



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

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Toowoomba Multi Service Centre

The Gordon Park Multi Service Centre operates from a beautiful, Queenslander style cottages in Brisbane North. It offers secure, cottage-based respite, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

The Gordon Park Multi Service Centre is suitable for both people living with Dementia, and 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 Gordon Park 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.

If you would like to find out more or arrange a tour please contact the Multi Service Centre on 07 3857 2191



Gordon Park Multi Service Centre is located at **45 Shamrock Street, Gordon Park QLD 4031**

T: 07 3857 2191 **F:** 07 3857 2090 **E:** gpadmin@alzqld.org.au



Clinical Corner

Eating, Drinking and Swallowing Difficulties in Dementia

Difficulty with swallowing (dysphagia) means that it takes more time and effort to move food or drink from your mouth to your stomach. Occasional swallowing difficulties are generally not a reason to be concerned. They may simply occur when you eat too fast or don't chew your food well enough. However, persistent difficulties with swallowing may indicate a medical condition that requires assessment and treatment. Dysphagia can occur at any age, but it is more common in older adults. People with dementia can experience swallowing difficulty as changes in the brain cause changes in the muscles, nerves and reflexes in the mouth and throat. These changes can gradually affect the ability to eat independently and swallow safely.

Signs and symptoms of dysphagia

- * Coughing or choking when eating or drinking
- * Throat clearing after eating or drinking
- * Sensation of food getting "stuck" in the throat or neck region
- * Holding food or drink in the mouth without swallowing
- * Drooling or inability to control saliva or food/drink in mouth
- * Gurgly or wet voice during or after swallowing
- * Unexplained weightloss
- * Recurring chest infections

Complications of dysphagia

If left untreated, swallowing difficulties can cause serious health complications. Food or drink may pass into the lungs (called aspiration) causing a chest infection or pneumonia. Swallowing problems can also cause weight loss, dehydration and malnutrition.

Treatment and assistance

Treatment and management for swallowing difficulties is available. If signs and symptoms of swallowing difficulties are present, a speech pathologist can assist. The speech pathologist can give advice on what foods/drinks to eat and things to avoid. They can also suggest strategies to reduce the chance of food and drinks entering the lungs. The speech pathologist can also provide information and recommendation on how to make mealtimes easier and more enjoyable for people with dementia.

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

Dementia and Living Alone

Many older people choose to remain living in their own home alone. This decision is based on a number of reasons. Most people who make this decision do so to remain independent. Residential care or nursing home placement is certainly something, few, if any of us, ever wish to consider for ourselves.

We often hear from family "I get so worried leaving her on her own alone..." It is understandable that many carers and loved ones worry about the safety of their relative with dementia. To care for someone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week can lead to enormous stress on carers, creating feelings of anger, resentment and isolation. There can also be a feelings relating to loss of roles and independence from the person with dementia as two separate lives, roles and values are melded into one routine.

For many, independence is of greater priority than physical safety. Since Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are progressive diseases, the physical and behavioural symptoms experienced will gradually increase over time. It is therefore important to plan in advance for any assistance you and your family may need to ensure that independence can be maintained.

Safety at home, especially when living alone, is often one of the first concerns raised when talking about living alone at home with dementia. With a few simple precautions, the risks to the physical safety of the person (and property) can be minimised, allowing the person with dementia to maintain independence and life roles in their own homes.

Consider the following points:

- * Ensure work, financial, legal and health matters are addressed as soon as possible after receiving your diagnosis. If left until late in the disease, the power to make decisions about these matters may be taken away from you. This includes having a Will, Enduring Power of Attorney (EPOA) and an Advanced Health Directive.
- * Inform your bank if you have difficulties with keeping track of your accounts, bill payments and other banking needs. Arrange for payments to be made directly into, and for bills to be paid directly from your bank account.
- * Seek information about getting assistance in the home with medications, meal preparation, housekeeping, general home maintenance, transportation and home nursing care.
- * Arrange for a daily visit or telephone contact by friends, relatives or a community organisation to remind you of meal times, appointments or to take your medications. You may consider the use of a calendar, diary or medication alarms.
- * Stay in close contact with your doctor and specialist for regular review of your medical situation. Other forms of physical disability also become more common as we age, limiting our participation in some activities. In addition, an elderly person with dementia may be less aware of their limitations.
- * Remember that dementia is a progressive disease. The person's abilities will continue to deteriorate despite the safety measures put into place in the home. The safety measures discussed below will enable the person with dementia to live more safely at home for longer periods than commonly thought possible.

Consider the following measures for safety and orientation:

- * Install a key safe, keep a list of emergency numbers
- * Label cupboards and drawers with words or pictures that describe their content
- * Maintain your daily routines wherever possible.
- * Occupational Therapy home review for safety.

It is essential to know what the person with dementia can still do and let them do it, even if there are some risks involved. Appropriate supervision is the key. By doing everything for the person, they quickly become more dependent and can exhibit more behaviours.

It is important to realise that the changes you are experiencing are due to the disease. As always, you will have good days and not so good days. The disease affects each person differently and the symptoms experienced will vary. It is normal to experience many and various emotions such as anger, depression, frustration, confusion, sadness and loneliness. However a good sense of humour can help you through the tough times. Laughter is therapeutic. Engage in activities that you enjoy and are fun.

Know that you are not alone. There are people who understand and can support you however much (or little) you wish.

With simple adjustments and safety measures in place, you should be able to maintain your independence for a considerable length of time. However, prepare yourself for the time when you can no longer live on your own. Alzheimer's disease and most other dementias are accompanied by increasing dependence on others.



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

A Ride Along The Brisbane River

Clients from our Gordon Park Multi Service enjoyed a picnic lunch followed by a Trishaw E-Bike Ride through New Farm Park and along the Brisbane River with the lovely volunteers from Cycling without Age.



A Walk Amongst The Alpacas

Our South Coast Multi Service Centre clients enjoyed a drive out to Mountview Alpaca Farm in the beautiful Canungra. Whilst there they got to walk, feed and play with the friendly resident Alpacas before enjoying a lovely lunch in the countryside.



Music in Dementia Care

Music holds remarkable therapeutic potential, particularly for individuals living with Dementia.

Scientific research and real-world experiences have highlighted a multitude of benefits that music can offer to enhance the quality of life for those individuals.

Why you should incorporate music into Dementia Care:

Emotional Connection: Music has the unique ability to evoke powerful emotions and memories, often even when other forms of communications may be impaired. Familiar songs can trigger memories, leading to moments of joy, nostalgia, and emotional connection.

Mood Enhancement: Listening to favourite songs or participating in musical activities can lead to improved mood and reduced feelings of anxiety, depression, and agitation. Music can create a positive atmosphere and contribute to a sense of calm and happiness.

Social Engagement: Group music sessions encourage social interaction and a sense of belonging. Participants can bond over shared musical experiences, growing connections and reducing the feeling of isolation.

Communication Aid: When verbal communication becomes challenging, music can serve as an alternative mode of expression. Singing, humming, or using rhythm can help individuals communicate their emotions and needs.

Personal Identity and Autonomy: Choosing and listening to preferred songs empowers individuals, allowing them to maintain a sense of personal identity and control over their environment.

Incorporating music into the lives of people living with Dementia, whether through professional programs or casual sing-alongs at home, the positive impact of music on the well-being of those with Dementia is undeniable. It's a powerful tool that can foster connection, joy, and a sense of purpose in their lives.

5 more benefits of music in Dementia.

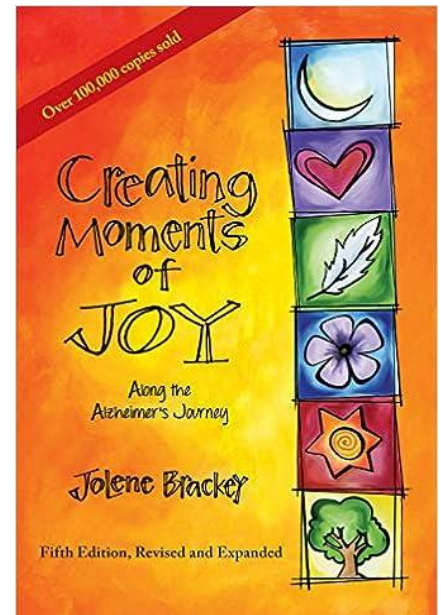
- * Pain Management
- * Enhancing Daily Routines
- * Improved Sleep Patterns
- * Caregiver – Client Bonding
- * Neurological Benefits

Recommended Reading

Creating Moments of Joy: A Guide for Families and Caregivers

Jolene Brackey has a vision: that we will soon look beyond the challenges of Alzheimer's disease to focus more of our energies on creating moments of joy. When people have short-term memory loss, their lives are made up of moments. We are not able to create perfectly wonderful days for people with dementia or Alzheimer's, but we can create perfectly wonderful moments, moments that put a smile on their faces and a twinkle in their eyes. Five minutes later, they will not remember what we did or said, but the feeling that we left them with will linger.

The new edition of *Creating Moments of Joy* is filled with more practical advice sprinkled with hope, encouragement, new stories, and generous helpings of humor.



In this volume, Brackey reveals that our greatest teacher is having cared for and loved someone with Alzheimer's and that often what we have most to learn about is ourselves.

This book is key for anyone looking to transform a hardship into a life-affirming experience for both the care recipient and the caregiver, ultimately making you a more effective caregiver as well as a happy one!" (Carlyne Fournier, producer of the short film Remember When)

Image and book description sourced from Amazon.com

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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

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,
Gold 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 or 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
Gold Coast.

Carer Support Groups

Alzheimer's Queensland Carer Support Groups provide information and support for 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 – 11:00am

Toowoomba – 07 4635 2966