

Friday 20 March 2020

## **An update from Dementia Australia**

In response to the coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak, Dementia Australia will be modifying the way we approach our service delivery and activity for the time being.

The wellbeing of our community, including people living with dementia, their families and carers, clients, volunteers, supporters and staff, is our priority. We have been following the situation closely and implementing the advice from Government and Health authorities and in some instances ensuring additional safeguards with the postponement of events as discussed below.

We are working to minimise person-to-person contact in order to reduce the potential spread of the virus, whilst ensuring we continue to support people living with dementia, their families and carers.

Be reassured that our National Dementia Helpline will operate as usual, and we will continue to update our website and social media sites regularly.

Some of our regular services and activities will be delivered differently for the time being for example by phone or online. In some instances, some services and activities may be postponed. Clients who access a service that will be postponed or changed will be contacted by our staff as soon as possible.

We are continuing to look at a range of other ways to support our clients and community.

As well, some of our larger public fundraising and other events have been postponed. This includes the Memory Walk & Jog events in Ballarat, Hobart, Adelaide and Western Sydney; our National Symposium; the Masterclass series by Professor Dawn Brooker; and the Night of Gold. Ticket holders and people registered for those events have been contacted by our staff.

We understand this is a challenging time for us all and we thank you for your understanding as we put these measures in place. The needs of people living with dementia, their families and carers continue to be at the heart of what we do and we remain committed to provide the services and supports during this difficult time even if, on a practical level, that may look a bit different in the coming weeks.

If you are living with dementia or caring for someone with dementia and have any concerns about the coronavirus COVID-19 please contact your doctor or the National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500.

For the most up to date information about the coronavirus COVID-19 please visit <https://www.health.gov.au/.../novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-hea...>

A Fact Sheet for the information and advice of older Australians in relation to COVID-19 is also available. You can find that here <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/03/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-older-australians.pdf>

Dementia Australia has provided some advice to the Aged Care Sector on supporting people living with dementia and we will continue to develop the kinds of advice that people may find

useful. You can find our most recent advice here <https://www.dementia.org.au/media-releases/2020/capacity-and-needs-of-people-living-with-dementia-a-priority-for-aged-and-health-care-covid-19-coronavirus-responses>

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](http://www.dementia.org.au)

-Ends-

**Media contacts:** Christine Bolt – National GM Communications, Corporate Communications – 0400 004 553 – [Christine.Bolt@dementia.org.au](mailto:Christine.Bolt@dementia.org.au)

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