

Monday 20 May 2019

Dementia Australia volunteers making a world of difference

Dementia Australia celebrates and thanks the many volunteers that contribute to making a 'world of difference' for the 447,000 people living with dementia this National Volunteers Week.

Two volunteers and friends that make a world of difference to Dementia Australia are Jill Edmondson and Dianne Hall.

Jill is a nurse and has cared for people living with dementia in aged care facilities and also in hospitals. Eight years ago, Jill approached Dementia Australia (formerly known as Alzheimer's Australia NSW) wanting to volunteer.

"My mother lived with dementia and after she passed I wasn't ready to go back to work but I still felt the need to contribute," Mrs Edmondson said.

"I approached Alzheimer's Australia NSW and they were fabulous, very welcoming and supportive."

You can usually find Jill at the Sydney Memory Walk & Jog standing on the finish line congratulating participants with her warm and infectious smile.

"The Memory Walk & Jog is just such a wonderful day out for family and friends who have loved ones going through the journey of dementia or who have lost loved ones," Mrs Edmondson said.

"Volunteering with Dementia Australia gives me the opportunity to connect with people going through a similar journey as I did and provide an empathetic ear."

Dianne got involved with Dementia Australia four years ago after her brother sadly passed away from younger onset dementia.

"At the time I'd actually retired from work and I had some time so I thought, this is a cause close to my heart why not help a little bit," Ms Hall said.

Dianne also volunteers for the Sydney Memory Walk & Jog and meeting people is one of the things that keeps her coming back.

"I help out with the Sydney Memory Walk & Jog and I like the fact that every little bit helps and I get to meet some lovely people." Ms Hall said.

"It's through volunteering that I became friends with Jill.

"To anyone thinking of volunteering with Dementia Australia I would say do it! Every little bit helps and you also get the satisfaction of knowing you might have done some good that day."

As well as volunteering at Memory Walk & Jogs, Jill and Dianne have been involved in other volunteering activities including fundraising events for the organisation and providing administrative assistance in the office.

Dementia Australia CEO Ms Maree McCabe said that volunteers like Jill and Dianne are an integral and highly valued part of Dementia Australia.

"Dementia Australia volunteers, like Jill and Dianne, make a world of difference for our organisation as well as the lives of the more than 447,000 people who are living with dementia," Ms McCabe said.

"Volunteers are integral to the work that we do at Dementia Australia and we are extremely grateful for the generosity and compassion our volunteers bring to their roles.

“Without volunteers we simply couldn’t do all of the work that we do, so this week and every week we say a big thank you to them for their immense contribution.”

There are many ways to volunteer for Dementia Australia including assisting with events, social support groups, administration and fundraising activities.

For more information on how to become a volunteer please visit our website:

<https://www.dementia.org.au/volunteering>

Dementia Australia is the national peak body and charity for people, of all ages, living with all forms of dementia, their families and carers. It provides advocacy, support services, education and information. An estimated 447,000 people have dementia in Australia. This number is projected to reach almost 1.1 million by 2058. Dementia Australia is the new voice of Alzheimer’s Australia. Dementia Australia’s services are supported by the Australian Government.

National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500

Interpreter service available

(The National Dementia Helpline is an Australian Government Initiative)

Dementia is a National Health Priority Area

www.dementia.org.au

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Media contacts: Stephanie Watkins - Media and Communications Advisor - 0423 936 371 -

Stephanie.Watkins@dementia.org.au

When talking or writing about dementia please refer to [Dementia Language Guidelines](#).