



A publication of
Alzheimer's Queensland.

Dementia Matters

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Alzheimer's Queensland

Alzheimer's Queensland is Queensland's largest not-for-profit community organisation 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:

Statewide Information, Education and Support Services:

- 24 hour 7 days per week professionally staffed Advice Line (ph: 1800 639 331)
- Community education
- Library resources
- Interactive website at www.alzheimersonline.org
- Professional education
- Family carer education
- Support groups – face to face and telephone support groups
- Individualised support
- Fact sheets and specific information requests posted as required
- Dementia Matters newsletter

Alzheimer's Queensland

47 Tryon Street

Upper Mt Gravatt Qld 4122

Telephone: (07) 3422 3000

Fax: (07) 3343 2557

Email: helpline@alzheimersonline.org

Website: www.alzheimersonline.org

Dementia Advice line: 1800 639 331

Alzheimer's Queensland Three Good News Stories

1. Yoga Classes

Wellness programs are being implemented across our four centres at Gordon Park, Garden City, Ipswich and Toowoomba. Currently yoga classes are held 8.30am Fridays at Windsor. Yoga classes are open to carers and the general public. We also hold weekly free yoga classes for clients living with dementia. Yoga postures can be modified for people with existing injuries or frailties such as in a chair.

Our yoga practitioner, Lisa, teaches the relaxing practice of Restorative Yoga and Yoga Nidra, which is lying down meditation. It is the ultimate relaxation technique for releasing stress and tension held in your body. Coupled with ambient music, this is the perfect relaxation for tired carers and people on the go.

Single classes are \$10, and 10 classes can be purchased for just \$80 with payment received up front. Preferred method of payment is cash.

Please call 07 3857 2191 with any enquiries or if you would like to join us.

2. Education Presentations

This year Alzheimer's Queensland staff have provided free community education days in Cairns, Bundaberg, Kingaroy, Toowoomba, Warwick, Ipswich, Sunshine Coast, Brisbane North, Brisbane South, and the Gold Coast.

Similar free sessions are provided each year for service providers, family carers and the general public on a wide variety of dementia related topics including Sexuality and Intimacy, Understanding Dementia, Managing Behaviours, Tai Chi, and Communication and local services. These and other topics have also been presented as part of Alzheimer's Queensland paid education sessions.

We wish to thank everyone who attended our sessions, and hope to see you all at future sessions.

3. Support Services

Alzheimer's Queensland provides a range of community services to support the person living with dementia and their carers to maximise independence, to understand their individual issues of concern and to stay at home safely for as long as possible. These services include Commonwealth Home Support Program services e.g. respite for carers, Carer Support Groups, Home Care Packages, Residential Care, Allied Health services and education. Carers and their loved ones can transition through all levels of service provision and support as their needs change.

Access to these services requires registration through My Aged Care Phone 1800 200 242 or can be accessed privately. Please phone the Dementia Advice Line on 1800 639 331 if you would like to discuss this process or please visit our website <https://www.alzheimersonline.org/page/our-services/>

Travel

Early planning for short or long distance travel can assist with identification of potential problems for both the person living with dementia and their travel companion.

Consideration should be given to the person's current capacity for independence, their safety (e.g. physical, psychological, financial), preferences, routines and options as change can contribute to anxiety, insecurity or confusion.

Some signs that indicate travel may be difficult or unwise include: wanting to go home when out on short visits, disorientation or agitation in familiar environment, episodic or persistent behaviours such as aggression, paranoia, wandering in familiar environments, difficulty reassuring, redirecting or distracting, episodes of not recognizing caregivers, being overwhelmed such as teary and anxious in noisy or unfamiliar environments, difficulty managing incontinence, unstable medical conditions or frequent falls.



Driving

Private Occupational therapists can provide driving assessments which the GP will consider when deciding if a person has the capacity to continue driving. No longer having a driving licence is a cause of loss and grief for the person with dementia. Strategies to consider may be a gradual reduction in driving e.g. a partner takes over more of the role, using public transport, starting the conversation early, acknowledging the person's feelings while being assertive, not driving at peak hour, on freeways, at night, on unfamiliar routes or on long trips.

Identification of early signs of difficulty is important e.g. not following traffic rules such as traffic signs/pedestrian crossings/traffic lights/speed signs;

being slow in decision-making such as indicating/changing lanes/using roundabouts/crossing intersections; getting lost in or returning late from familiar places; frustration or anger when driving.

If over 75 years in Queensland a current, annual Medical Certificate for Motor Vehicle Driver must be carried with you. A fine can occur if you do not comply with any included conditions.

If your licence is surrendered you may be eligible for a Queensland Government Adult Proof of Age card to use as photo identification if needed. You may choose to acquire a Go Card, apply for a taxi subsidy or other subsidized community transport options, walk with friends/family, have written plans for outings (timetables, landmarks).

Tracking Devices

A person with dementia can be at risk of wandering and becoming lost in familiar or in new environments even if there is no history of wandering.

Before travelling overseas with a tracking device purchased in Australia, the person should check with the supplier in relation to accuracy, range, overseas networks and any extra fees or costs for

the person tracking on their phone.

Alzheimer's Queensland Occupational Therapists can provide individualised information in relation to tracking devices and other strategies to reduce risk when travelling (Phone 1800 639 331). Assistive Technology Australia (Phone 1300 452 679) or Independent Living Centres (Phone 1300 885 886) can also provide information.

Medication

The risk of adverse drug events, hospitalisation and even death increases for the person with dementia who mismanages their medication. Potential signs of risk may include missing doses, taking additional doses or doses that are too low or too high, taking medication at the wrong time, not identifying a medication if the brand name is different or the colour of the medication is different, using expired medication, not tolerating or reporting side effects, swallowing difficulty, refusing medication, forgetting to get prescriptions or running out of medication, miscommunication between patients and doctors seen privately or while in hospital e.g. different specialists and/or GPs not aware of medication changes, not informing doctors of their over the counter drugs that may interact with prescribed

medications, forgetting to take medication not packed in the blister pack e.g. short term antibiotics or variable dose medication such as warfarin.

To identify potential medication issues of concern the government funds reviews by accredited pharmacists - Home medication reviews in Community settings or Residential Medication Management Reviews in Residential Care. Both require a GP referral. Medschecks can be provided at pharmacists and an appointment may be needed. Blister Packs, consistent routines, electronic aids/alarms/dispensers, signs, magnifying glasses, locked boxes and/or monitoring by community services or family carers are among strategies that can be implemented to improve medication compliance and safety.

Falls Prevention

For those over 65 years of age 80% of hospital admissions related to injuries are due to falls. For people with dementia the risk may increase up to 8 times. To improve bone and muscle health and reduce the risk of falls adequate Vitamin D is strongly recommended particularly for those over 65yrs with low exposure to sun, or with darker skin or obese.

Other strategies to reduce falls risk may include regular enjoyable exercise (planned or incidental), assessment and use of aids (walking aids, grab rails, shower seats), appropriate footwear, decluttering, sleep hygiene to maintain adequate sleep routine, medication and medical reviews to eliminate reversible causes.

Vision aids may include ensuring adequate lighting (avoid spotlights, sudden changes in light levels but increase lighting at regular task areas, decrease stray light from street lights or corridors at night), avoiding busy patterns in flooring, caution when surfaces are unfamiliar, uneven, slippery, or shiny, use of colour contrast to aid vision processing (chairs, steps, floors but avoid change of tone on level surfaces which may be interpreted as a change in level), regular eye and ear tests (use prescribed aids).



Scams

The highest number of reported losses from scams are from the 55-64 group with males being affected more than females. The most common scams were related to investment, dating and romance, business, employment and investment. Information about other scams can be found in Targeting scams: report of the ACCC on scam activity 2017. Men were more likely to be involved in investment scams and women by dating and romance scams. Scammers more common method of contact was phone (40%) and emails (31%). The Scamwatch website offers the public a central point to report scams <https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/>. Scammers may include people pretending to be from a government agency, telecommunications provider, Australia Post, police or a bank.

The risk for the person living with dementia may increase where capacity for financial management and understanding of financial concepts is impaired and psychological and physical well-being is reduced particularly in the old-old person. A balance is needed between supporting independence and the need for protection from scams. Maintaining financial and health literacy and awareness and engaging in everyday decision-making may reduce risk.

Early signs of financial difficulty may include difficulty with balancing cheque books or monitoring change following payments (e.g. groceries), forgetting to open mail or pay accounts, unusual withdrawals or spending on new purchases. Early strategies that may reduce risk include cancelling or limiting credit on credit cards, not leaving bank account statements with account details in view, a trusted person checking monthly statements, registering on the Do Not Call register to reduce telemarketing (<https://www.donotcall.gov.au/> or Ph 1300 792 958), leaving a sign near the phone to not give callers personal details, No Junk Mail signs on a letter box, virus protection on computers, no online purchases, arranging direct debits or keeping a schedule for bill paying e.g. insurance, rates, electricity, water and using approved aged care providers who have police checks.

The treating health professional may make a decision in relation to the financial management capacity of the person with dementia and an occupational therapist's report may assist this decision-making. Future planning should include appointment of an Enduring Power of Attorney for financial, health and lifestyle that can be enacted when the person is no longer competent.



Emotional Well Being

Social and cognitive stimulation, maintaining skills and roles and independence can support emotional well-being. Social engagement often reduces for many reasons including embarrassment in relation to memory changes or changes to social correctness, loss of capacity to travel independently, friends and family lacking the understanding of changes related to dementia. Apathy or loss of motivation does not mean activities will not be enjoyed but support may be required from paid or family carers to ensure meaningful engagement and activities are accessed.

Diaries, electronic reminder prompts, supported transport, smaller group activities, phone contact, reminiscence, music, massage, yoga can be among potential aids. There is an increased risk of depression for both the person with dementia and their carer. Depression needs to be identified, diagnosed and behavioural strategies implemented prior to pharmacological approaches.



Pin on your notice board

Alzheimer's Queensland Services and Contacts

www.alzheimeronline.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 with dementia, families, friends and staff. The

Advice Line has a database of services in Queensland 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

Brisbane North, Brisbane South, Ipswich, Toowoomba

Seven days per week including:

- Personal Care; Domestic Assistance
- Social Support; Transport
- Allied Health Assessments
- Respite - Centre-based – day, overnight or emergency
- NDIS Services and Respite for Working Carers
- Home Maintenance

Multi-Service Respite Centres located at:

- Gordon Park; Mt Gravatt; Ipswich; Toowoomba

Residential Aged Care located at:

- Garden City Aged Care Services, Upper Mt Gravatt
- Rosalie Nursing Home
- Windsor Aged Care Services

Home Care Packages at:

- Brisbane South and Gold Coast
 - Logan River
 - Brisbane North and Sunshine Coast
 - West Moreton
 - Darling Downs
-

Call the Advice Line for vacancies for Home Care Packages and for Residential Aged Care both permanent and respite.

Carer Support Groups - 2018

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.

- **Toowoomba:** First Monday of month: 9:30am – 11:30am Park Motel, 88 Margaret Street, Toowoomba 2 July, 6 Aug, 3 Sept, 8 Oct, 5 Nov, 3 Dec.
- **Toowoomba Men Only:** 11:30-13:30 (Includes lunch) For Venue and Dates please contact 07 4635 2966
- **Ipswich:** Third Wednesday of every month: 10:00am – 12 noon Calvary Baptist Church, 83 Chermerside Road, Ipswich 18 July, 22 Aug, (NB: 4th week due to public holiday), 19 Sept, 17 Oct, 21 Nov, 19 Dec.
- **Windsor:** First Thursday of month: 10:00am – 12 noon. 26 Palmer Street, Windsor (Enter via Reception) 5 July, 2 Aug, 6 Sept, 4 Oct, 1 Nov, 6 Dec.
- **Redcliffe:** First Thursday of month: 2:00pm – 4:00pm Redcliffe Cultural Centre, Terry Walker Room, Downs Street Redcliffe, 5 July, 2 Aug, 6 Sept, 4 Oct, 1 Nov, 6 Dec.
- **Mt Gravatt:** First Friday of month: 10:00am – 12 noon 47 Tryon Street, Upper Mount Gravatt 6 July, 3 Aug, 7 Sept, 5 Oct, 2 Nov, 7 Dec.
- **Garden City Evening:** 52 Khandalla Street, Upper Mount Gravatt 6:00pm – 7:00pm 16 August, 21 November.
- **Gordon Park Evening:** 45 Shamrock Street, Gordon Park 6:00pm – 7:30pm 16 August, 18 October.
- **Qld-wide Telephone Support Group:** Last Wednesday of month: 1:00pm – 2:00pm AAQ organises telephone link-up at no cost to members 25 July, 29 Aug, 26 Sept, 31 Oct, 28 Nov.

**For further details or to register please contact
the Alzheimer's Queensland Dementia Advice Line 1800 639 331**

