

"Within 20 years dementia will become the number one killer of Australians."

*Dr Michael Valenzuela
School of Psychiatry University of NSW*

THE PROBLEM:

More than **212,000 Australians** have a diagnosis of dementia, with the number predicted to reach 730,000 by the year 2050.

Demographics indicate that a high proportion of these people will live in regional centres along the seaboard.

Clearly, dementia poses a significant health, social and economic problem – a situation that will continue as the Baby Boomers age and the population of all States in Australia grows.

Secondly, it is experience of Alzheimer's Australia that there is a stigma attached to dementia in many communities and reluctance by many people who suspect they are facing the possibility or reality of dementia.

A diagnosis of dementia can leave the person and family feeling extremely isolated. Most people are sent home to get on with life with little or no information about dementia and support options. So they set about coping as best they can. It is not until they meet other people in the same situation that they begin to recognise how shocked, anxious and alone they have been feeling.

The mission and vision of Alzheimer's Australia is to enhance the quality of life and dignity of all people living with dementia and their family carers and working towards a society free from dementia. Alzheimer's Australia believes that timely, easy access to information and support can significantly reduce the impact and stigma of dementia at both individual and community levels, and to enhance the quality of life for people already living with dementia.



STATISTICS:

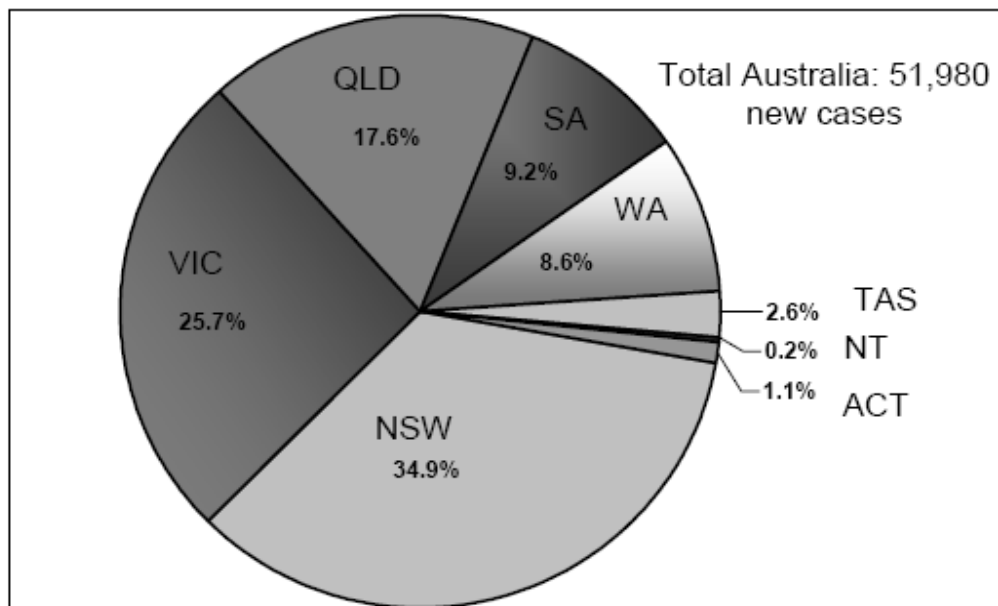
Australia

General findings from the Access Economics Report

- Currently 212,000 Australians are living with dementia.
- By 2050 this number will increase to more than 730,000.
- In 2005, almost 52,000 new cases of dementia were diagnosed in Australia
- In 2050 this number will increase threefold to an estimated 151,000 annually.
- The majority of new cases are in people aged 75 to 89. A quarter will be aged between 80 and 84.
- Currently around 65% of people with dementia live in metropolitan areas.
- Although 65% of people with dementia live in metropolitan areas there is likely to be more rapid growth of dementia in regional areas between 2002 and 2050.

*(Source: Dementia Estimates and Projections, NSW and its Regions.
Report by Access Economics P/L for
Alzheimer's Australia NSW and NSW Health, 18 June 2005)*

FIGURE 10 DEMENTIA INCIDENCE BY STATE/TERRITORY (% TOTAL), 2005



STATISTICS:

New South Wales

General findings from the Access Economics Report

In New South Wales almost 74,000 people have a diagnosis of dementia, with 227,000 people expected to be directly affected by 2050.

- **1 in 3 Australians with dementia live in NSW (about 73,810 people in 2006).**
- By 2050 this number will increase to more than 227, 000 in NSW.
- In 2006, 18, 700 new cases of dementia will be diagnosed in NSW
- In 2050 this number will increase threefold to an estimated 54, 700 annually.
- Currently around 65% of people with dementia live in metropolitan areas (about 46, 300).
- The largest number of people with dementia lives in the Northern Sydney/Central Coast and South Eastern Sydney/Illawarra area. This trend is expected to continue up to 2050.
- In 2005 there were 46,261 people with dementia in metropolitan areas. This number will grow to nearly 147,400 in 2050.
- In 2005 there were more than 25,000 people with dementia in regional areas. This number will grow to nearly 80,000 by 2050.
- Of the estimated 18,100 new cases of dementia in NSW in 2005, more than 11,000 are women.
- The majority of new cases are in people aged 75 to 89. A quarter will be aged between 80 and 84.
- **Although 65% of people with dementia live in metropolitan areas there is likely to be more rapid growth of dementia in regional areas between 2002 and 2050.**
- The greatest growth in dementia incidence will be on the North Coast.

*(Source: Dementia Estimates and Projections, NSW and its Regions.
Report by Access Economics P/L for
Alzheimer's Australia NSW and NSW Health, 18 June 2005)*

Alzheimer's Australia NSW believes that timely, easy access to information and support can significantly reduce the impact and stigma of dementia at both individual and community levels, and to enhance the quality of life for people already living with dementia.

BACKGROUND TO ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA NSW:

Alzheimer's Australia NSW is the New South Wales arm of the national not-for-profit organisation Alzheimer's Australia – the peak body for people living with dementia, their families and carers.

Established in 1982, Alzheimer's Australia NSW (AA NSW):

- works to raise awareness and understanding of dementia in the community
- provides support services to people living with dementia, their family and friends. This includes servicing a network of support groups, as well as providing free carer education and counselling services.
- provides training, information and resources to service providers, including health care workers and other organisations, to enable them to provide appropriate support for people living with dementia, their families and friends.

VISION:

Enhancing the quality of life and dignity of all people living with dementia and their family carers and working towards a society free from dementia.

MISSION:

Providing Leadership in dementia advocacy, awareness and understanding.

ABOUT DEMENTIA:

Dementia is a general term for more than 70 conditions causing progressive deterioration in thinking, memory and everyday abilities. While it is more common as people age, dementia is not a normal part of ageing.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia. We are now entering a period of rapid growth in the prevalence of dementia. There are an estimated 212,000 people in Australia with the condition and by 2050 this number is projected to increase to 730,000.

