

MEDIA STATEMENT

04 April, 2019

Open garden embraces Dementia Friendly Communities initiative

The Margaret River Organic Garden (MROG) has thrown its support behind the town's Dementia Friendly Communities initiative, with organisers encouraging those living with dementia and their carers to become actively involved with the garden by volunteering.

MROG Secretary Sharyn Carroll said the 30-year-old unique garden was a place of tranquillity and connectivity that supported people living with dementia to remain active in the community.

"People with dementia deserve to participate in everyday life, which is why the MROG embraced the Dementia Friendly Communities initiative that was introduced into Margaret River five months ago," Sharyn said.

Sharyn said there were several ways those living with dementia and their carers could use the open space throughout the week.

"If people living with dementia and their carers have a few hours spare on a Wednesday afternoon we would love some more volunteers," she said.

"Otherwise we offer coffee and cake on Saturday mornings and the garden is open to the public seven days a week.

"We want the community to know that the Organic Garden is a very welcoming environment for people living with dementia and their carers."

CEO Rhonda Parker said Alzheimer's WA was delighted MROG had embraced the initiative that empowers communities with the knowledge on how best to support and involve people living with dementia.

"The objective from the start for the Dementia Friendly Communities project was to reduce the stigma surrounding dementia and develop a community that enables and supports people living with dementia to remain active in the community rather than be confined within the four walls of their home," Ms Parker said.

"I would like to thank the Margaret River Organic Garden for being so inclusive.

"Through the Dementia Friendly Communities project, participating community members and businesses are educated on the background of dementia, how to recognise symptoms, and how to communicate with a person living with dementia.

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“We know in life small things make the world of difference and the volunteers at the MROG are living proof of that.”

The Margaret River Dementia Friendly Communities project is supported by the WA State Government through the WA Country Health Service, along with Margaret River Rotary and Lions.

Two free information community information session on Dementia Friendly Communities will be held in Margaret River on 13 and 14 May, 2019.

ENDS

Statistics

- There are currently 41,149 people living with dementia in Western Australia.
- This figure is predicted to increase dramatically to over 84,000 people in less than twenty years and almost 150,000 people by 2056¹.
- Dementia is the leading cause of death of women in Australia, and the second leading cause of death of all Australians². There is no cure.

Sources

¹ NATSEM calculations using Australian Bureau of Statistics population projections

² Australian Bureau of Statistics

– Ends –

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Notes to media:

Stories in the media about dementia may prompt concerns or cause distress for audiences and readers. When writing or talking about dementia, please encourage your audience/readers to call our Customer Support line on 1300 66 77 88, a free call, telephone information and support service.

What is appropriate language for talking about dementia and why we need it?

The words used to talk about dementia can have a significant impact on how people with dementia are viewed and treated in our community. In particular, please avoid the use of the word sufferer or suffering – the preferred language is a person/people living with dementia. Please read the [Dementia Language Guidelines](#) that have been developed by people living with dementia and carers.

About Alzheimer's WA

As the dementia experts Alzheimer's WA works with those living with dementia and the organisations that care and support them, to have the greatest beneficial impact on their dementia journey.

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Our client services, advocacy work, training and consultancy programs are based on a philosophy of understanding the lived experience of dementia. We are guided by people living with dementia and our approach views dementia as a holistic experience for the person rather than just a biological illness. Call our Customer Support line on 1300 66 77 88 or visit www.alzheimerswa.org.au.