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## **24/7, life-changing dementia support, counselling, and services to reduce fears and increase ability to live well**

More people living with dementia, their families and carers will have access to life-changing services with the Federal Government's \$102 million commitment to expand and enhance the National Dementia Support Program provided by Dementia Australia.

Dementia Australia CEO Maree McCabe AM welcomed the significant increase in funding that will enable the expansion of access to services like counselling, post-diagnostic support programs, early intervention programs and education sessions.

"For the first time we will also be able to expand the operating hours of the National Dementia Helpline to be 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week," Ms McCabe said.

"The National Dementia Helpline, 1800 100 500, is a vital first point of contact for people with any concerns about their own or a loved one's cognition, for anyone who is experiencing symptoms, and for any Australian needing support or information to access early diagnosis and support."

Bobby Redman, Chair of the Dementia Australia Advisory Committee, who lives with dementia said knowing that you're not alone and having somewhere to turn to at a time of need was so important in reducing fears and increasing the ability to cope.

"The ability to increase the National Dementia Helpline to 24/7 is a major breakthrough that will ensure help will be there whenever it is needed," Ms Redman said.

The National Dementia Helpline will be available to anyone living with dementia, their families and carers, at any time for any questions, information, support and to connect people into other services and support including My Aged Care, The Carer Gateway and the Dementia Behaviour Advisory Service.

"Receiving a diagnosis of dementia is overwhelming news for any individual and for family and friends," Ms McCabe said.

"Accessing supports immediately after diagnosis is vital for people impacted to learn how to live well and independently with dementia.

"It is also important for GPs, geriatricians, nurses and allied health professional to know the National Dementia Helpline is there to assist them when they are supporting their patients."

Expanding the operating hours of the National Dementia Helpline means more people will be able to get critical support and information at times to suit them.

"This, along with the other additional support services being rolled out as part of the increased investment in the National Dementia Support Program will go a long way towards improving the lives of people living with dementia and their carers," Ms Redman said.



“It is great news that the government is recognising more, the needs of those of us living with dementia and has provided Dementia Australia with the funds to build on the National Dementia Support Program.”

Ms McCabe said Dementia Australia welcomes the extra injection of funds from the Federal Government.

“This will ensure all who need it will have access to support and services from help in getting a diagnosis, after diagnosis and onwards,” she said.

“On behalf of people living with dementia, their families and carers, thank you to the Federal Government for this significant increase in funding that will make a difference for people impacted now and for so many Australians in the future.”

Currently the National Dementia Helpline operates from 8am-8pm, from Monday-Friday, excluding public holidays. The expanded operating hours are expected to start from March.

More information about the National Dementia Helpline service can be found at <https://www.dementia.org.au/helpline>.

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](https://www.dementia.org.au)

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**Media contacts:** Gabrielle Prabhu, Media & Communications Manager, 0447 253 583 or [Gabrielle.Prabhu@dementia.org.au](mailto:Gabrielle.Prabhu@dementia.org.au) / Christine Bolt, National GM Communications - Corporate Communications, 0400 004 553 or [Christine.Bolt@dementia.org.au](mailto:Christine.Bolt@dementia.org.au)

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