

Friday 26 February 2021

People impacted by dementia demand a commitment to quality dementia care

Dementia Australia has a clear vision for quality dementia care in anticipation of the final report of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety which has been handed to the Governor General today.

Maree McCabe, CEO Dementia Australia said all Australians need to have confidence and trust in our aged care system.

“People with the lived experience of dementia have told us – if you get dementia care right you get it right for everyone.

“This is the once in a generation opportunity to transform dementia care and the aged care system overall,” Ms McCabe said.

The transformation needed to deliver quality dementia care needs a commitment to:

1. **Dementia Support Pathways:** An integrated and specialist service response with a single access point, that is a centralised, national telephone and online service that sits alongside My Aged Care.
2. **Transformed Dementia Workforce Capability:** An integrated approach to build dementia capability and expertise of the aged care workforce by mandating minimum levels of dementia education. Developing dementia practice leaders will support the application of this learning as well as promote practice change. This will ensure the aged care workforce has the necessary skills, knowledge and capability to provide quality care and support to people living with dementia.
3. **Dementia-Friendly Design:** Developing and embedding a set of robust, evidence-based and practice-informed dementia-friendly standards. This will enable physical environments that support people living with dementia to be as independent as possible.

“Dementia is not yet core business in the majority of aged care settings despite the fact 68% of residents known to have moderate to severe cognitive impairment,” Ms McCabe said.

“Outcomes and quality indicators for people living with dementia are not defined, measured or used to inform continuous improvement and at present, people living with dementia and their carers are not at the centre of service planning, delivery, feedback and evaluation.

“Diagnosis, service pathways and access to information, support, and services is complex and not timely and there is a lack of understanding about the significance of dementia-friendly environments for people living with dementia.

“The current health, disability and aged care workforce – at all levels including leadership and management – for the most part lacks an understanding of dementia and the knowledge and skills needed to deliver quality dementia care.



“Dementia Australia has had promising discussions with the Federal Government regarding our holistic plan for the future, the [Roadmap to Quality Dementia Care](#). We have been urging the government not to take a piecemeal approach in their response to the Royal Commission report.

“We urge the government to demonstrate their commitment to the 472,000 Australian living with dementia and the 1.6 million people involved in their care.

“Getting quality care right for people living with dementia will have a profound and lasting, impact for all – systemically, economically and as a human right. It is our responsibility as a society to provide appropriate care for those who are most vulnerable.

“That opportunity is now in the hands of the federal government.”

Dementia Australia is the source of trusted information, education and services for the estimated half a million Australians living with dementia, and the almost 1.6 million people involved in their care. We advocate for positive change and support vital research. We are here to support people impacted by dementia, and to enable them to live as well as possible. No matter how you are impacted by dementia or who you are, we are here for you.

For support, please contact the **National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500**. An interpreter service is available and the Helpline is open 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday excluding public holidays. The National Dementia Helpline is funded by the Australian Government. People looking for information can also visit dementia.org.au

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