



**Alzheimer's**  
QUEENSLAND



## **Dementia Matters**

### **A Publication of Alzheimer's Queensland**

Alzheimer's Queensland is Queensland's largest not-for-profit community whose primary aim is to maintain the quality of life of people with dementia and their caregivers. We support the desire of most people to remain living in their own home as long as possible and assist families and caregivers to facilitate this.

We aim to do this by offering the following State-wide Information, Education and Support Services

- \*24 hour 7 days per week professionally staffed Advice Line
- \*Community education Library resources
- \*Interactive website
- \*Professional education
- \*Family carer education
- \* Support groups – face to face and telephone
- \* Individualized support
- \* Fact sheets and specific information requests

- Ipswich Multiservice Centre
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### Ipswich Multi Service Centre

**The Ipswich Multi Service Centre operates from two beautiful, Queenslander style cottages located on Chermside Road. It offers secure, homely cottage-based respite, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week**

The Ipswich Multi Service Centre is suitable for both people living with Dementia or the frail aged, as well those over 65 seeking opportunities for social and community engagement.

Offering both centre-based and in-home respite care, giving carers and their families a well-earned break to recharge and attend to daily life; safe in the knowledge that their loved one is being cared for by carers trained specifically in Dementia fundamentals, behaviours and response.

The Ipswich Multi Service Centre offers the following services;

- Centre-based respite & social support – offering social interaction for clients whilst participating in meaningful activities and outings.
- Cottage Overnight respite – Offering families overnight respite with the knowledge their loved one is safe and being cared for.
- In-Home respite – providing a companion in the comfort of the client's own home, assistance with personal hygiene, meal preparation or medication assistance.
- Allied Health – offering services such as Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Podiatry and speech pathology.
- Home Maintenance – offering basic home maintenance, ensuring a safe home environment. This may include garden care, rubbish removal and minor home repairs.

If you would like to find out more or arrange a tour please contact the Multi Service Centre on 07 3812 2253

Ipswich Multi Service Centre 83-85 Chermside Road,  
Ipswich QLD 4305  
T: 07 3812 2253  
E: [intaketeam@alzqld.org.au](mailto:intaketeam@alzqld.org.au)





## Clinical Corner

# Depression: for carers & people living with dementia

Most people experience a fluctuation of moods in the course of a day to day living. It is normal to feel sad or down in reaction to the problems of life. Depression is not a normal part of ageing. It is a significant illness that affects all aspects of a person's life. However, a person who has a severe and persistent depressed mood may have a serious illness that requires treatment. No one should have to live with depression.

### Cause of depression

Depression is the most common mental health problem in older people. It is a chemical imbalance in the brain that results from a combination of factors.

Research has shown that normal ageing alters chemicals in the brain leaving an older person vulnerable to mood changes. Depression tends to run in families and is more common in women. Physical illness and the effects of medication can also trigger a depressive illness.

### Symptoms of depression

Older people may not present with clear symptoms of depression. They may complain of physical problems, loss of enjoyment, loss of energy and cognitive changes, rather than a feeling of sadness.

The most significant features of depression include:

- Depressed mood or loss of interest in usual activities
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Insomnia or excessive sleeping
- Agitation or lethargic
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Difficult thinking, concentrating or making decisions
- Recurrent thoughts of death, suicidal ideas, plans or attempts
- Deterioration in functioning

### Depression and Alzheimer's disease

An individual with depression may present similar symptoms to a person with dementia. Depression can either mimic dementia or worsen symptoms of an existing dementia condition.

Up to 30% of people with Alzheimer's disease may develop depression, especially early in the disorder when they first become aware of a cognitive decline.

When a person has depression, they lose interest in their usual activities, experience problems with appetite and sleeping and may neglect their self-care tasks. It is often difficult to differentiate between these symptoms and dementia. Cognitive changes such as difficulty thinking and concentration occur in both depression and dementia.

Cognitive changes in depression usually have a rapid onset and may fluctuate, whereas in dementia, there is a slow or step like deterioration in cognitive abilities.

It is important that the depression is treated, as it can aggravate physical and cognitive decline in a person with Alzheimer's disease.

### **Treatment of depression**

Treatment reflects the biological psychological and social nature of depression. There are a variety of options ranging from medication, counselling, herbal remedies, meditation, exercise and support groups.

It is important that the person is reviewed by their doctor to exclude physical illnesses and to properly diagnose and treat the depression.

### **How you can help**

There is a direct link between depression and suicide. Take any comments about death or suicide seriously and seek immediate medical assistance from a local doctor, hospital or community health service.

If the person is neglecting to eat or drink, seek immediate medical assistance, ensure you encourage the person to seek medical advice to exclude physical causes and start treatment.

Dementia impairs the person's ability to communicate and respond to others. It is often difficult to know what to say to someone who is depressed. Ensure that you treat the person with respect:

- Be patient and understanding
- Listen carefully
- Don't blame the person for their illness
- Explain that depression is a chemical imbalance for which there is effective treatments that can be trialed
- People who are depressed often feel hopeless and helpless. Show that you have faith in their ability to get better
- Gently encourage things to help them get better such as attending appointments, medication, meditation, exercise and support groups
- There are also support groups for friends and relatives of people with depression.

**Help and assistance is available. For further information  
please contact Alzheimer's Queensland Advice Line on  
1800 639 331**

# Looking After Yourself

If ever a word engendered a host of negative emotional reactions, it is dementia. Despair, grief, loss, guilt, depression, sadness, bewilderment, anger, resentment, shock ... the list goes on. All these reactions are normal responses, and at various times are felt by both the person with dementia as well as the carer.

## Seeking support

As a carer you may find yourself trying to juggle your caring duties in between being a spouse, parent and paid work. You may have to take on roles and duties that have never been your responsibility before, you may find yourself in the unfortunate position of having to care for a relative with whom you have never got on.

Every carers situation is unique, however they all share common elements. Many carers find it difficult to focus on their own needs in addition to those of the person they are caring for. A lot of carers find that they are time poor and struggle to fit self-care strategies into their daily life. Planning ahead and scheduling your day to include time for yourself can help.

Additionally. Some carers experience guilt, as time spent on themselves is time taken away from other pressing needs. However, not taking care of yourself can impact on your own health, which may impact on your ability to care for your loved one. As such, getting help when you need it is necessary in order to be an effective carer and cope in the long term.

## Some strategies for better health

Strategies for better health and self-care include;

- Exercise – ensure you are fitting physical activities into your life. Exercise can help improve your current health.
- Activities and hobbies – making time for activities that you enjoy can help your mental wellbeing.
- Diet – eating healthy and regular meals can have great benefits to your long term health
- Sleep – making sure you are getting enough sleep and downtime should be a priority. This can sometimes be difficult with night-time dementia behaviours, but carer stress can quickly increase when fatigued.
- Social – spending time with friends and family can relieve a huge amount of stress
- Seek support – it is advisable to seek support as early as possible.
- Taking a break – organise to have regular breaks, either informally with the support of family and friends, or via a local community respite centre.



## Coping with stress

Developing effective ways to deal with the emotional upheaval associated with dementia is a crucial part of managing the disease process and ensuring the wellbeing of all concerned. Although we can often be self-critical when we cry, you need to allow yourself to do so when necessary. Crying is the body's natural way of relieving emotional stress.

The following are some effective ways of coping with stress. None of the suggestions require special training or equipment and most can be done, anywhere, anytime:

Breathing exercises – Sit up straight and comfortable in a supporting chair. Take a slow deep breath through your mouth then breathe out slowly through your mouth, take ten breaths and repeat the entire process as many times during the day as required.

- Walking – the most natural, relating and effective exercise possible
- Swimming and floating in a pool – another natural way of relaxing. Focus on the water around your body and face whilst breathing deeply.
- Sitting in a quiet area – simply sitting in the sunshine in the garden or by the water can contribute to a sense of mental relaxation.
- Massage – this could be a simple hand and arm massage or a more relaxing full body massage.
- Listening to soft relaxing music – choose music that you enjoy. It is a powerful tool that will very quickly change your mood and lift spirits.
- Gentle stretching exercise – our bodies by nature are designed to move, try the following:
  - Stretching your arms above your head as high as you can and wiggle fingers
  - Roll your shoulders in gentle circles
  - Turn your head slowly from side to side
  - While sitting, stretch your legs in front of you and point your toes away from you and then back towards your head. Roll your ankles around in gentle circles.

For any questions or concerns you have in relation to dementia and its management, or for specific information on services available in your area and how to access them, please contact Alzheimer's Queensland on  
**1800 639 331**

# Out & About

Our Garden City Multi Service Centre clients have been out and about in the community enjoying some great outings and activities.



A lucky client got to meet a Broncos player on one their visits to the Clive Berghoeffer Centre to watch the Bronchos team at the public training session.

A group of clients enjoyed a trip to the Queensland Art Gallery to participate in the Dementia Art Program. A wonderful opportunity for the to paint in a creative space.

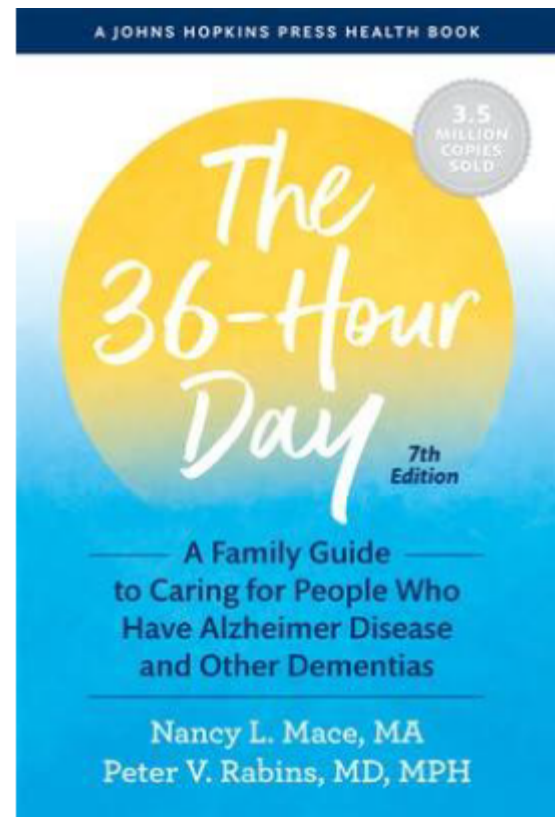


Enjoying Brisbane's green space via bicycle, thanks to Cycling without Age.

# Recommended Reading

The 36-hour day: A family guide to caring for people who have Alzheimer's disease and other Dementias

For 40 years, The 36-Hour Day has been the leading work in the field for caregivers of those with dementia. Written by experts with decades of experience caring for individuals with memory loss, Alzheimer's, and other dementias, the book is widely known for its authoritativeness and compassionate approach to care. Featuring everything from the causes of dementia to managing its early stages to advice on caring for those in the later stages of the disease, it is widely considered to be the most detailed and trusted book available. Highlighting useful takeaway messages and informed by recent research into the causes of dementia.



## **“I give the book an A.”**

It's comprehensive, honest, and compassionate. Be prepared that reading it may stir up some strong emotions, however you will come away from reading informed, equipped, and self-aware”

Leah Fogt Counseling & Consultation



# **PIN ON YOUR NOTICE BOARD ALZHEIMER'S QUEENSLAND SERVICES AND CONTACTS WWW.ALZHEIMERSONLINE.ORG**

## **Dementia Advice Line**

**1800 639 331**

Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Free Call from landline and public phones  
or email: [helpline@alzheimeronline.org](mailto:helpline@alzheimeronline.org)

For information and emotional support for  
people living with Dementia, families,  
friends and staff.

The Dementia Advice Line has a database  
of services to provide information and  
referrals. Call for free information e.g. fact  
sheets or brochures to be mailed out.

### **AQ Rehab**

In home physiotherapy  
Occupational Therapy  
Speech Therapy  
**1800 180 023**

## **Care Services**

Our Multi Service Centres are located in  
Brisbane North, Brisbane South, South  
Coast, Ipswich and Toowoomba and offer  
the following;

- Personal Care and domestic assistance
- Social support and transport
- Allied health assessments
- Respite – Centre based; day,  
overnight and emergency
- NDIS support
- Home garden maintenance

Residential Aged Care located at;

- Garden City Aged Care Services
- Rosalie Nursing Care Centre
- Windsor Aged Care Services

Home Care Packages at;  
Brisbane South, Brisbane North, Logan  
River, West Morton, Darling Downs and  
South Coast.

## **Carer Support Groups**

Alzheimer's Queensland Carer Support Groups provide information and support to those  
caring for a friend or family member with Dementia.

Please phone 1800 639 331 for more information or to be placed on the mailing list.

### **Fortnightly 09:30am – 11:30am**

Brisbane North – 07 3857 2191    Brisbane South – 07 3349 0875  
South Coast – 07 5613 1844    Ipswich – 07 3812 2253

### **Monthly 09:30am – 11:30am**

Toowoomba – 07 4635 2966