proud grandmother Robina conveys his story “To achieve his Grey Wolf Award - the highest award in Cub Scouts Max was required to “do a good turn by helping plan, and taking part in, an activity which will assist an organisation which helps other people”. After some discussion Robina recalls “Max decided to hold a ‘Cupcake Cafe’ and donate the money raised to Alzheimer’s Australia ACT, Max’s grandfather lives with Alzheimer’s disease and Max wanted to help people that are facing similar health challenges.” Robina explained “First Max designed a flyer and with the help of his family advertised the event to friends through facebook and his scout group. Then Max and his family spent an afternoon baking, icing and decorating 60 cupcakes. The next day we hosted a cupcake cafe and invited our family, friends, fellow cubs and leaders. Max sold cupcakes and hot drinks for $2 or $3 for a cake and drink combo. Max was very good using the coffee machine, serving our guests and taking the money. We had some generous donations in addition to sales and in all he raised $150!”

Max’s cupcakes for a cause

Saluting our young achievers

Lincoln is an everyday hero

Last September for Dementia Awareness Month Lincoln decided to raise the profile of the disease that had recently struck his Gra (grandfather - John pictured left) and help raise funds to support research. Lincoln’s mother Nicole explains her son’s story “We set up an Everyday Hero Fundraising page called Push to Remember with proceeds going towards Alzheimer’s Australia. Lincoln initially set himself a goal of raising $500. He challenged himself to run and do push ups every day for the month of September in addition to his normal swim training. Lincoln amazed his parents, extended family & friends with his commitment and tenacity. He got himself up every morning at 6.30am to complete his run and push-ups before heading off to school. His efforts were so great that his $500 goal was realised early in the month, he decided to raise the bar to $1000 and eventually even this was surpassed so he set his sights on $1500. On the final day of the month he had completed 1080 push ups, run 74km and swum approx 13.5km, all at the tender age of 8 years old! He achieved his goal and raised a total of $1894 from 49 donations. In addition to this our message about creating a dementia friendly society reached hundreds of people.Lincoln has inspired his younger sister, Zara who is 6 and wants to join the efforts. We are trying to think of a new and creative way to raise awareness and funds this September as a family.

Want to fundraise for Alzheimer’s Australia ACT?
Call us 02 6255 0722
act.admin@alzheimers.org.au