

Wednesday 25 September 2019

## Dementia the leading cause of death of women, second of all Australians

Australians are more likely to die of dementia than almost any other disease – with the exception of heart disease. The release of new data confirms dementia remains the leading cause of death of women and the second leading cause of death of all Australians.

According to the Causes of Death 2018 data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics today, cause of death by heart disease has decreased by 22.4 per cent since 2009 while dementia rates have increased by 68.6 per cent in the same period.

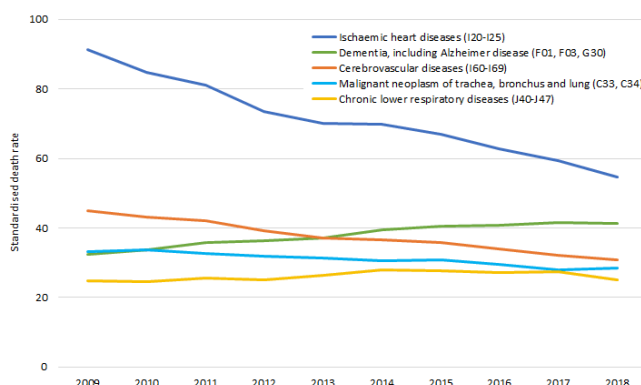
Dementia Australia CEO Maree McCabe said without a major medical breakthrough this trend is likely to continue, with the report stating that dementia will become the leading cause of death in coming years.

### Leading Causes of Death, Australia (year and number of registered deaths)

Cause of death	2009	2013	2018
Ischaemic heart diseases	22,587	19,778	17,533
Dementia, including Alzheimer disease	8,280	10,934	13,963
Cerebrovascular diseases	11,216	10,543	9,972

Source: ABS Australia's leading causes of death, 2018

### Leading causes of death, standardised death rates, 2009-2018



Source: ABS Australia's leading causes of death, 2018

“With more than 447,000 Australians currently living with dementia, and the number expected to increase to almost 1.1 million by 2058, dementia is the chronic disease of the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” Ms McCabe said.

“Australian and international research shows there is a lack of knowledge about dementia and the global World Alzheimer Report released on 21 September 2019 reveals a staggering 95 per cent of people think they will develop dementia in their lifetime<sup>1</sup>.

“While age is a risk factor, dementia is not a normal part of ageing.

“It is a progressive and, ultimately, terminal disease.

“With a lack of understanding comes discrimination. People living with dementia share with us the impact that discrimination has on their everyday life.

“Discrimination around dementia is a potential barrier between major breakthroughs in research and funding that could improve the lives of people living with dementia.

“Hence our focus on discrimination during Dementia Action Week last week, with the theme - Dementia doesn't discriminate. Do you?”

<sup>1</sup> [World Alzheimer Report 2019: Attitudes to dementia](#)

The profile on dementia continues to be raised this week with leading experts on dementia in Sydney at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference® (AAIC®) Satellite Symposium, which starts today, running until September 27 to explore emerging dementia research in Oceania.

Dementia Australia is the national peak body and charity for people, of all ages, living with all forms of dementia, their families and carers. It provides advocacy, support services, education and information. An estimated 447,000 people have dementia in Australia. This number is projected to reach almost 1.1 million by 2058. Dementia Australia is the new voice of Alzheimer's Australia. Dementia Australia's services are supported by the Australian Government.

**National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500**

**Interpreter service available**

(The National Dementia Helpline is an Australian Government Initiative)

**Dementia is a National Health Priority Area**

[www.dementia.org.au](http://www.dementia.org.au)

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