

DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES: STARTING A LOCAL DEMENTIA ALLIANCE

Do you want to make your local community more dementia friendly? You can start today by setting up a Local Dementia Alliance.

WHAT IS A LOCAL DEMENTIA ALLIANCE?

A Local Dementia Alliance is made up of people in the community you are interested in helping to make their community or town more dementia friendly. It must include people with dementia, alongside others such as carers and family members of people with dementia, local councils, business owners, community groups, schools and just about anyone who is interested. It must not be 'about people with dementia, without them'.

A Local Dementia Alliance will look different in every community depending on who is involved and the aims of the group.

FIVE STEPS TO GETTING STARTED

1. Find people who are interested in helping you

Gather together some interested people to help you. You could start with finding people with dementia, friends, family, neighbours and co-workers. Be sure to include people with dementia and their carers. Aim for 2-4 people who can help you set up a Local Dementia Alliance, but always include people with dementia.

With that group, think about the things you would like to try and achieve in making your community dementia friendly. Your list could include things like:

- Local businesses providing accessible services to people with dementia
- Knowing that staff understand dementia and know how to communicate effectively with people who have dementia.

- Employers supporting people with younger onset dementia to remain employed, in the same way people with other disabilities are.
- Improved signage in your town.
- Choirs, walking groups, sporting clubs and social groups that are welcoming and inclusive for people with dementia.
- Memory cafes for people with dementia and their families.

Once you have a general idea of what you may like to see you are ready to organise your first meeting!

2. Organise a meeting

Decide on a day, date and time to hold an information session about Dementia-Friendly Communities and setting up a Local Dementia Alliance.

Make a list of businesses and local community groups you think may be interested in taking part and talk to the owners about what it means to be dementia friendly. The information in the dementia-friendly businesses tip sheet can give you some ideas and help you do this.

Organise to speak to the relevant members of your local council about how they can become involved and invite them to attend the meeting.

Involving people living with dementia, their carers and families in a Local Dementia Alliance is central to ensuring your Alliance meets the needs of people in your community. Finding out from people with dementia, their carers and families about their experiences of living in the community; where they feel supported and where improvements can be made will help determine the work of the Alliance.

Spread the word. Encourage as many people as possible to attend a meeting to learn more about Dementia-Friendly Communities participate in a discussion. There are lots of ways you could promote the meeting

including, putting up posters on noticeboards in your local shopping centres and libraries; handing out leaflets; promoting it on social media; advertising in the community notices section, or sending a press release or letter to the local newspaper; having the meeting announced on the local radio station.

3. Make your first meeting a success

Introductions and welcome

Decide who is going to do the introductions and welcome everyone to the meeting.

Set the scene

Let everyone know why they are here and explain what you are trying to achieve. The concept of having Dementia-Friendly Communities is very new in Australia, so it is important to help people understand what it means and how they can help you achieve this goal.

Encourage people with dementia in the community to join the group, as well as speak to the group about what it means to them to live in a Dementia-Friendly Community so everyone has the chance to hear first hand what it means to different people.

Brainstorm

Facilitate a group discussion about different ways to make your local community more dementia friendly. Ask people to help identify dementia-friendly and unfriendly places around the town, including public buildings and spaces; the people who can answer those questions the most authentically and accurately are people living with dementia.

Recruit Alliance Members

Explain that a Local Dementia Alliance will work together on some of the issues identified during the brainstorming session. Ask for volunteers to join the Alliance and emphasise that everyone's contributions are valued and all are welcome. At the end of the discussion take note of who is interested in helping and how they want

to contribute. Do they want to be a member of on the Local Dementia Alliance? Can they offer support in another way? Make sure every is clear on their role and who is the main contact for the group. Depending on the number of people on the Alliance, it may be helpful to assign some roles such as Chair and Secretary to help run future meetings.

4. Take action!

Working successfully together as members of the Local Dementia Alliance will be a big part of helping your community become more dementia friendly. Working together with a focus on encouraging and supporting each other to be active members of the Alliance will be the key to your success.

Now that the group is set up it is time to take all your ideas a put them into a Community Action Plan. An action plan set out what you aim to achieve and helps you track your progress as you go.

Once you have your plan, make sure to follow up with members of the community, businesses, council members, local clubs and organisations who agreed to be involved to progress the actions you have agreed on.

It may be helpful to schedule regular meetings of the Local Dementia Alliance to help with achieve the goals in the plan.

5. Getting feedback

It will be important to get feedback from everyone involved as you progress the action plan to see how the actions of the groups are making a difference to people with dementia, their carers and families.

LOCAL DEMENTIA ALLIANCE

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

Who we are	List the members of your Local Dementia Alliance, including the businesses or community groups the represent (if applicable)		
Our commitment to creating a dementia-friendly community	Briefly describe the main aims of the Alliance.		
AIM	Outline the aim		
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Progress
List the possible actions that could be taken to achieve this aim	Who will be responsible	When will this action be completed by	Progress to date
1.			
2.			
3.			
AIM 1			
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Progress
AIM 2			
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Progress
AIM 3			
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Progress
AIM 4			
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Progress

AIM 5			
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Progress

AIM 6			
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Progress

Community Profile

This plan for the community of _____ was drafted on _____

Signed by members of the Local Dementia Alliance:
