Media Release

Alzheimer’s Australia Vic calls for millions to take the lead in creating a dementia-friendly Victoria

Alzheimer’s Australia Vic is calling on the State Government to invest three million dollars into creating a dementia-friendly Victoria in response to soaring prevalence.

In a ground-breaking budget submission, Alzheimer’s Australia Vic advocates for support for the estimated 81,000 Victorians of all ages living with dementia. This number is projected to increase to almost a quarter of a million by 2050 in the absence of a medical breakthrough. Dementia is a chronic disease which is the second leading cause of death in Australia and has been recognised by state and territory Health Ministers as a National Health Priority Area.

Alzheimer’s Australia Vic CEO Maree McCabe said, “The increasing prevalence of dementia means that there is both an economic and welfare imperative for the government to develop initiatives to tackle dementia and ensure that people have access to appropriate care and wider community support.

“The Victorian Government could take the lead, following the success of multi-million dollar dementia-friendly government commitments in the United Kingdom, Japan and Canada.

“Dementia-friendly communities are places where people with dementia remain active participants; maintain a good quality of life with meaning and purpose; live independently for as long as possible and continue to have choice and control over their day-to-day lives.

“Alzheimer’s Australia Vic looks forward to working closely with the Government to create this environment.” Ms McCabe said.

Based on extensive consultation with consumers and other stakeholders, the Alzheimer’s Australia Vic budget submission prioritises the creation of dementia-friendly communities and highlights the flow-on benefits to the retail, small business, hospitality and tourism sectors.

“Local dementia alliances are at the heart of what we’re proposing. These are groups of local representatives who collaborate to determine local community priorities and make a commitment to integrate dementia-friendly principles into their way of life,” Ms McCabe said.

The submission calls for a commitment of $10.96 million in 2015-2016 to be allocated over three years to fund the development of dementia-friendly communities, awareness-raising campaigns and support programs for people living with younger onset dementia. This will fill critical dementia service gaps with activities such as an expanded suite of training and education programs and services including catering to culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

“We want to work together with the State Government to improve outcomes for people living with dementia as well as their families and carers. Ongoing support will see Victoria continue to be a leader in the provision of dementia services,” Ms McCabe said.

The Alzheimer’s Australia Vic budget submission can be viewed at http://bit.ly/vicbudget

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In Victoria over 81,000 people are living with dementia.

Alzheimer’s Australia Vic is the peak body and charity representing people with all forms of dementia in Victoria. As the peak body, we provide specialised dementia information, education and support services.

Call our National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500 or visit www.fightdementia.org.au/vic

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