

# The Byron carer



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[www.byronrespite.com.au](http://www.byronrespite.com.au)

## National Carers Week, dedicated to acknowledging carers in Australia, runs from Sunday 15 – Saturday 21 October 2017.

There are over 2.7 million family and friend carers in Australia providing 36 million hours of care and support every week to a family member or friend who has a disability, mental illness, drug and/or alcohol dependency, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is frail. The replacement value of that unpaid care is \$1.1 billion per week. The theme for National Carers Week, Carers Count, highlights these figures.

Carers come from all walks of life, cultural backgrounds and age groups.

Carers exist in all communities, including Aboriginal communities, those of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTI communities, and throughout metropolitan, regional, rural and remote NSW.

By letting people know how many carers there are in Australia, the hours of care provided each week and the value of that care, Carers Count aims to raise awareness of the contribution made by carers.

**Say Thank You – show carers how much they count.**

This National Carers Week we are asking you to offer your thanks to carers and



help build a carer-friendly Australia by showing carers how much they count.

Anyone at anytime can become an unpaid carer and it is our job to ensure that we have a carer-friendly Australia where everyone, including carers, has a fair go.

Carers contribute so much to our nation, with the value of the caring role estimated at \$60.3 billion per year, and yet they often experience social isolation and find it harder to maintain employment, enter the workforce, or participate in education.

A carer-friendly Australia is one where unpaid carers are recognised and supported during and after their caring role, across all spectrums of society.

Byron Shire Respite Service Inc. is supported by the Australian Government Department of Health. Visit [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au) for more information. Our service also acknowledges the funding provided by NSW Government Family & Community Services Ageing, Disability & Home Care. Visit [www.adhc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.adhc.nsw.gov.au) for more information.



Australian Government  
Department of Health



Family & Community Services  
Ageing, Disability & Home Care

Although funding for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme has been provided by the Australian Government, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Australian Government.

Imagine the impact we would make if we had one 'thank you' for every one of Australia's 2.7 million unpaid carers?

**If you are 'tech-savvy', raise your voice and help build a carer-friendly Australia by using #Carers2017 and tag @CarersAustralia across your social media platforms.**

### What do carers do?

A carer is any individual who provides care and support to a family member or friend who has dementia, another chronic condition, terminal illness or disability, mental illness, drug and/or alcohol dependency, or someone who is frail.

Every situation is different. Some carers provide 24 hour nursing to a family member with high care needs. They help with daily needs and activities like feeding, bathing, dressing, toileting, lifting and moving and administering medications.

Other carers support people who are fairly independent, but may need someone to keep an eye on them, or help them with tasks like banking, transport, shopping and housework.

Most carers give comfort, encouragement and reassurance to the person they care for, oversee their health and wellbeing, monitor their safety and help them stay as independent as possible. Carers help the person they care for to have a good quality of life.



**\$1.1 BILLION EVERY WEEK.**

**THAT'S HOW MUCH WE COUNT ON CARERS.**

**NATIONAL CARERS WEEK 2017**  
15-21 OCTOBER

What unpaid carers do in a single week has been valued at a staggering \$1.1 billion. It's a massive figure that speaks volumes of the extraordinary effort required to care for and support family members and friends who have a disability, mental illness, chronic condition, terminal illness or who are frail aged.

It's clear Australia counts on carers, so this National Carers Week we want to show just how much they count.

To recognise the enormous contribution unpaid carers make to our communities and our nation, visit [carersweek.com.au](http://carersweek.com.au)

National Carers Week 2017 is an initiative of Carers Australia and is funded by the Australian Government.



## How to best respond to the person when dementia causes unpredictable behaviours

**Alzheimer's disease and related dementias can cause a person to act in different and unpredictable ways. Some people become anxious or aggressive. Others people with dementia repeat certain questions, gestures or misinterpret what they hear.**

These types of reactions can lead to misunderstanding, frustration and tension, particularly between the person with dementia and the carer. It is important to understand that the person is not acting that way on purpose.

*Continued on next page >>*

Byron Shire Respite Service acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land and pay respect to the elders past and present.



## ◀ People with dementia and their responses

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### Behaviour may be related to:

- **Physical discomfort** related to temperature, illnesses or medication
- **Overstimulation** such as loud noises or a busy environment
- **Unfamiliar surroundings** due to new places or the inability to recognise home
- **Complicated tasks** such as difficulty with activities or chores
- **Frustrating interactions** due to the inability to communicate effectively

### Use this three-step approach to help identify common behaviours and their causes:

#### 1. Examine the response of the person

- What was their response? Was it harmful to the person with dementia or others?

- What happened just before the response occurred? Did something trigger it?
- What happened immediately after their response? How did you react?
- Could something be causing the person pain?
- Consult a doctor to identify any causes related to medications or illness.

#### 2. Explore potential solutions

- What are the needs of the person with dementia? Are they being met?
- Can adapting the surroundings comfort the person?
- How can you change your reaction or your approach to the person's response?  
Are YOU responding in a calm and supportive way?

#### 3. Try different responses

- Did your new response help?
- Do you need to explore other potential causes and solutions?  
If so, what can you do differently?

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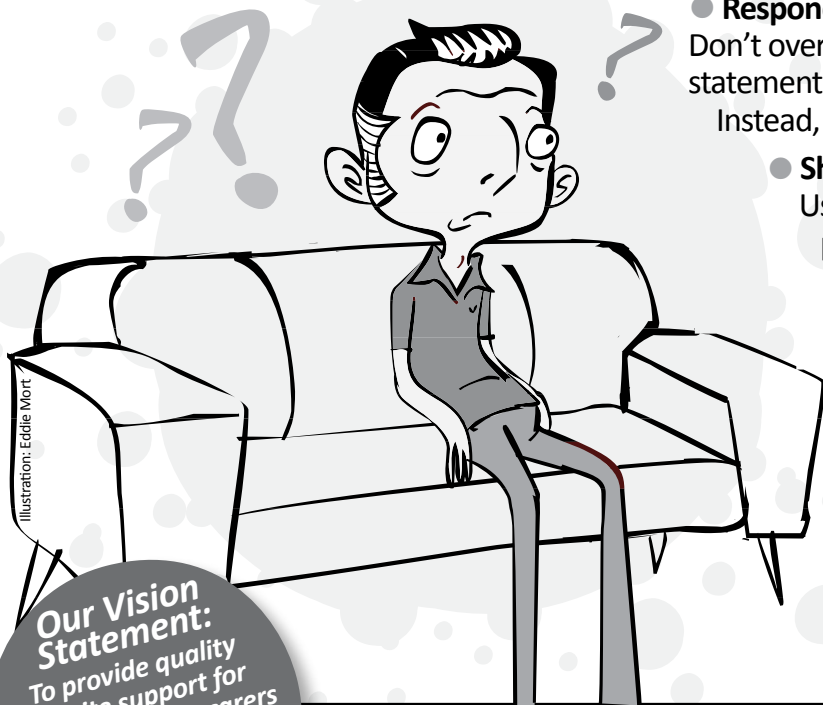
# Confusion

A person with Alzheimer's may not recognize familiar people, places or things. He or she may forget relationships, call family members by other names or become confused about where home is.

The purpose of common items, such as a pen or fork may also be forgotten. These situations are difficult for caregivers and require patience and understanding.

### How to respond:

- **Stay calm**  
Although being called by a different name or not being recognised can be painful, try not to make your hurt apparent.
- **Respond with a brief explanation.**  
Don't overwhelm the person with lengthy statements and reasons.  
Instead, clarify with a simple explanation.
- **Show photos and other reminders**  
Use photographs and other thought-provoking items to remind the person of important relationships and places.
- **Offer corrections as suggestions.**  
Avoid explanations that sound like scolding. Try "I thought it was a fork," or "I think he is your grandson Peter."
- **Try not to take it personally.**  
Remember, dementia causes your friend or family member to forget, but your support and understanding will continue to be appreciated.



**Our Vision Statement:**  
To provide quality respite support for clients and their carers and therefore enhance their quality of life.

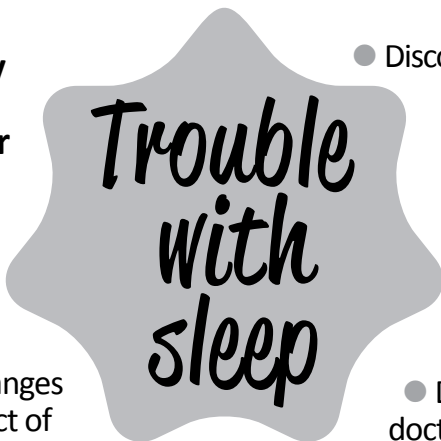
Byron Shire Respite Service Inc. is located at the Brunswick Valley Community Centre, South Beach Rd, Brunswick Heads. PO Box 163, Brunswick Heads, NSW, 2483.

To speak to Care Manger, Barbara Chambers, telephone: 02) 6685 1619 or email: [challengingbehaviour@byronrespite.com.au](mailto:challengingbehaviour@byronrespite.com.au).

Colin Munro, our Service Manager can be reached at: 02) 6685 1921 or email: [service@byronrespite.com.au](mailto:service@byronrespite.com.au)

**People with dementia may have problems sleeping or experience changes in their sleep schedule.**

Scientists don't completely understand why these sleep disturbances occur. As with changes in memory and behavioural responses, sleep changes somehow result from the impact of dementia on the brain.



**How to respond:**

**Make a comfortable environment**

- The person's sleeping area should be at a comfortable temperature.
- Provide nightlights and other ways to keep the person safe, such as door and window locks.

- Discourage watching TV during periods of wakefulness at night.

**Maintain a schedule**

- As much as possible, encourage the person to adhere to a regular routine of meals, waking up and going to bed. This will allow him or her to sleep more restfully at night.

**Talk to a doctor**

- Discuss sleep disturbances with a doctor to help identify causes and possible solutions.
- Most experts encourage the use of non-drug measures rather than medication.
- Avoid stimulants as alcohol, caffeine and nicotine can all affect ability to sleep. Avoid them as much as possible to promote better sleep at night.

For the original transcript of this article, visit: [https://www.alz.org/national/documents/brochure\\_behaviors.pdf](https://www.alz.org/national/documents/brochure_behaviors.pdf)

**Need support?**

- **My Aged Care** 1800 200 422 for information about the Australian Government's aged care system and services. [www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au)

**If you require emergency respite, please call:**

**1800 052 222** (24hrs)

- **Call Colin or Barbara at Byron Shire Respite Service Inc. to discuss any aspect of your role as a carer.** ph: 02) 6685 1921
- **Alzheimer's Australia / National Dementia Helpline** ph: 1800 100 500
- **Carers Counseling Service** ph: 02) 6628 6416
- **Carers NSW** ph: 1800 242 636
- **Far North Coast Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centre** ph: 1800 052 222
- **National Continence Helpline** ph: 1800 330 066
- **NSW Elder Abuse Helpline** ph: 1800 628 221

**Need a holiday?**

- **Beachside Lake Ainsworth Centre** ph: 02) 6687 7168
- **Lifefridge Care for U Program** ph: 02) 6674 2267

**Aids:**

- **Byron Ballina Home Maintenance and Modification Service (HMMS) Inc. 1/65 Centennial Circuit, Byron Bay** ph: 02) 6685 7312
- **Bright Sky Cards for Continence Aids Payment Scheme (CAPS)** ph: 1300 886 601

**Need Transport?**

- **Tweed Byron Ballina Community Transport** ph: 1300 875 895

Transport to medical appointments, weekly & fortnightly shopping outings & monthly social outings. The service is funded to support older people living at home independently or have a permanent disability or Indigenous Australians aged over 50 years. Phone Kathryn in the Byron office on: 1300 875 895 for transport to medical appointments or Amanda for any shopping bus or social bus enquiries.

Travel for medical appointments free with travel voucher or for Veteran and Widow Gold Card holders:

- **Byron Shire Limousines** ph: 02) 6685 5008
- **Brunswick Limousines** phone David on: 0412 855 747.

**Byron Shire Respite Service Inc. Activity Timetable**

monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday
10am – 2:30pm Changed Behaviours with Dementia	10am – 3pm Dementia Specific	10am – 3:00pm Changed Behaviours with Dementia	10am – 3pm Older people	10am – 3pm Dementia Specific

Lunch, morning and afternoon teas are provided and the cost for the day including transport is \$20.