

# **DEMENTIA AWARENESS WEEK**

**DATE:** 16 - 22 **SEPTEMBER 2013**

**THEME:** BRAIN HEALTH:  
MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

Go to [www.fightdementia.org.au](http://www.fightdementia.org.au) for details on activities.

**NATIONAL  
GUEST SPEAKER:  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
SUE KURRLE**



**"HOW DID THIS LADY LIVE TO BE 122  
(WITHOUT DEMENTIA)?  
AN UPDATE ON DEMENTIA RESEARCH"**

# PRESIDENT & CEO REPORTS

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**Patron:** Dr Valerie Asche, AM

**Medical Adviser:** Dr Sadhana Mahajani

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Julie Nicholson  
Judith Buckley  
Ruth Leslie-Rose  
Dr Sadhana Mahajani

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Shop 5 Cinema Complex, Todd Mall,  
Alice Springs NT 0870

**Consumer Advisory Group**

Seeking new members! Meetings are held three times a year. If you are interested, please call the Darwin Office.

**National Dementia Helpline  
1800 100 500**

Australian Government Initiative  
(interpreter service available)



**DR. VICKI  
KRAUSE**  
President

As always Alzheimer's Australia NT at 3/18 Bauhinia St, Nightcliff and throughout the NT is a hive of activity. A look here at page 7 underscores the services and programs provided in Darwin and beyond to support those with and caring for people with dementia. Additionally Alzheimer's Australia, NT and nationally are working hard to educate and raise awareness about dementia in every aspect of our lives to create dementia-knowledgeable and dementia-friendly societies.

Professor Julian Hughes from the UK recently spoke to the local medical society at Grand Rounds at the Royal Darwin Hospital. He gave an inspiring and all-encompassing talk on models of dementia care and how we might do it better. While there were challenges on what can and absolutely needs to be done he also made everyone realise we all have something to offer and the capacity of our society to care for those with dementia can be as simple as a smile and acknowledgement to those with the disease.

Ben Graetz, working at Alzheimer's NT, is creating a DVD and messages to bring the Your Brain Matters project to Aboriginal communities to raise awareness and bring home to all of us the impact of dementia in our community.

In addition to the NT President position I serve as the NT member on the national board of Alzheimer's Australia. Part of my board responsibilities includes sharing NT visions and work and to gain the same from other jurisdictions. A resource called IS IT DEMENTIA for recognising the signs of dementia, available at [www.isitdementia.com.au](http://www.isitdementia.com.au), is a valuable resource developed in SA. Have a look and see how this work might be used in the NT, particularly in training packages.

Continuing in the tradition of our NT Medical Advisor, Dr Sadhana Mahajani, being Senior Territorian of the Year, our National Alzheimer's Australia President, Ita Buttrose, being the 2013 Australian of the Year, Glenn Rees, long serving CEO of Alzheimer's Australia was made a Member of the Order of Australia, a well-deserved and distinguished honour for a lifetime of outstanding work including leadership to Alzheimer's Australia.



**RUTH  
LESLIE-ROSE**  
CEO

The 2013 Conference in Tasmania in May was well attended and an excellent information sharing and networking forum for the many staff who attended.

We have had a change in Support NT Services Manager. Anne Pike left at the end of June to take up the position of State Manager of GROW. We thank Anne for her hard work and enthusiasm and wish her well in her new role. At the beginning of July, we welcomed Judy Ratajec who assumed responsibility for Support Services. Many of you will already know Judy from her excellent work with Frontier Services and the NT Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Service. We are delighted that she has joined our team.

We were all saddened to hear of the passing of Patricia Hastie. Pat went missing from her home in the Darwin Rural area and was later found in dense bushland not very far from her home. The community showed great solidarity and concern in assisting in the search. Our thoughts are with the family.

Professor Julian Hughes attended a luncheon with Minister Styles, the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, Sally Sievers, and members of the medical profession after his Grand Rounds presentation. The conversation was so engaging Julian was almost late for his plane!

# DEMENTIA CHAMPIONS

## DEMENTIA CHAMPIONS

In October 2011 Alzheimer's Australia launched the Fight Dementia Campaign and has advocated for the Federal Government to make dementia a National Health Priority Area and to invest in action to combat the dementia epidemic.

In April 2012, Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, and Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Mark Butler, announced an investment of \$268.4 million over five years to tackle dementia as part of the Living Longer. Living Better. aged care reform package.

However no commitment has been made to increase investment in dementia research.

### What is our goal?

To move towards a world without dementia by:

- Delaying the onset of dementia by five years;
- Reducing the number of people living with dementia in 2050 by one third; and
- Improving quality of life for people with dementia.

We must all stand up to fight Dementia. You can help support Alzheimer's Australia's campaign and every Australian affected by Dementia.

### How you can help?

If you would like to become a dementia champion and speak for people who cannot, please contact Tania Nash, who will send you a champion form. We are asking The Australian Government to invest more money into dementia research, as we believe the current level of spending is inadequate. We need the voices of as many people as possible.

## ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA 15TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Tiles of Life - Colouring the Future took place this year in Hobart, Tasmania from the 14th to 17th of May 2013.

The biennial conference brought together world leaders in social and medical dementia research. Key speakers from Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany challenged participants on how we can be positive in addressing dementia through promoting awareness, rehabilitation, social engagement, creativity and self-expression. They also discussed the critical role an investment in dementia research can play in identifying the cause of, and treatments and cure for, dementia.

Ita Buttrose, Alzheimer's Australia National President and Australian of the Year 2013, launched three important publications that are directed at changing community attitudes towards dementia. These include Dementia Friendly Societies, Cognitive Impairment Symbol: creating dementia friendly organisations and Respite Care for People Living with Dementia which focuses on new opportunities for social engagement through respite care.



**PROFESSOR JULIAN HUGHES**

Professor Julian Hughes, consultant in old age psychiatry based at North Tyneside General Hospital in the UK and Honorary Professor of Philosophy of Ageing at the Institute of Ageing and Health, Newcastle University, UK, visited Darwin on the 24th of June. The visit was part of a national speaking tour of Australia, generously supported by the BUPA Health Foundation.

Professor Hughes delivered a thought provoking and very well attended presentation at the Grand Rounds at Royal Darwin Hospital on how dementia care might be improved. Professor Hughes was impressed that Royal Darwin Hospital has grand rounds as a means of keeping medical staff up to date. They have been ceased at some hospitals in the UK. A comment afterwards described his presentation as one of the most inclusive the participants had heard.

Two papers have been published to support Professor Hughes's lecture series: Models of Dementia Care: Person-centred, palliative and supportive discussion paper written by Professor Julian Hughes; and Wrestling with dementia and death, a report by Professor Jenny Abbey.

Both the above publications are available in hard copy from our Darwin and Alice Springs offices and on line on the Alzheimer's Australia website.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## YOU'RE INVITED!



As part of Seniors Month Alzheimer's Australia NT invites you to attend a Seniors Morning Tea.

**Date:** Friday 2nd August

**Time:** 10am – 11:30am

**Venue:** Chung Wah Society,  
25 Woods Street Darwin

Once again, the Chung Wah Society has kindly offered their hall – which is a fantastic venue.

Live entertainment and morning tea will be provided.

The event is free but bookings are essential for catering purposes.

Please contact the Alzheimer's Australia NT Darwin office for further information or to RSVP, on 8948 5228 or email [rod.scarr@alzheimers.org.au](mailto:rod.scarr@alzheimers.org.au)



**DR. CAMERON CAMP**

Dr Cameron Camp will be in Darwin to facilitate a one day workshop for family carers as part of a national tour promoting the release of two new resources developed through the National Quality Dementia Care Initiative (led by Monash University in partnership with AA Victoria). The resources, **Relate, Motivate, Appreciate: An Introduction to Montessori Activities**, and **Relate, Motivate, Appreciate: Promoting Positive Interaction with People with Dementia**, will be launched on the 24 July and each participant will receive a copy of the book and DVD.

Dr Camp is an extremely knowledgeable and inspirational presenter who will provide valuable insights into how to provide high quality person centred care to people living with dementia. His work, based upon the principles of learning developed by Dr Maria Montessori, promotes 'personhood' by focusing on the abilities and strengths, rather than the inabilities, of a person living with dementia.

**Date:** Thursday 22 August

**Time:** 9am - 4pm

**Venue:** Salvation Army Community Centre, 3 Yanyula Drive, Anula

Bookings are essential. Contact the Darwin office for further information or to RSVP on 8948 5228 or email [nt.admin.d@alzheimers.org.au](mailto:nt.admin.d@alzheimers.org.au)



**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR SUE KURRLE**

"HOW DID THIS LADY LIVE TO BE 122 (WITHOUT DEMENTIA)?" AN UPDATE ON DEMENTIA RESEARCH

Associate Professor Sue Kurrle will conduct two seminars in Darwin and one in Alice Springs. Topics will include:

- What are the factors associated with development of dementia
- What we as individuals and a community can do about prevention, and modification of risk factors
- The latest information on research into how and why Alzheimer's disease occurs; and
- What is available in the way of treatment to manage the disease and slow its progress

### **Darwin:**

**Date:** 16th September 2013

**Time:** 12noon

**Venue:** Royal Darwin Hospital Grand Rounds **and**

**Time:** 3pm - 4:30pm

**Venue:** AlzANT Training Room, 3/18 Bauhinia Street Nightcliff

### **Alice Springs:**

**Date:** 17th September 2013

**Time:** TBA

**Venue:** TBA

For more information go to [www.fightdementia.org.au/nt](http://www.fightdementia.org.au/nt)

# RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

## DEMENTIA IN ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIANS THREE TIMES AS LIKELY

The rate of dementia in Aboriginal Australians is three times that of Australia's non-Indigenous population, a three year study has found.

The preliminary results of the study were presented at Alzheimer's Australia 15th National Conference in Hobart.

Professor Tony Broe, a Senior Principal Research Fellow at NeuRA (Neuroscience Research Australia), conducted the Koori Growing Old Well Study, a census of all resident Aboriginal people aged 60 years and over, across five urban and regional Indigenous communities in NSW: Kempsey, Nambucca, Coffs Harbour, La Perouse and Campbelltown.

Most Aboriginal Australians live in urban or regional areas like these, with only about 30% living in remote areas.

"The number of older Aboriginal Australians is increasing rapidly, and yet little is known about their health and dementia rates." Professor Broe said.

"A previous study in the remote Kimberley region of Western Australia found higher rates of dementia at younger ages, but research in the majority urban population has been lacking.

"Like remote communities, however, Aboriginal people in urban areas have a disproportionately high burden of many of the risk factors and systemic disease that have been linked to dementia in studies around the world. Improved understanding of this issue has important implications for ensuring access to appropriate

services for Aboriginal people with dementia and their families and for future service development."

Glen Rees, CEO of Alzheimer's Australia, said that this study yet again demonstrates the need for increased research.

"This would help us provide culturally appropriate services for Australia's indigenous community." Mr Rees said

## AUSTRALIAN RESEARCHERS ON THE VERGE OF A BLOOD TEST FOR ALZHEIMER'S

Researchers from the world-leading Australian Imaging and Biomarkers Lifestyle Flagship Study of Ageing, have identified a combination of proteins in the blood that could one day lead to a simple test for the early detection of Alzheimer's disease.

Specifically, the researchers have identified a non-invasive and inexpensive method to detect neocortical amyloid-beta burden - a known predictor of Alzheimer's disease.

The method was generated by measuring the levels of biomarkers in the blood of 273 participants to assess the differences in blood plasma between groups of people with high or low amyloid beta levels in the brain. This identified nine blood markers that were associated with amyloid beta burden.

These markers were further examined by seeing the extent to which they could predict the presence of amyloid beta in the brain in a new sample comprising 817 healthy participants and 82 participants from the international Alzheimer's disease Neuroimaging Initiative (ADNI) study; all of whom had undergone Positron Emission Tomography (PET) brain

scans.

Using sophisticated computer modelling software to determine the most reliable combination of blood markers, the researchers were able to identify a set of five specific blood proteins that had a sensitivity of 80% (i.e., 80% of people who did have amyloid beta in the brain were correctly identified using the blood markers) and a specificity of 82% (i.e., the percentage of people without amyloid beta in the brain who were cleared by the blood test).

While these rates are still short of what would be required for a clinical test, the findings may have implications for the early detection of Alzheimer's disease in the future. This is because amyloid beta is one of the earliest signs of Alzheimer's disease, with observable build-ups in the brain starting as much as 17 years before dementia symptoms first appear.

"Early detection is critical if we are to make any real difference in the battle against Alzheimer's, giving those at risk a much better chance of receiving treatment earlier, before it's too late to do much about it," said Dr Samantha Burnham from CSIRO's preventative health flagship study.

"We hope our continued research will lead to the development of a low cost, minimally invasive population based screening test for Alzheimer's".

Dr Chris Hatherly, Research Manager of Alzheimer's Australia also commented on the study: "These findings demonstrate the value and the power of investment in health and medical research. We encourage the Government to look beyond the short-term economic problems, as complicated as these are, and invest in a future without dementia by committing an additional \$200M to dementia research over the next 5 years".

## STAFF NEWS

Alzheimer's Australia NT Darwin office recently welcomed the addition of several new staff members; Judy Ratajec, Michelle Lawson and Jessica Lam.

## JUDY RATAJEC

After recently being awarded a scholarship to attend the Alzheimer's Australia National Conference in Tasmania I found myself reassessing my career choices and my future. Why am I constantly being drawn back towards those living with dementia?

At 18 years of age I began my training as a Psychiatric Nurse. After many years of nursing in the areas of Psychiatrics, Geriatrics and Disabilities on the Southern Tablelands of NSW my husband's work brought us to the NT. My first year in Darwin was spent settling into the way of life and ensuring my young family's needs were met. It wasn't long before I was keen to return to work, with Frontier Services opening the door for me. I took on the role as the Co-ordinator for the Psychogeriatric Unit and then on to manage the NT Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Service (DBMAS). The last 12 months I had taken on project work as the Manager Professional Development with Frontier Services. I am grateful for the opportunities and experiences that the last 13 years have given me and look forward to the future with Alzheimer's Australia NT. I also wish Anne Pike all the best in her new venture with GROW.

As with many of you I have my own personal stories of dementia but it was the stories told and felt at the conference that sang the message home. We need to start our journeys well; with all the knowledge and tools required, knowing if we get lost there is someone to call, to give support and advice, someone to give us a break so we can catch our breath, someone to reassure us that it is Ok to change our direction and that we do not need to take the journey alone. I look forward to meeting you and sharing in your own unique stories.

# YOU'RE INVITED!

Don't miss the Alzheimer's Australia NT annual Tea Dance, to mark Dementia Awareness Week.

**Date: Tue 24th September**

**Time: 1:30 – 4:30pm**

**Venue: Greek Orthodox School Hall, Chapman Rd, Nightcliff**

**This year's theme is Masquerade**

Live entertainment and afternoon tea will be provided.

The event is free but bookings are essential for catering purposes.

Please contact the Alzheimer's Australia NT Darwin office for further information or to RSVP, on 8948 5228 or [nt.admin.d@alzheimers.org.au](mailto:nt.admin.d@alzheimers.org.au)



## DEMENTIA AWARENESS WEEK: CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Fri 20 September - World Alzheimer's Day

### Alice Springs:

- Tuesday 17 September – Associate Professor Sue Kurrle – will present on the links between chronic disease and dementia. Time and Venue TBA

Contact Nicole O'Connor on 8952 9799 or [nicole.o'connor@alzheimers.org.au](mailto:nicole.o'connor@alzheimers.org.au) for more details

### Darwin:

- Mon 16 September – Associate Professor Sue Kurrle – Speaking at Royal Darwin Hospital Grand Rounds and at Alzheimer's Australia NT's Training Room on the links between chronic disease and dementia.
- Tue 24 September – Tea Dance with a masquerade theme at the Greek Orthodox Community Hall, Nightcliff from 1:30 – 4:30pm.

Contact Tania Nash on 8948 5228 or [nt.admin.d@alzheimers.org.au](mailto:nt.admin.d@alzheimers.org.au) for more details



# OUR SERVICES

## DEMENTIA & MEMORY COMMUNITY CENTRE

### Social Group

This group is for people with memory loss & their family carers. This group meets every 4th Friday of the month 10am to 12 midday. Minimal costs may be involved with the Social Group.

### Activities Group

This program is held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month and is facilitated by our Activities Officer. It provides an opportunity for people with dementia & their carers to engage in a variety of cognitive activities and gentle physical exercise, whilst promoting independence. The theme of the program changes every six months.

### Memory Matters

Sessions are held on the 2nd Friday of each month 10am to 12 midday. Participants engage in brain gym, puzzles & cognitive exercise. Members of the public are welcome to join us for these free sessions.

### Nightcliff Health & Well Being

Sessions are held on the 1st Friday of each month 10am to 12 midday, incorporating whole body health & guest speakers covering a range of topics relevant to Senior Territorians. Members of the public are welcome to join us for these free sessions.

### Internet Café

Feel free to arrange a time with our friendly staff to use our free internet café where we have dedicated computers to browse memory & dementia resources on the internet. We even have some brain teaser games to exercise your brain! Members of the public are welcome to join us at the cafe.

## EDUCATION & TRAINING

The following courses are held in Darwin, Alice Springs & Katherine.

### Community Education

These information sessions are tailored to meet the needs of the community, including - culturally and linguistically diverse groups and health professionals. Please contact us if you would like a free information session.

### Your Brain Matters Program

This program highlights the seven lifestyle changes we should adopt that may reduce our risk of dementia. Suitable for the general public and health professionals.

### Dementia Care Essentials

Nationally accredited Certificate III and IV units, designed for health professionals working in the area of dementia care.

### Carer Education

This is designed specifically for family carers and friends to assist in their caring roles. By learning about dementia, carers and friends develop a better understanding of the effects of the disease.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### Living With Memory Loss

An information & support program for people living with early stage dementia and their carers & family. If you are interested in participating please contact Susan Williams, Support Services Coordinator for further details.

### Younger Onset Dementia Carer Support Group

Held fortnightly on Tuesday evenings. Please contact Dianne Maley, Support Services Coordinator for details.

### Nightcliff Carer Support Group

Held on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 10am. Groups alternate between guest speakers and social functions. If you are interested in participating please contact the Support Services Coordinator for details.

### Exercise Group

Held every Wednesday for clients with memory loss who are physically fit and enjoy outdoor activities. Fees apply.

### Stepping Out — Day Respite

Stepping Out groups promote socialisation and meaningful activity for people living with the early stages of memory loss. They are suitable for people who still enjoy company, who are mobile & need little assistance with every day tasks. This program also provides regular respite for carers. Fees apply.

### Social Activity & Support

A new fee-for-service program. A qualified staff member, will visit a person with dementia who is in hospital or a residential care facility. The focus of these visits is to encourage socialisation, physical and cognitive activities and can include excursions to community venues.

### Life Memories Albums

Life Memories Albums encourage individuals to construct an album representing their life history through recollecting and retelling memories. For further information, or to volunteer your services with this program, please call the Support Services Manager.

### Territory FM (104.1)

Listen to Territory FM (104.1) on the first Wednesday of each month at 10.20 am to hear Alzheimer's Australia NT staff and guest speakers discuss issues faced by those with dementia or those caring for someone with dementia.

**Most of these events are free of charge - bookings are essential.  
For further information please contact the Darwin Office on 8948 5228.**

# TALKING ABOUT ALZHEIMER'S ACROSS AUSTRALIA

POSTAGE  
PAID

## TO:

### THANK YOU

Alzheimer's Australia gratefully acknowledges the donations made by the following people and organisations since April 2013:

- Shelley Holland
- Dr Robbie Lloyd
- Roller Door Services Pty Ltd - Justin McQuinn
- Hazel Glencross
- Helen Gabel
- Les and Clare Fern
- Ruth & Russel Beazley
- Judy Dent
- Raymond Weir
- Patricia Rasmussen
- Allison O'Connor
- Anne Jansen
- Rosemarie Valle
- Centre for Disease Control
- Gwen Phillips
- Robbie and Len Greenwood
- Norma Sutcliffe

A big thank you to all of those who have made anonymous donations and supported Alzheimer's Australia NT

### HAZEL HAWKE'S LEGACY 1929 - 2013



Hazel Hawke's legacy has been to raise the profile of dementia and the importance of investment in research to improve the quality of dementia care.

"I hope that, by speaking out about this very private issue, I can help to promote openness, awareness

and support for all people living with dementia. No illness should carry a negative label. None of us is immune."

"Although I would obviously prefer not to have Alzheimer's I continue to live a happy and healthy life, with the love and support of family and friends. I hope that, as a community, we can work towards this as a reality for all those similarly affected."

"Practically speaking, I hope to help raise much-needed funds by establishing the Hazel Hawke Alzheimer's Research and Care Fund. I have done this together with Alzheimer's Australia. We will use the money you donate to assist on-going research into the prevention and

management of Alzheimer's disease, and to help provide crucial services to people and their carers living with dementia. I urge you all to contribute generously to this Fund." - Hazel Hawke (November 2003)

Glenn Rees, CEO of Alzheimer's Australia, said that everyone involved in advocating for people with dementia would have the memory of Australian Story in 2003 – The Big 'A' - and Hazel Hawke indelibly printed in their memories forever.

She had made a great and personal commitment to dementia research and particularly to improving the quality of dementia care through the Hazel Hawke Alzheimer's Research and Care Fund.