

Tuesday 24 August 2021

A little support makes a big difference this Dementia Action Week

The theme for this year's Dementia Action Week – to be held from Monday 20 September - Sunday 26 September, is '**A little support makes a big difference**'.

The national awareness raising campaign will continue to lead the discussion about discrimination and dementia. The challenge to all Australians is to increase their understanding about dementia and how they can make a difference to the lives of people around them who are impacted - and help to eliminate discrimination.

Dementia Australia CEO, Maree McCabe AM said during Dementia Action Week Dementia Australia will share information and tips to show the many meaningful ways **A little support makes a big difference** to the everyday experience of people living with dementia and their carers.

"Once a person is diagnosed there is a common perception that they have a complete loss of function and independence when there is a wealth of evidence that shows people living with dementia, with good support, can live active and fulfilling lives for many years," Ms McCabe said.

"Our research shows that people living with dementia and carers experience discrimination that can lead to social isolation, loneliness and poor mental health.

"People living with dementia report that social invitations and inclusion start to dwindle.

"Carers report feeling they no longer have the support of family or friends when the reality is often people close to them withdraw not knowing how to help or not wanting to intrude.

"Often the 'discriminatory' behaviour is unintended and rather a result of a lack of awareness and understanding about dementia.

"The restrictions and lockdowns of COVID-19 have exacerbated these experiences for people living with dementia and carers.

"We need to change this experience for people impacted by dementia and Dementia Action Week is one way to start inspiring the community to act and to learn more – to understand how their words, behaviour and responses can make a difference to the lives of people living dementia and carers."

The theme for Dementia Action week was developed in consultation with Dementia Advocates, who have a lived experience of dementia.

A number of Dementia Advocates will appear in national television and digital advertising as well as sharing their experiences to help others in social and traditional media.

"I thank all the Dementia Advocates who have contributed to the development of this campaign and for continuing to make a difference to the lives of the almost half a million Australians living with dementia and the 1.6 million people involved in their care," Ms McCabe said.

Organisations, partners and supporters are encouraged to register their interest to receive our digital kit and further information about Dementia Action Week 2021 by heading to dementia.org.au/dementia-action-week/show-your-support.

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**

-Ends-

Media contacts: Gabrielle Prabhu, gabrielle.prabhu@dementia.org.au, [0447 253 583](tel:0447253583)

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