

# The Byron carer



dementia  
australia™

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September  
Dementia  
Awareness  
Month 2018

Small actions.

Big difference.



Dementia Awareness Month is Dementia Australia's national awareness-raising campaign held every year throughout September. Its aim is to encourage all Australians to become more aware of dementia, to get a better understanding of what it is like to live with dementia and how we can support people living with dementia.

## There are many ways to get involved in Dementia Awareness Month

- Find an event near you
- Become a Dementia Friend
- Show your support
- Learn more about dementia

## MemoryScape launch | Friday 7<sup>th</sup> September 10.30 – 12.30pm

Members of the community are invited to visit the Tweed Regional Gallery in Murwillumbah to learn more about the new MemoryScape program as part of Dementia Awareness Month.

Enjoy some 'slow art' experiences that demonstrate how looking at and talking about art can have benefits for people living with dementia and their care partners. A representative from Dementia Australia NSW will also be available to provide information about dementia, risk reduction and support services available in the local area.

**Where:** 2 Mistral Road (Corner Tweed Valley Way) Murwillumbah South. Telephone: 6670 2790

For more information, visit <https://artgallery.tweed.nsw.gov.au>

*continued overleaf* ►

Byron Shire Respite Service acknowledge and pay respect to the Arakwal people of the Bundjalung nation, the traditional owners of the land on which we live and care – and pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging.



## Dementia Friends Information session | Brunswick Heads Library | Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September 10.30 – 11.30am

Learn more about dementia and how we can make communities in the Northern Rivers Dementia-friendly. Show your support and become a Dementia Friend. Join Christine from Dementia Australia and a community representative at the library for a free information session and Q&A. Family members, care partners, people with dementia and interested community members welcome.

**Where:** Brunswick Heads Library, 1 Fingal Street, Brunswick Heads. RSVP essential.  
e:brunswick@rtrl.nsw.gov.au  
or dementiafriendly@byronrespite.com.au  
or telephone the library on 6685 1816

### What is dementia?

Dementia is the term used to describe the symptoms of a large group of illnesses which cause a progressive decline in a person's functioning. It is a broad term used to describe a loss of memory, intellect, rationality, social skills and physical functioning.

There are many types of dementia including Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, frontotemporal dementia and Lewy body disease. Dementia can happen to anybody, but it is more common after the age of 65.

Dementia Australia, the new voice of Alzheimer's Australia, is the national peak body for people, of all ages, living with all forms of dementia, their families and carers. It provides advocacy, support services, education and information.

## How to stay connected to a person living with dementia

Family and friends play an important part in our lives. The need to be a valued member of a family or circle of friends does not diminish with dementia. In fact, the chances are that this is when we need our family and friends most. Yet, often the fear of the unknown, or the changes that we see, interfere with our ability to continue with the relationship as we knew it.

Changes will occur as a result of dementia, but important elements of the relationship still remain.

### Helpful things to remember

Communication is essential for maintaining our identity and connecting us to others.

The content of our everyday exchanges may be relatively unimportant.

What counts is their role in connecting us together.

- People living with dementia are working very hard to make sense of their world, to see through the confusion and deal with their symptoms.
- Don't take personally mistakes and mix ups due to a person's memory loss.

### The impact of dementia in Australia

In 2018, dementia is estimated to cost Australia more than \$15 billion ● By 2025, the total cost of dementia is predicted to increase to more than \$18.7 billion in today's dollars, and by 2056, to more than \$36.8 billion ● Dementia is the single greatest cause of disability in older Australians (aged 65 years or older) and the third leading cause of disability burden overall ● People with dementia account for 52% of all residents in residential aged care facilities.

### International statistics

Dementia affects almost 50 million people worldwide, which is predicted to increase to 131.5 million people by 2050 ● Every three seconds someone in the world develops dementia ● Two out of three people globally believe there is little or no understanding of dementia in their countries ● The total estimated worldwide costs of dementia were US\$818 billion in 2015 ● If dementia were a country, it would be the world's 18th largest economy.

To find out more and view the original transcript of this article, visit: <https://www.dementia.org.au/media/key-facts-and-statistics>

- Being prepared to 'walk a mile in their shoes' can help family and friends understand and be more accepting.

- Feelings of confusion, grief and loss, and even anger, are normal feelings caused by dementia.
- The person with dementia may forget your name but they will remember that they like you.
- If the person with dementia appears difficult it is not deliberate.
- Remind yourself that what a person needs at this time is understanding and support.
- Support the person in the caring role to take a break.
- It may be possible for more family members to be involved in supporting the person with dementia.

Language skills and vocabulary can diminish as dementia progresses but the desire to communicate does not. People continue to want to understand and be understood.

- You can keep the communication going even when it feels one-sided.
- The person with dementia may forget details of recent events, or the event itself. This is not an indication of indifference or lack of significance; it is simply one of the major impacts of dementia.
- By using prompts, you can help the person recall these events without making them feel embarrassed that they can't remember or by focusing on their memory.

To download the *Family and Friends Matter* booklet for more tips on maintaining meaningful relationships with people with dementia, visit Dementia Australia at: [https://www.dementia.org.au/files/resources/Family-AndFriendsMatter\\_english.pdf](https://www.dementia.org.au/files/resources/Family-AndFriendsMatter_english.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
- **National Dementia Helpline** ph: 1800 100 500
- **Carers Counselling Service** ph: (02) 6628 6416
- **Carers NSW** ph: 1800 242 636
- **Sandra Kimball Counselling** ph: 0458 175 962
- **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

### 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.

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.

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.

Byron Shire Respite Service is located at the Brunswick Valley Community Centre, South Beach Rd, Brunswick Heads. Telephone Barbara Chambers on: (02) 6685 1619 or Colin Munro: (02) 6685 1921  
Website: [www.byronrespite.com.au](http://www.byronrespite.com.au) Email: [service@byronrespite.com.au](mailto:service@byronrespite.com.au)

# Caring for Carers

## A new program to reach carers for people with dementia

**The Caring for Carers of People with Dementia Project links carers of older people with dementia to other carers living in regional and rural Australia.**

The chat-based group program allows carers to chat with other carers in similar circumstances.

Carers join a weekly group videoconference meeting from their home and connect with other carers in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

Carers have the opportunity to share information, experience and skills. The program is available to primary carers of a person with dementia.

The information and chat meetings are led by an experienced facilitator, Dr Annie Banbury, and run for six weeks. Group programs have now started and will be offered through to May 2019.

Carers need to be connected to the internet. The program is free, apart from charges from the internet service provider for data usage in the videoconference sessions.

Carers are encouraged to use their own desktop computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone; the project can loan a tablet for the sessions, if needed.

Carers do not need to stop any other programs or services that they are involved in. Carers will be offered \$50 voucher to cover internet charges at completion of their involvement the project. They will also go into the draw to win one of five tablets.

The Caring for Carers program is being offered by Central Queensland University's Caring for Carers of People with Dementia Project which has received Australian Government Dementia

and Aged Care Services funding. The project will gather information about the response of isolated rural carers of older people with dementia to a video-conference based, outreach, information and peer support program. A summary of the information gathered from the project will be available for participants when the project is finished.

The project team is keen to hear from carers who would like to participate.

To register for the Caring for the Carers program or find out more, please contact the project by email: [carers@cqu.edu.au](mailto:carers@cqu.edu.au)  
Or phone Karen Nixon on: 0427 812 156 or Kristen Forster on: 0437 579 695.  
You can also register online at: [cqu.edu.au/caringforthecarers](http://cqu.edu.au/caringforthecarers)

## MULTICULTURAL HEALTH WEEK

HEALTH LITERACY • 3-9 SEPTEMBER 2018

In 2009, NSW

Multicultural Health Communication Service initiated Multicultural Health Week, an annual statewide campaign that aims to raise awareness of health issues facing people from CaLD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) communities in NSW.

Delivered on behalf of the NSW Ministry of Health, Multicultural Health Week is an umbrella initiative with events held by a wide range of health and social community-based services.

### What is health literacy?

Health literacy is a critical element to enable people to exert control over their health and their health care.

Health literacy has been defined as a means to enabling individuals to exert greater control over their health

and the range of personal, social and environmental determinants of health.

This includes the ability of a person to understand essential health information that is required for them to successfully make use of all elements of the health system (preventive, diagnostic, curative and palliative services).

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care separates health literacy into two components:

- Individual health literacy and the
- Health literacy environment.

Individual health literacy is the skills, knowledge, motivation and capacity of a consumer to access, understand, appraise and apply information to make effective decisions about health and health care, and take appropriate action.

### Why is health literacy important?

Health literacy lies at the heart of a person being able to take control of their own health care through making informed health decisions, seeking appropriate and timely care and managing the processes of illness and wellness.

Health information can be complex, use technical or complicated vocabulary and be ambiguous. Information can often be difficult to obtain and read, let alone comprehend. When the stressors of caring for a loved one or oneself are added to the need to navigate the health system, people can feel alone, confused and distraught.

**To find out more, visit:** <http://multiculturalhealthweek.com>