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# WESTERN SYDNEY DEMENTIA HANDBOOK

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MAKING EVERY DAY COUNT

*When you or a loved one has received a diagnosis of dementia, it may feel overwhelming to seek out support. The WentWest Dementia Handbook aims to assist you in accessing the support you need from the time of diagnosis and beyond. This handbook does not give professional advice and is not intended to be a substitute for professional advice. However, we hope the information compiled in this guide will provide you with greater knowledge that will assist you in those important conversations you will need to have and be able to access the services you need in a timely manner.*

*If you are a health professional, consider providing this handbook to your patient who is having difficulties with their cognition or who has received a diagnosis of dementia. Pages 13-27 contain a directory of community services in our Western Sydney region to support patients with cognitive changes and dementia.*

*WentWest, the Western Sydney Primary Health Network, has recently launched Healthy Western Sydney, a service directory for those living in Western Sydney. You can access dementia services by visiting **[healthywesternsydney.org.au](https://healthywesternsydney.org.au)***

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# Dementia

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Dementia is a term to describe the group of symptoms (also known as a syndrome) that affect a person's cognitive (thinking) ability due to damage that has occurred to a person's brain. Dementia is not a part of normal ageing and can have wide-ranging impacts on a person. There are over 100 different diseases that may cause dementia. Typical forms of dementia include Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, dementia with Lewy bodies, and frontotemporal dementia. People can have more than one form of dementia.

## Mild Cognitive Impairment

Some people experience memory loss to a greater extent than is seen in normal ageing but do not have the other signs and symptoms of dementia. It is common for people with mild cognitive impairment to experience difficulties with recalling where they left items, following a conversation due to problems with memory, or remembering the names of people whom they have recently met. People with mild cognitive impairment may not go on to develop dementia.

## Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia where important chemicals are reduced, which affects the synapses (messages) between brain cells. People with Alzheimer's disease typically experience difficulties with memory, thinking and language.

## Vascular Dementia

Vascular dementia is a type of dementia that results from problems with blood flow to the brain. This may occur after someone has a large stroke or may be due to multiple small strokes or problems with the small blood vessels in the brain. People with vascular dementia typically experience problems with thinking, such as difficulties with paying attention, making decisions, and understanding problems.

## Dementia with Lewy Bodies

Dementia with Lewy bodies is associated with the build-up of tiny protein deposits in the brain. It is not yet understood if this build-up causes the symptoms of dementia. People with dementia with Lewy bodies experience changes in the way they move and walk, think, and function and can experience changes in their thinking, called delusions.

## Frontotemporal Dementia

Frontotemporal dementia describes a collection of diseases caused by nerve cell damage in the frontal and temporal areas of the brain. Frontotemporal dementia used to be called “Pick’s Disease”. Unlike other forms of dementia, such as Alzheimer’s disease, people with frontotemporal dementia often find their memory unaffected. Frontotemporal dementia typically affects a person’s behaviour, personality, language, and movement.

# Risk Factors and Prevention

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Risk factors for dementia vary from person to person. Some risk factors cannot be changed (non-modifiable), including a person’s age, family history, and genetic mutations/variations.

However, there are risk factors for dementia that can be modified (changed). Staying healthy throughout your life is essential, especially ensuring good heart and brain health. Consider the following strategies to help reduce your risk of dementia and to promote good brain health:

- Eat a healthy, varied diet that is rich in vegetables, fruits, and whole grains and low in saturated fats.
- Reduce your salt intake.
- Quit smoking (speak with your GP for support with this).
- Ensure that you maintain a healthy body weight.
- Limit how much alcohol you are consuming (the current Australian guidelines recommend no more than 10 standard drinks per week).
- Get plenty of physical activity (at least 30 minutes, five times per week).
- Ensure you have enough sleep.
- Have your hearing and vision checked regularly. If you are prescribed aids to assist with low hearing or vision, wear these routinely.
- Engage in mentally stimulating activities such as crosswords or sudoku puzzles, arts and crafts, playing a musical instrument, or learning a new skill.

# Early Signs and Symptoms

While people may experience different forms of dementia and may experience other symptoms, there are common early symptoms of dementia. It can be challenging to identify these as they can be subtle.

Early signs and symptoms include:

- Having difficulties with memory. Examples include losing items, forgetting recent events or challenges in retracing steps.
- Being confused about where you are. For example, becoming lost when driving.
- Having difficulties completing everyday tasks such as cooking.
- Becoming confused about the day of the week, the time of the day or losing track of time.
- Having difficulties with speaking or writing or understanding what others are saying. It may become difficult to follow conversations.
- Changes in mood or personality, including becoming withdrawn from social activities or work.
- Having difficulties with judgement, planning, problem-solving or decision-making.
- Experiencing problems with judging distances to objects or understanding what is being seen.

If you or a loved one are experiencing these symptoms, it is important that you speak with a GP. It is a good idea to bring a list of any changes you have observed, any medical problems or medications you are on to the appointment.

For further information, including translated information about changes to memory, visit the [‘Worried about your memory’ page on the Dementia Australia website.](#)

## Diagnosing Dementia

When you visit your GP to discuss your concerns about your cognition (thinking), your GP will need to discuss your medical history, including any past and current medical conditions, your current medications, and your family history. Your GP will want to understand your current concerns and symptoms. It may be helpful to have these written down before attending the appointment.

Your GP may also conduct a physical examination and arrange for some tests. The tests may include blood and urine tests, and brain scans such as a CT scan or MRI. There are medical conditions that can look like (mimic) dementia, and your GP will want to make sure that these are identified if they are the cause or contributing to your symptoms.

Your GP may conduct a short cognitive test to better understand how your symptoms affect you.

Your GP may also arrange for you to be reviewed by a specialist such as a geriatrician, neurologist or psychiatrist. You may be referred to a memory clinic at your local hospital.

If you or a loved one are worried about your cognition, asking your GP the following questions will help you process and understand the next steps:

- Does this need investigation?
- What tests will I need?
- What do the tests involve?
- Am I going to need a referral to a specialist?
- When will I receive my results?

It is common to feel overwhelmed when you are told that you or your loved one has dementia. Below are some questions that can help you to get the information you need.

- Do you know what type of dementia I have?
- Is there treatment for the dementia?
- What are the side effects of the medications I am prescribed?
- Are there other things I can do to improve my life now that I have dementia?
- What other symptoms might I experience as the dementia progresses?
- What support is available to me?
- If I have a problem related to my dementia, who can I call?
- If I need more care, what should I do?
- What should I consider in terms of planning for the future?

Dementia Australia supports people diagnosed with dementia or mild cognitive impairment and their families/ carers through six sessions with a skilled staff member to provide information and support.

For further information, call Dementia Australia on **1800 100 500** or visit the [‘post-diagnostic support’ page on the Dementia Australia website](#)

## What do I do if my loved one does not want their cognition (thinking) problems to be investigated?

Sometimes, people who have signs and symptoms of dementia do not want these investigated because they are fearful of the outcome. Other times, people may not understand what is occurring because of the changes to the brain caused by dementia. Consider encouraging an appointment with their GP to discuss a health problem that the person is comfortable discussing, such as a review of their cholesterol levels. Alternatively, encourage them to see their GP for a routine health assessment. Be calm and reassuring as this will help your loved one feel comfortable seeing their GP.

If you find that these strategies are not successful, you can contact the following organisations:

- The National Dementia Helpline on **1800 100 500** or via the [Dementia Australia website](#).
- Your local Aged Care Assessment Team through My Aged Care on **1800 200 422** or via the [My Aged Care website](#).

## What can I do to support my health and wellbeing after my diagnosis with dementia?

You may feel shocked or upset and need support to process the diagnosis. Speak with people you trust about these feelings. Dementia Australia can be contacted for further support on **1800 100 500**. It is important to remember that there are many things that you can do to maintain your independence and have a good quality of life.

Consider the following strategies:

- Keep up your social connections and engage in mentally stimulating activities that you enjoy such as reading, crosswords and word games.

- Eat a healthy diet.
- Ensure that you are getting enough rest and relaxation time.
- Make sure you are taking your medications correctly.
- Limit alcohol consumption. Alcohol may make your thinking difficulties worse and may mean that you are more likely to fall.
- Talk to your GP about the types of exercise that may be suitable for you, as it is essential that you stay active.

## How can I support my family member who has a diagnosis of dementia?

Your family member may be upset or shocked by their new diagnosis of dementia. You are an important source of support for your family member. Be open to listening, non-judgemental, and patient if your family member is having difficulties finding the right words or being repetitive.

People living with dementia can find it challenging to express emotions, understand what is said to them, and may not be able to communicate their thoughts. This can cause the person distress and may worry you.

Some techniques to consider include:

- Remaining calm and avoiding arguing or correcting words.
- Speaking slowly and clearly, keeping sentences short.
- Sitting with your family member rather than standing over them.
- Avoiding negative body language.
- Using touch, such as holding hands or a hug, if your family member is comfortable.
- Consider reminiscing with your family member. Looking at old photographs or listening to music can help.

You may need support to assist your family member. For further information, counselling, or support, call the Dementia Australia National Dementia Helpline on **1800 100 500** or visit the [Dementia Australia website](#).

# Dementia Planning Checklist

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If you have received a diagnosis of dementia, you must plan to ensure that your wishes are respected. The following checklist provides points which you may wish to consider:

- Have you ensured that all your important documents are up-to-date and accessible to a person you trust? These include life insurance policies, mortgage documentation, superannuation information, and other important documents. Review any life insurance and superannuation policies to ensure the nominated beneficiaries are correct.
- You may wish to make a list of any debts or regular payments you make to assist another person in managing your finances on your behalf.
- It may be helpful to consider adding an additional person's name to utilities so that someone else can access these accounts if needed.
- Do you have an Advance Care Directive, and have you appointed an Enduring Guardian and Enduring Power of Attorney? (See Advance Care Planning section of this handbook for assistance). Does your family know your wishes contained within the directive?
- Have you written a will, and has an executor been appointed?
- Compile a list of documents and where they are kept. Documents include birth certificate, marriage certificate, will, Enduring Power of Attorney, insurance policies, property deeds and real estate details, bank account details, superannuation papers, Medicare card, Veteran Affairs card, medical insurance details, concession cards and any pre-paid funeral investments.
- Social media considerations. If you wish someone to have access to your email or social media accounts later, they will need the account information. Because of privacy laws, they may be unable to access your account otherwise.





# Advance Care Planning

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Advance care planning is the process of discussing and planning for your future health care needs with your loved ones and with your health care team. It allows you to talk about your values, beliefs and preferences and be able to determine the treatments you wish to have. Advance care planning is an ongoing process as your wishes and preferences may change as your life changes or as you encounter different stages of your illness.

## Advance Care Directives

An Advance Care Directive is a document in which you state your values, wishes and preferences and specify the types of medical or health care treatments you wish or don't wish to have. Advance care planning means that your loved ones and your health care team can make decisions about the health care you receive based on your stated preferences if you cannot communicate these yourself. You can access an Advance Care Directive and a [guide on completing an Advance Care Directive from NSW Health](#) or contact your GP.

## Advance Care Planning Australia

Advance Care Planning Australia provides advice, information and support to people interested in advance care planning. You can call Advance Care Planning Australia's free National Advance Care Planning Support Service on **1300 208 583** for information and assistance. For further information, visit the [Advance Care Planning Australia website](#).

Sometimes, people cannot make decisions about their health care or other aspects of their lives. This may be due to an acute illness, such as delirium, or a chronic disease, such as dementia. People having trouble with their thinking or cognition may need additional support with decision-making. Your family member's GP can assist you if you have concerns about their decision-making.

If there is concern and you need to provide support for them to be able to make decisions or need to make decisions on their behalf, consider the following:

- Ensure that your family member is included in their care and health discussions.
- Does your family member have an Advance Care Directive, or have they provided verbal instructions regarding their wishes?

- If your family member still needs to provide instructions, consider what they would decide if they could make this decision. Consider their wishes, values and beliefs, including cultural and spiritual beliefs and practices.
- If it is unclear what decision your family member would have made, consider what is in their best interest. Ensure that you ask any questions you need to so that you can fully understand the situation and any benefits and risks of the available options. You should refuse health care likely to result in an outcome your family member would want to avoid.
- When GPs and other health professionals have been providing you with information, it can help to summarise what you think they mean. Start by saying, 'So if I've got that right, you mean.....' or 'So what you are telling me is that...'
- Be prepared to advocate for your family member if you feel that proposed medical treatments are not what they would have wanted or will impact too negatively on their quality of life.
- Speak with family or friends for support and guidance.
- Ask your family member's GP, specialist, or aged care provider for support.
- Sometimes, family members disagree with care directives or decisions. Families are not always close, and there may be general communication problems. If this happens to you, talk to your family member's GP or aged care provider for support.

For more information, visit [Dementia Australia's resources on Advance Care Planning](#).





# Additional Resources

## The Dementia Podcast: Starting Conversations

The Dementia Podcast provides the latest research, expertise, and currency of knowledge from the HammondCare Dementia Centre and guests. Joined by experts in community health and dementia care, the podcasts address the latest in thinking and practice issues that need to be considered in advanced dementia.

[Listen to the Dementia Podcast](#)

## TED Talk: How to Meaningfully Reconnect with Those who Have Dementia

By incorporating art and creativity into elder care settings, gerontologist Anne Basting helps families reconnect with loved ones with Dementia. In this moving talk, "How to meaningfully reconnect with those who have dementia", she shares how asking "beautiful questions" that don't have a right or wrong answer open up a shared path of discovery, imagination, and wonder. "If we can infuse creativity into care, caregivers can invite a partner into meaning-making," Basting says. "In that moment, care, often associated with loss, can become generative."

[Listen to the TED Talk here](#)

## TED Talk: A Mother and Son's Photographic Journey Through Dementia

Artist Tony Luciani was testing out a new camera when his 91-year-old mother, Elia, snuck into the background of his photos. The spontaneous images that resulted sparked a year-long collaboration, with Luciani documenting his mom's life and spirit as she lived with Dementia. In this touching talk, "A mother and son's photography journey through dementia," Luciana shares the stories behind some of their favourite shots, capturing the joy and grief of caring for an aging parent.

[Listen to the TED Talk here](#)

## Books

**Being Mortal** by Atul Gawande.

**The 36 Hour Day** by Nancy Mace and Peter Rabins.

**Chicken soup for the soul: living with Alzheimer's and other dementias: 101 stories of caregiving, coping, and compassion** by Amy Newmark and Angela Timashenka Geiger.

# Support for People Living with Dementia and their Families

## Dementia Australia: Living with Dementia Program

This program provides an overview of dementia and how to proceed after a diagnosis. It covers coping with change, relationships and communication, planning for the future and staying healthy.

The program is suitable for people living with dementia, their family carers and family members. It is delivered interactively and you will be encouraged to share your experiences alongside other participants, giving you the opportunity to develop new support networks.

Run by Dementia Australia facilitators, who have specialist dementia knowledge, skills and experience, you will gain knowledge in:

- Dementia and related issues, such as planning for the future.
- Strategies for living positively with dementia, including support.
- The management, reduction and prevention of behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia.

For further information, contact Dementia Australia.

Phone: **1800 100 500**

[Visit the Living with Dementia webpage on the Dementia Australia website](#)

## Dementia Australia: Counselling Support

If you have dementia or you're caring for someone living with dementia, it's normal to experience a range of good and bad feelings. You're not alone. Dementia Australia offers free, confidential, professional counselling for individuals, families, couples and professional carers at all stages of a dementia journey.

[For more information visit the Counselling support webpage on the Dementia Australia website](#)

## Forward with Dementia

Forward with dementia is a website to guide you in your first year after diagnosis with dementia. You will find up-to-date information from clinicians and researchers as well as practical suggestions and stories from people living with dementia to help you live positively with Dementia.

[For more information visit the Forward with Dementia website](#)

## Dementia Support Australia

Dementia Support Australia delivers support that is tailored to your needs. Their team will help determine the most appropriate service, which can change over time. They have a dedicated helpline 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Trained dementia consultants work with you, so you receive the right support at the right time.

For more information, contact Dementia Support Australia.

Phone: **1800 699 799**

[Visit the Dementia Support Australia website](#)

## The Western Sydney Local Health District Dementia Advisory Service

The Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD) Dementia Advisory Service supports carers of people with dementia or mild cognitive impairment through dementia cafes, carer support groups, information and educational sessions.

For more information, please contact a Dementia Advisor, by phone at **8890 3333** or email [WSLHD-DAS@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:WSLHD-DAS@health.nsw.gov.au).

Carers and families interested in accessing the services must contact My Aged Care and discuss being referred to the WSLHD Dementia Advisory Service.

[Visit the My Aged Care website](#)

## Memory Lane Café

Memory Lane Café is a place where you can meet with others who can provide friendship and support while enjoying entertainment and light refreshments. You will also have the opportunity to chat with trained staff and volunteers from Dementia Australia.

This is suitable for people living with a diagnosis of dementia, their family and friends.

For more information and bookings, call **0482 186 517** or email [NSW.memorylanecafe@dementia.org.au](mailto:NSW.memorylanecafe@dementia.org.au).

## Anglicare at Home Dementia Advisory Service

Anglicare's Dementia Advisory Service provides information, education, enabling strategies and support to improve the wellbeing of people living with dementia and their support persons. Support is provided through home visits, phone sessions and support and education groups for both the person with dementia and the family.

Anyone can make referrals by contacting Anglicare at Home Dementia Advisory Service.

Phone: **1300 111 278**

[Visit the Anglicare at Home website](#)

## Dementia Alliance International

Dementia Alliance International is a registered non-profit organisation whose membership is exclusively for people with a medically confirmed diagnosis of any type of dementia from all around the world.

Dementia Alliance International seeks to represent, support, and educate others living with dementia and the wider dementia community. They strive to provide a unified voice of strength, advocacy and support for our rights, individual autonomy and improved quality of life.

[For more information visit the Dementia Alliance International website](#)

## Care Finder

Care Finder assists vulnerable older people who cannot arrange services without intensive support and do not have family members or friends who can help. Care Finder services in Western Sydney are fully funded through WentWest, the Western Sydney Primary Health Network.

Care finders can assist their clients with the following:

- Talking to My Aged Care on their behalf and arranging an assessment.
- Helping them understand what aged care services are available.
- Accessing services for the first time and changing or finding new services and supports.
- Attending and providing support at the assessment.
- Finding and short-listing aged care providers in their area.

- Completing forms and understanding aged care service agreements.
- Ensuring the client is okay once they start engaging in a service.
- Solve other challenges and connect the community to support, such as health, mental health, housing and homelessness, drug and alcohol services, and community groups.

If a person is eligible for Care Finder services, a Care Finder organisation will connect them with a Care Finder. Those calling on behalf of someone who needs to access a Care Finder must ensure consent from the person to provide their information to the Care Finder organisation.

See the information below about how to access Care Finder:

Organisation	Target Population	Contact Details
<b>Aspire4Life</b>	People living in the Blacktown and The Hills LGAs	P: <b>1300 012 056</b> E: <a href="mailto:carefinder@aspire4life.com.au">carefinder@aspire4life.com.au</a> W: <a href="http://aspire4life.com.au">aspire4life.com.au</a>
<b>Your Side Australia</b>	People living in the Cumberland and Parramatta LGAs	P: <b>8405 4484</b> E: <a href="mailto:carefinder@yourside.org.au">carefinder@yourside.org.au</a> W: <a href="http://yourside.org.au">yourside.org.au</a>
<b>HammondCare</b>	Older people experiencing homelessness or risk of homelessness	P: <b>1800 776 112</b> E: <a href="mailto:HCAHCareNavigationService@hammond.com.au">HCAHCareNavigationService@hammond.com.au</a> W: <a href="http://hammond.com.au">hammond.com.au</a>
<b>Wesley Mission: Wesley Community Services</b>	Older people experiencing homelessness or risk of homelessness	P: <b>9263 5177</b> E: <a href="mailto:carefinders@wesleymission.org.au">carefinders@wesleymission.org.au</a> W: <a href="http://wesleymission.org.au">wesleymission.org.au</a>



## Dementia Friendly Environments

An enabling environment will encourage a person with dementia to lead as full and independent a life as possible. Many simple modifications can be made to a home, residential aged care facility, hospital, public building or landscaping, as well as architectural design changes.

You can use this resource to explore different settings, learn more about fundamental design principles in each building or garden area, and download helpful information and resources.

**For more information visit the [Dementia Enabling Environments website](#)**

## Driving and Dementia

Once a person receives a diagnosis of dementia, it does not mean they have to give up driving straight away. All drivers are required by law to tell their local licensing authority of any medical condition that might affect their ability to drive safely.

**For more information visit the ['Dementia and Driving' webpage on the Dementia Australia website](#)**

## Falls Prevention

Unfortunately, people living with dementia are more at risk of falls. This risk can be reduced by receiving support from physiotherapists, exercise physiologists and occupational therapists.

The Western Sydney Primary Health Network, has commissioned New Edge Performance to run the Still Standing program. The program addresses the burden of fall-related injuries for seniors in Western Sydney, offering medium-intensity group exercises and falls education programs delivered by an accredited Exercise Physiologist.

**For further information about the program, visit the [New Edge Performance website](#)**



# Medication Safety

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People who are living with dementia can be more at risk of problems with medications. This may be because you have challenges remembering the instructions given to you by your GP or pharmacist or whether you have taken your medications. It is a good idea to keep a list of your medications handy and make a note of when you are due to take these and how they need to be taken.

Other strategies you can use include:

- Maintaining a routine with your medication times each day to make it less confusing.
- If you have difficulties swallowing your medications, talking to your GP or pharmacist about alternative options.

If you are finding your medication regime complicated or forgetting to take your medications, talk to your GP or pharmacist about the options to assist you. These include:

## Blister Packs

Your pharmacist can pack your medications into a weekly blister pack to ensure that you take your medications at the right time and at the correct dose. Blister packs make it easy to see if you have taken your medications.

Talk to your pharmacist about whether a blister pack may assist you, especially if you take multiple medications a day, have a complicated medication regime, or are inclined to forget or be unsure about your medication doses. Make sure you ask about any fees associated with this service.

## Home Medicines Review

A Home Medicines Review involves a pharmacist reviewing your medications and making sure that they are used effectively, that you are not experiencing unwanted side effects, and that there are no other concerns with your medications. Talk to your GP about a Home Medicines Review. Your GP will determine if you require a review and arrange a referral to a community pharmacist or a pharmacist of your choice.

## Return Unwanted Medicines Program

The Return Unwanted Medicines (RUM) Program allows you to return unwanted and out-of-date medicines to your local pharmacy for safe disposal.

[For more information visit the Return Unwanted Medicines website](#)

# Accessing Care and Support Services

## National Disability Scheme

The National Disability Scheme (NDIS) supports people aged between 7 and 65 years who have a disability. It aims to increase independence and improve quality of life. For enquiries, call **1800 800 110** or email [enquiries@ndis.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@ndis.gov.au)

For further information visit the [NDIS website](#)

## My Aged Care

My Aged Care is run by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care to assist people aged 65 years and older or over 50 years for First Nations people accessing aged care services, including residential aged care and in-home care.

My Aged Care provides information on the types of care available, the eligibility and assessment process, and the costs associated with the services you require.

You may be eligible for in-home support through the Commonwealth Home Support Program or the Home Care Packages Scheme. You may be able to receive assistance with housework, personal care, meals and food preparation, transport, shopping, allied health, social support and planned respite.

You will need to have a face-to-face assessment to assess your eligibility.

For further information or to arrange an assessment, please contact My Aged Care.

Phone: **1800 200 422**

Visit the [My Aged Care website](#) for more information

## Aged Care Advocacy Services

The Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN) offers free, independent and confidential support and information to older people seeking or already using Australian Government-funded aged care services across the country, along with their families and carers.

For support, contact OPAN directly.

Phone: **1800 700 600**

Visit the [Older Persons Advocacy Network website](#)

# Carer Support

## Carers Gateway

Carers Gateway is an Australian Government program providing support and services to carers. Carer Gateway also provides access to emergency respite if a carer becomes ill or injured.

Phone: **1800 422 737**

The phone line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

For further information visit the  
Carer Gateway website

## Carers NSW

Carers NSW is a state-based service providing information, education and training, resources and referrals for carers living in NSW.

Phone: **9380 4744**

Email: [contact@carersnsw.org.au](mailto:contact@carersnsw.org.au).

For further information visit the  
Carers NSW website

## Gather My Crew

Gather My Crew assists people experiencing a crisis by coordinating assistance from family and other support people via an app.

For further information visit the  
Gather my Crew website



# Dementia Support for First Nations People

## Caring for Spirit

Caring for Spirit aims to provide a centralised online source of appropriate resources and information related to dementia and aged care for First Nations communities.

Phone: **9399 1732**

[Visit the Caring for Spirit website](#)

## 13YARN

A 24-hour-a-day, seven-days-a-week phone line to support First Nations people going through a hard time. Individuals can connect to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Crisis Supporter to have a yarn if they are feeling worried.

Phone: **13 92 76**

[Visit the 13 YARN website](#)

## National Aboriginal Controlled Health Organisations

National Aboriginal Controlled Health Organisations has 144 member organisations providing primary care across Australia. Greater Western Aboriginal Health is located at 2 Palmerston Road, Mount Druitt.

Phone: **9836 7300**

[Visit the Greater Western Aboriginal Health Service website](#)

## Dementia Australia

Dementia Australia has several resources including help sheets and videos available to assist First Nations people understand their diagnosis. Dementia Australia was founded by carers more than 40 years ago and is the national peak body for people impacted by dementia in Australia.

[Visit the resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on the Dementia Australia website](#)

## The First Peoples Disability Network

The First Peoples Disability (FPDN) is a national peak organisation advocating for First Nations people living with a disability. They are governed by First Nations people with lived experience of disability. FPDN aim to be a strong voice for First Nations people, their families and community. FPDN do this using a range of strategies, including providing advice to the government, and educating the government and non-government sectors about how to meet the unmet needs of First Nations people with disability.

[For more information visit the First Peoples Disability Network website](#)

## Let's CHAT Dementia

The Let's CHAT (Community Health Approaches To) Dementia in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities is a research project working with 12 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs) around Australia to improve the detection of cognitive impairment and dementia, as well as dementia care and brain health in the primary care context.

This is a co-design project in the area of First Nations health and aged care which aims to enhance the overall health outcomes and quality of life of those with cognitive impairment.

[For more information and to access the resources available visit the Let's Chat Dementia website](#)

# Dementia Support for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities

## Dementia Australia

Dementia Australia offers resources about dementia which have been translated into 38 languages including Arabic, German, Greek, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Thai, Ukrainian and Vietnamese.

To access the translated resources, visit the 'Information in other languages' webpage

## Dementia Care Navigator

The Dementia Care Navigator Program supports people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities living with dementia, their families and carers to navigate the health and aged care service sectors and connect with services most suitable for their circumstances.

For more information visit the Dementia Care Navigator website

## NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors

Refugees have often experienced multiple levels of trauma, which impact all areas of their lives and communities. In recognition of this, the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) provides a holistic range of services, which include counselling, group work and other support.

For further information, contact STARTTS.

Phone: 9646 6700

Visit the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors website

## SydWest Multicultural Services

SydWest Multicultural Services provides a range of services for refugees and migrants in Western Sydney.

Phone: 9621 6633

For further information visit the SydWest Multicultural Services website

## Jesuit Refugee Services

Jesuit Refugee Services supports people seeking asylum, refugees, and migrants with emergency assistance, food bank support, specialist casework, community development activities, employment assistance, and hosting legal clinics.

Phone: 9098 9336

For more information visit the Jesuit Refugee Services website

## Advance Care Planning Australia

For access to translated resources about advance care planning for people and their families.

**For more information visit the [Advance Care Planning Australia webpage](#)**

## Moving Pictures

Access to accurate information about dementia is crucial. Family carers of people living with dementia have been found to prefer using digital technologies (internet, mass media, smartphones) to access information on dementia management and care.

The Moving Pictures Genie resource currently contains dementia information in more than 67 languages and is intended to be a 'live' resource that can be extended as new resources emerge or are suggested by visitors to the page.

**For more information visit the [Moving Pictures website](#)**

## Translating and Interpreting Service

The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) provides interpreting services to people who do not speak English. These services enable non-English speakers to access services and information in Australia independently. TIS National contracts more than 2600 interpreters across Australia in more than 150 different languages. Non-English speakers can access immediate telephone interpreters through TIS National by calling **131 450**.

**For more information visit the [Translating and Interpreting Service website](#)**



# Practical Support in Western Sydney

## MEAL DELIVERY

### Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels provides affordable pre-made meals to the local community. For further information or to find your local provider, contact Meals on Wheels.

Phone: **1300 679 669**

[Visit the Meals on Wheels website](#)

### Tender Loving Cuisine

Tender Loving Cuisine delivers frozen meals to your door. Seniors' discounts are available. For more information, contact Tender Loving Cuisine.

Phone: **1800 801 200**

Email: [clientservices@tlcmeals.com.au](mailto:clientservices@tlcmeals.com.au)

[Visit the Tender Loving Cuisine website](#)

### Care Food Co

Care Food Co provides home-delivered texture-modified food in NSW. For more information, contact Care Food Co directly.

Phone: **1300 251 890**

Email: [info@carefoodco.com.au](mailto:info@carefoodco.com.au)

[Visit the Care Food Co website](#)

### Lite n' Easy

Lite n' Easy provides home-delivered food in NSW. Additional information including pricing is available on the website.

Phone: **13 15 12**

[Visit the Lite n' Easy website](#)



## CRISIS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

### Anglicare

Anglicare can provide practical assistance with food and financial support.

Phone: **8624 8600**

[Visit the Anglicare website](#)

### Salvation Army

The Salvation Army can provide support with financial hardship and housing difficulties.

Phone: **13 72 58**

[Visit the Salvation Army Australia website](#)

### Hills Community Aid

Hills Community Aid provides a range of services for people experiencing financial hardship.

Phone: **9639 8630**

[Visit the Hills Community Aid website](#)

### St Vincent de Paul Society

St Vincent de Paul provides practical assistance, including financial aid and support with access to food.

Phone: **13 18 12**

[Visit the St Vincent de Paul Society website](#)

### Wesley Mission

Wesley Mission provides support with accommodation services and housing.

[Visit the Wesley Mission website](#)

### No Interest Loans Scheme

Loans can be used to purchase household appliances, including medical equipment and support items, for up to \$2000. For further information, contact Good Shepherd.

Phone: **13 64 57**

[Visit the No Interest Loans Scheme provider page on the Service NSW website](#)

### Centrelink

Carer Allowance is an income supplement for carers who are providing daily care for a person with a disability. Carer Payment is available to people who provide significant care for someone with a disability and have no other income. For more information, contact Services Australia.

Phone: **13 27 17**

[Visit the Caring for someone resource on the Services Australia website](#)

## TRANSPORT SERVICES

### Community Wheels

Community Wheels provides transport to medical appointments, hospital visits, shopping centres and social outings for people who are elderly, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, transport-disadvantaged residents, culturally diverse individuals, younger people with disabilities, and their carers living in the Parramatta and Cumberland local government areas. For further information, contact Community Wheels.

Phone: **8868 1400**

[Visit the Community Wheels website](#)

### Active Care Network

Active Care Network provides transport to medical appointments, shopping centres and social outings for people living in the Blacktown local government area who have difficulties accessing transport due to a disability, mobility or health issues; have language challenges that impact access to transport; have a lack of access to public or private transport; are elderly; do not have a driver's licence or face other significant barriers to accessing transport.

Phone: **4722 3083**

[Visit the Active Care Network website](#)

### Hills Community Care

Hills Community Care helps with your transport needs to attend your medical appointments and visitation to aged care facilities, nursing homes, hospitals and cemeteries to visit loved ones. Hills Community Care also runs weekly shopping trips and outings. A driver or volunteer driver will pick you up and take you home again.

Phone: **9761 7604**

[Visit the Community Transport Hills Community Care website](#)

### Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme

The Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme supports NSW residents who cannot use public transport due to severe and permanent disability. If eligible, you could receive a subsidy of 50 per cent for taxi fares and pay only the remaining fare.

Phone: **13 77 88**

[Visit the Services NSW website](#)

### Mobility Parking Scheme (MPS)

This service provides parking concessions to people with mobility disability. If you are eligible, you will be issued a licence-style card called an MPS permit, including a photo and other security features.

Phone: **13 77 88**

[Visit the Mobility Parking Scheme page on the Services NSW website](#)

## OTHER SUPPORT

### NSW Spectacles Program

The NSW Spectacles Program funds free glasses and optical aids to financially disadvantaged residents of NSW.

Phone: **1300 847 466**

Email: [info@visionaustralia.org](mailto:info@visionaustralia.org)

[Visit the Vision Australia website](#)

### Hearing Services Program

The Hearing Services Program ensures eligible Australians with hearing loss can access subsidised hearing services and devices.

Phone: **1800 500 726**

[Visit the Hearing Services Program website](#)

### Continence Aids Payment Scheme

The Continence Aids Payment Scheme (CAPS) is an Australian Government scheme that provides a payment to assist eligible people with permanent and severe incontinence to meet some of the cost of their continence products.

Phone: **1800 239 309**

[Visit the Continence Aids Payment Scheme website](#)



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WentWest the Western Sydney  
Primary Health Network