

Thursday 22 August 2019

Dementia peak body releases new papers on hospital care and medication

To coincide with the release of two research papers from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), Dementia Australia has produced two companion reports which analyse the key issues arising from the AIHW research and make a number of policy recommendations.

The reports draw on AIHW data that demonstrates almost 95,000 people living with dementia were hospitalised during 2016-17, and that there continues to be evidence of inappropriate prescription of medications for people living with dementia.

Dementia Australia CEO Maree McCabe said the AIHW reports reinforce that more needs to be done to provide quality care for people living with dementia.

“With the number of people living with dementia expected to increase to an estimated 1.1 million by 2058, this data reinforces for us that we must act now to improve medication management and support for people living with dementia in hospital environments,” Ms McCabe said.

Dementia Australia’s paper *Medication use by people living with dementia* makes a number of recommendations including that anti-psychotics are used as a last resort and quality training in dementia care is provided for all staff working in hospitals.

“Our focus must be on the delivery of the best possible care and quality of life at every stage of dementia,” Ms McCabe said.

“The use of anti-psychotic medications in the majority of instances is contrary to achieving these outcomes.

“There are many non-pharmacological interventions that must be considered as first line options when some of the challenging symptoms of dementia may present.”

Dementia Australia’s paper *Hospital stays for people with dementia* includes recommendations that the physical environment of hospitals adheres to dementia-friendly design principles and that hospitals provide mandatory staff training in dementia.

“It is only through a collaborative approach to dementia care in hospitals, which centres on the involvement of people living with dementia, their families and carers, that we can ensure quality of life and limit unnecessary and dangerous situations,” Ms McCabe said.

Download the full reports [here](#).

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