

MILESTONES

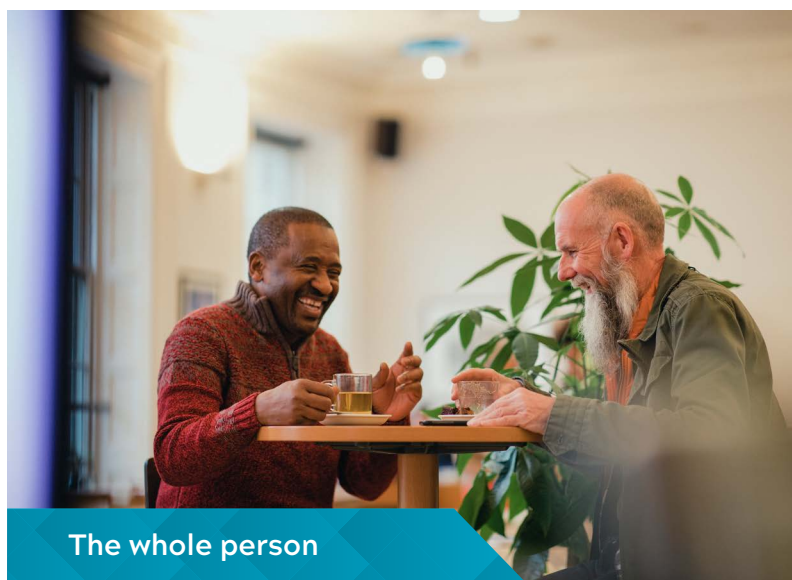
AUTUMN 2020, ISSUE 25



Maintaining connections in uncertain times



Carer Gateway








The whole person

alzheimer'swa
the dementia experts



Contents

CEO Welcome.....	1	Diet to reduce risk of dementia	8
Alzheimer's WA welcomes new executive and Board members	2	Stay at home or go into care.....	10
David and Sue's experience with the Adjusting to Change program.....	3	The whole person - challenging outdated views of dementia	12
Alzheimer's WA response to COVID-19	4	Assistive Technology - a bright future for digital health in dementia care	14
Carer Gateway - a new service for carers ...	5	Research report	15
Maintaining connections in uncertain times.....	6	Courses and workshops	16

 facebook.com/alzheimerswa
 twitter.com/alzheimerswa
 instagram.com/alzheimers_wa
 linkedin.com/company/alzheimers-wa
 youtube.com/alzheimersauswa

Alzheimer's WA
55 Walters Drive, Osborne Park WA 6017
PO Box 1509, Subiaco WA 6904
P: (08) 9388 2800 F: (08) 9388 2739

Advertising Enquiries
For advertising enquiries please email
moira.mckechnie@alzheimerswa.org.au.

CEO Welcome



Welcome. I am delighted to bring you this edition of *Milestones*, a biannual magazine for Alzheimer's WA members.

When the opportunity arose to join Alzheimer's WA as Chief Executive Officer I was honoured. I have worked in the aged care sector for a number of years, and in that time I have experienced the extraordinary support and care that Alzheimer's WA provides to people with dementia. I have always admired, and continue to admire, the way the organisation provides services centred on the individual.

Since joining Alzheimer's WA my focus has been on strengthening our existing services and looking at new and innovative ways we can support our clients. I am grateful for the support of a dedicated team. Their motivation and enthusiasm is the foundation from which we achieve our purpose.

Not that these last few months have been without their challenges. COVID-19 (coronavirus) has made a significant impact on the way we deliver services. Our main goal has been the safety of clients and staff while continuing to provide services, and this has proven challenging at times. During this time of uncertainty, I have really appreciated the resilience and resourcefulness of our team members, clients, carers, students and partners in embracing the changes we have made.

In this edition of *Milestones* read about the importance of remaining socially connected in these times of physical distancing, and how to discuss a move to residential care with a family member. Learn more about how we have adapted our services during COVID-19, including a move to online delivery of our courses and workshops. Clients David and Sue share their experience of attending the Adjusting to Change program via Zoom. We explain new services available to carers through Carers Gateway.

In closing, I want to thank you for your continued support of Alzheimer's WA as we work towards a future where supporting people with dementia as individuals is the norm, not just the benchmark.

Stay safe and well.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'M' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.

Maria Davison
Chief Executive Officer

Alzheimer's WA welcomes new executive and Board members

In January 2020 Alzheimer's WA welcomed new Chief Executive Officer Maria Davison. Ms Davison is committed to making a difference in the community. She began her career as a psychologist specialising in aged care and organisations before a move to customer services and operations management lead her into executive manager roles.

Ms Davison has held a number of executive roles in both the aged care and disability sectors specialising in transformation, working with organisations moving into deregulated markets to ensure that positive experiences for clients are achieved by bringing together an engaged workforce and sound business processes. Her passion for the not-for-profit sector, and ensuring their continued place in our communities remains strong, has been a constant through her career.

Ms Davison holds a BA Psych, Bpsych, MAPS, GAIC and is a member of the Australian Psychological Society, Australian Institute of Company Directors, and INSEAD.

More recently, a new General Manager Services was appointed. Greg Massam leads the team that delivers all the different services to Alzheimer's WA clients. Mr Massam has held a number senior executive roles in the pharmaceutical, health services and aged care industries. Mr Massam has a passion for improving both the quality of service delivery and commercial operational performance.

In addition to the appointment of Ms Davison, two new Board members were appointed at the 2019 Annual General Meeting in November, Ms Mellisa Teede and Ms Ella Dachs.

Both appointees have a wealth of experience that they bring to the Alzheimer's WA Board which will be critical



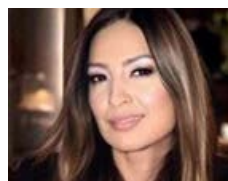
Ms Maria Davison
CEO



Greg Massam
GM Services



Ms Mellisa Teede
Director



Ms Ella Dachs
Director

to the organisations growth to meet the increasing demand for services.

Ms Teede is currently Chief Executive Officer of the South West Development Commission. Ms Teede has significant high-level strategy and policy skills as well as experience in the education and training sector, and in the regional economic and social development sector.

Ms Dachs is the Principal of a strategic consulting firm and has over 20 years international experience specialising in strategic change, business transformation and branding/marketing across multiple industries.

The Alzheimer's WA Board comprises nine members including Mr Craig Masarei, Mr Warren Harding, Mr Matthew Budge, Mrs Jenny Rogers, Dr Sean Maher, Mr Arnold Stroobach, Ms Mellisa Teede, Ms Ella Dachs and Ms Maria Davison.

David and Sue's experience with the Adjusting to Change program

David and Sue recently completed our Adjusting to Change program, attending three in-person sessions before the onset of coronavirus meant the final two sessions were completed via Zoom. Below, David shares why they decided to join the program, and how the online format worked for them.

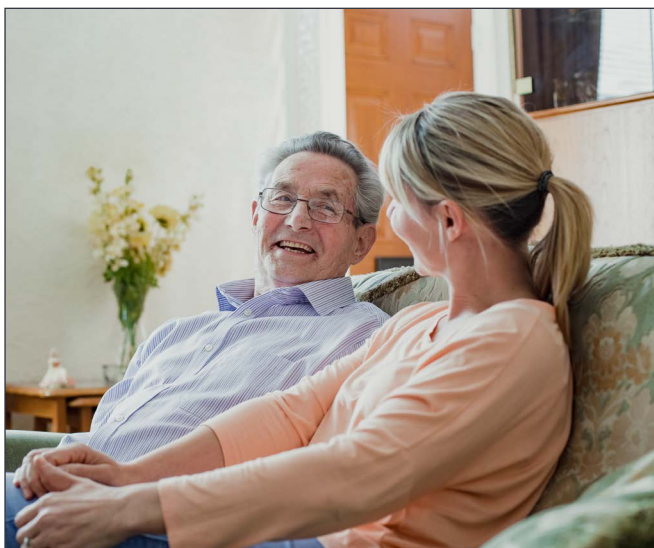
“When we realised that some memory lapses can have consequences and might need to be anticipated and planned for I contacted Alzheimer's WA and asked for some advice. I'd expected to be directed to print material or a YouTube video and was quite surprised to get invited to a meeting with Dyann.

“She not only provided some wise counsel and information but recommended I talk with Sue about attending the Adjusting to Change program - which was just what we were looking for. It is full of information about matters relevant now and probably in the future and opened our eyes to many strategies and aids to maintain a good quality of life.

“Having just set up Zoom to play chess with my grandson Oliver during lockdown, we were



all set to enjoy this new technology (to us) and I think some of the others. While it is not quite as personal as a face to face meeting, the online version achieved a lot and was well worthwhile attending. Alzheimer's WA has introduced us to lots of new ideas and resources and connected both of us to others sharing this journey. Many thanks.”



Home Care Packages

**By your side on your
dementia journey**

If you are living with dementia, Alzheimer's WA can provide you with specialised dementia home care services, tailored to meet your individual needs.

Call 1300 66 77 88 | alheimerswa.org.au/home-care

alzheimer'swa
the dementia experts

Alzheimer's WA response to COVID-19

Alzheimer's WA is taking a proactive and cautious approach to COVID-19 (coronavirus) as our clients and carers may be in the high-risk category for the virus. Our priority is to protect our staff, our clients and their families. We are constantly monitoring the situation and taking advice from the Department of Health.

Changes to our services

Our focus is on continuing to support our clients and carers. We have a commitment to offer an alternative service for any services we are unable to run at this time.

We have enacted a series of protocols to minimise the risk to our staff and clients while continuing to deliver meaningful individual one-to-one support in our clients' homes.

Where clients do not wish to have services within the home we have introduced new services such as picking up shopping and wellness calls. We will continue to adapt our services to support our clients for as long as necessary.

Resources to support people with dementia

We have created information sheets for families supporting a person living with dementia during this time.

The information sheets cover:

- » The impact of coronavirus and self isolation on a person with dementia
- » Tips for staying connected with friends and family
- » How to cope with carer stress
- » Tips for activities you can do in the home
- » Online activities for a person with dementia

Find out more

Visit our dedicated webpage alzheimerswa.org.au/covid-19 to find out more about changes to our services, or to download our resources for families.

The impact of COVID-19 on the community is profound but this is increased for people living with dementia. It is vital we continue to support people living with dementia and their carers.

Please call us on 1300 66 77 88 to discuss how we can support you and your family.



Overnight respite services

Alzheimer's WA provides short stay respite services at dementia specialist households.

This service provides an opportunity for carers to have a break while the person living with dementia enjoys a few days in our dementia specialist care houses. Each of our houses feature an enabling design, as well as a wide range of activities tailored to the individual.

Call us on 1300 66 77 88 | alzheimerswa.org.au

alzheimer'swa
the dementia experts

Carer Gateway - a new service for carers

In April the Australian Government launched Carer Gateway, a new service providing practical supports for carers. In Western Australia services will be managed by Carers WA. Alzheimer's WA is working closely with Carers WA to ensure support services are available to carers of people living with dementia.

The new Carer Gateway services include:

- » Carer support planning
- » In-person peer support
- » In-person counselling
- » Carer-directed packages
- » Emergency respite care

If you are a carer, contact Carer Gateway to find out what types of services and supports you may be eligible for. Services are free for anyone looking after a family member or a friend who has a disability, a medical condition, mental illness or someone who is frail due to age. This includes all people living with dementia.

You can find out more about the Carer Gateway online at carerswa.asn.au/our-services/carer-gateway-services or call 1800 422 737 (Monday to Friday 8.00am - 5.00pm).





Maintaining connections in uncertain times

In these uncertain and unprecedented times, and with so much attention on our physical health, it is easy to overlook our emotional and mental health. Right now, many people are experiencing increasingly high levels of stress and anxiety over current world events. Two things that can help are a little self-care, and maintaining connections (albeit, from a distance) with others.

When it comes to self-care there are a number of things you can do to look after yourself even if you are confined to home. If you are caring for someone at home and you don't have a regular break scheduled into your week consider looking into in home respite options. Right now. In order to keep looking after the person you care for, it is vital you look after yourself too and arrange for some time out.

Meditation and practising mindfulness are associated with improving sleep and cognition as well as reducing anxiety and stress. There are a number of websites and apps dedicated to meditation and mindfulness. Headspace and Smiling Mind are just two that come to mind. Exercise is another way to practice self-care, and the links between exercise and positive mood are very strong. By getting your blood flowing and moving your body, you release endorphins which combat stress and help you to feel good. A brisk walk, cleaning the house, washing the car or logging into an online exercise class (such as yoga, pilates or tai chi) are all activities that can be achieved at home.

Connecting with nature has more of a positive benefit on our emotional health than many people realise. Try setting aside 30 minutes

in the morning and again in the afternoon to go into the garden, prune the plants, read the newspaper or enjoy a cup of tea in the sun. If you enjoy reading, most public libraries have much of their catalogue available to read, or even listen to, online. You can call your local council for more information.

Keeping up social connections is vital for maintaining wellbeing, now more than ever before. However in the current climate it can seem too hard to do. Research shows maintaining connections can improve our physical and mental health, and even help to reduce the risk of developing dementia. As we are asked to practice social distancing and stay at home, it is easy to feel disconnected and alone. Thanks to the internet there are a number of options available to stay connected.

At a time when we are unable to see many of our loved ones face-to-face, video calling using Skype or FaceTime is a great alternative. It will also help children to understand that their friends and families, in particular their grandparents, are ok. Try setting up a regular time each week to stay in contact. Email is also a great way to share photos and videos. Who knows, perhaps the humble telephone will make an almighty comeback? Another great activity you could start with the grandkids is letter writing.

If you are caring for a person living with dementia, you may be at home with your loved one more than usual. This may be very stressful for you both. At this time finding activities your loved one enjoys can be very helpful, support you to keep them engaged and reduce their anxiety.

Putting together an activity area or box in the home with things the person can access and engage with, that brings them some joy and meaning, is a great way to stimulate and divert the person's anxiety. One activity is to list favourite holidays then jump online and share a journey visiting websites of that area, looking at photos and talking about why the holiday was so good for them. This can lead to digging out the old photo box which is always a great way to spend a few hours.

Now could be a great time to put together a meaningful music playlist and share some singing and dancing together. Research has shown music that has meaning to us affects the brain and makes us feel better.

Life stories can often bring people joy and reminiscing has proven to stimulate positive chemical releases in the brain. It is an activity the whole family can get involved in and we have tips on creating life stories on our website.

Lastly, if you are caring for someone at home consider having a few hours of in home respite regularly to give yourself a break and have some "me time". In response to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, we have introduced a number of new respite and other service offerings to support you and your loved one at home. Keeping yourself healthy and managing your stress and anxiety is critical, now more than ever before. Please call and speak to one of our friendly staff, who will be more than happy to talk through the various options with you.



New Services Available

Alzheimer's WA has launched a grocery shopping and prescription pick up service to support you through these challenging times.

Call us on 1300 66 77 88 | alzheimerswa.org.au

alzheimer'swa
the dementia experts



Diet to reduce risk of dementia

A 2019 survey commissioned by Alzheimer's Disease International into global attitudes towards dementia saw responses from almost 70,000 people across 155 countries. Key findings show that despite ongoing efforts by dementia organisations worldwide, more needs to be done to improve awareness and understanding of dementia - in particular to combat the misnomer that dementia is a normal part of ageing and that there is no way people can prevent it.

Two in three people who responded to the survey said they believe dementia is caused by normal ageing, and 62 per cent of health practitioners who responded also said they believe dementia is a normal part of ageing. In addition, 25 per cent of people think there is nothing they can do to prevent dementia.

Although one in three people over the age of 85 will develop dementia in Australia, it is not a normal part of ageing, and numerous

studies have shown that up to 30 per cent of dementia can be prevented by following certain risk reduction strategies.

Late last year new guidelines were released for GPs in Australia that will help them recommend lifestyle changes to their patients, to help reduce their risk of developing dementia. The guidelines were developed by the Dementia Centre for Research Collaboration and are based on ten years of research. The hope is the new guidelines will go some way towards reducing the number of people being diagnosed with dementia in Australia in the future, by providing evidence-based guidance to GPs on modifiable risk factors.

One of the modifiable risk factors listed in the guidelines is following a healthy diet - specifically the Mediterranean diet - including two or more fish meals per week, as well as reducing alcohol consumption.

However, this information is not new. A number of studies over the last few years have led to the same conclusions. The World Health Organisation has released its own set of guidelines for risk reduction of dementia. It also recommends following a healthy, balanced Mediterranean-style diet. Two other diets that have been studied and may be beneficial include DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) and the brain health-specific Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay (MIND) diet.

Both diets include similar advice. The DASH diet recommends consumption of vegetables, fruit, low-fat dairy, whole grains, fish, poultry, beans, seeds, nuts and vegetable oils. It limits salt, sweets, sugary beverages and red meats. The Mediterranean diet includes vegetables, fruit, whole grains, fish, nuts, olive oil and other healthy fats, and also limits consumption of red meat.

At last year's Alzheimer's Association International Conference in Los Angeles, this information was once again reported with researchers from Exeter University confirming that following a healthy diet was one way to avoid developing dementia later in life. Their research suggested following a healthy diet with plenty of fruit and

vegetables, eating fish twice a week, avoiding processed meats and limiting alcohol consumption to no more than a pint of beer or a big glass of red wine per day.

It may get a little boring to hear the same 'healthy eating' messages over and over again, but wait - there's more. Not only is maintaining a healthy diet considered one of your best defences against developing dementia, it is also a recommended strategy to help prevent other diseases such as type 2 diabetes, obesity, stroke and heart disease. When you consider that each of these diseases is also a risk factor for dementia, and that heart disease and dementia are the leading causes of death in Australia, it becomes hard to ignore all the advice.

The evidence is clear. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, lean meats, and foods containing unsaturated fats and omega-3. Limit food and drinks high in sugar, and food high in saturated fats such as anything deep fried, biscuits, cakes and pastries. By combining a healthy diet with other risk reduction strategies such as regular physical exercise and mentally stimulating activities, you will give yourself the best chance of living a long and healthy life. And that is something that money just can't buy.



Dementia Advisory Service

Our Dementia Advisory Service remains accessible to support you through your dementia journey.

Personalised and practical advice to help you plan for your future and dementia specialist services and supports to suit your lifestyle.

Call us on 1300 66 77 88 | alzheimerswa.org.au

alzheimer'swa
the dementia experts

Stay at home or go into care

Most people want to stay at home as they age. Yet for many people living with dementia, chances are they will need to move into a residential care home at some point in their journey. Over half of all Australian aged care residents are living with dementia, and most of those are in high care.

For people with dementia, a move to residential care is often the result of a crisis or major health issue. Almost 50 per cent of residential care admissions of people with dementia come directly from hospital. This means the decision to move out of the family home is rushed and often unplanned, and made at a time when the person and their family is very emotional. You may need to take the first place available, and this may not be in your preferred care home. For these reasons, it is important to start conversations around future aged care early.

Moving house is considered one of life's most stressful events, and moving into a residential care home comes with its own misnomers. Some people consider residential care as a step away from freedom and independence, and a step closer to death. "God's waiting room" is a term often used.

Moving can be difficult both practically and emotionally for everyone involved. By the time a person with dementia moves into residential care they are often in the mid to late stage of dementia and not able to understand the reason they are moving. Whether a person has dementia or not, they may feel confused, frightened and disempowered by a move. They may have issues around privacy, feel discomfort around strangers, have reservations about the cost, or fear losing their freedom. They may not be aware of their limitations and be adamant they are staying at home. Regardless, they should still be involved in

the process of deciding about their future living arrangements.

As with many things, it is best to talk about the future before a crisis occurs. Start conversations early and have them often. This will help to normalise the conversation around aged care but more importantly will help you to find out what the person wants for their future, while they can still tell you about it.

How do you start a conversation about moving to residential care? Start by planting the seed. Ask questions around where the person would like to live when they are older, when they might need some assistance. Comment on all the available options now - such as having help at home, moving to an independent living village or how residential care has come a long way since their parent's days.

Focus on the positives of a move one day, such as no longer being responsible for maintaining the home or completing daily chores. Other positives include having more opportunities to socialise, meeting new people and making friends, taking part in activities they otherwise might not get a chance to. You could also emphasise the safety aspect, especially if the person is currently living alone.

Once visiting restrictions are lifted, offer to visit a few care homes with them. While visiting, ask for their input - what they liked and didn't like. Ask about their preference for a private or a shared room. Whether they want to be involved in regular daily activities or prefer to have places for quiet contemplation. It may be important to the person to have food freshly prepared on site, to have the option to eat in small intimate groups or alone in their room. All of this information will help to build a picture of the right care for your loved one, if and when the time comes.



If the person is resistant to the idea of a move, yet it has become necessary, seek the help of a professional they trust. Your loved one may be more inclined to be guided by their GP or pastor. You could also ask for recommendations from friends and family members.

Legal documents such as an Enduring Power of Guardianship can be very useful at this time. The earlier these are completed the better, as a person must have legal capacity. To help facilitate the process, you could complete one for yourself at the same time or mention people you know who already have done this. Stress this doesn't change anything now, however it will be a big help to the family with decisions about where the person might live in the future.

We all want to stay in our own home for as long as we can. Perhaps at this stage, a move to residential care is not necessary and some in home support might be helpful. However, at some point it may be in a person's best interests to move into a residential care home. Although this can be a difficult time and lead to feelings of guilt for family members, having had the conversation will make the decision easier.

Tips for talking about future care:

- » Start talking now about future living arrangements
- » Talk positively about a move to residential care
- » Involve the person and let them feel like they have control over the decision
- » Find out as much as you can about the person's preferences now; this will help later on if they are unable to communicate their wishes
- » Revisit conversations often, as your loved one may change their mind about something or provide you with additional useful information.



The whole person - challenging outdated views of dementia

Getting a diagnosis of dementia can be a difficult and long process. Often people are told there is nothing much that can be done for you, go home and get your affairs in order. With more and more people being diagnosed with dementia, and with a better understanding of the impacts of the disease, it is well and truly time to challenge this way of thinking.

The traditional way of viewing dementia considers only the changes that are occurring in the brain. This medical model of dementia focuses on managing the symptoms or changing behaviour that results from the disease. A person with dementia may be referred to as disappearing, no longer the person they were, or not a person at all - just a shell. Well meaning care staff direct focus on a person's basic physical needs, such as being fed or kept clean, without time or training to consider the person will have other real human needs just like any person without dementia.

Just think of how people with severe mental illness used to be treated - locked up in institutions and sedated - in order to manage the symptoms of their disease. No consideration for what the person may be thinking or feeling. As with dementia, people looked at the disease first and the person with the disease second. This limited view hindered any ability to connect with each other, and treat each other, as human beings.

Although medical treatments for dementia have not changed in over 20 years, what is changing is the way people think about dementia and how they approach supporting the person living with it. The foundation for this change in thinking is based on viewing the whole person, not just their disease. This means looking at a person's life story: who they are, where they were born, what jobs they had, whether they married or have children, what is important to them and gives them purpose, as well as their experience of life with dementia.

A person with dementia will often have lived a long and interesting life, and their life experiences do not stop when they are diagnosed. Quite the opposite. The diagnosis is just another part of who they are now, another part of their life experience. However, the environment and the people who surround them will impact how a person experiences dementia. If the environment is enabling, if family and friends are understanding and supportive, the chances are a person with dementia will have a much more positive lived experience.

Understanding that everyone's experience of dementia is different has led to the development of a number of effective early interventions for people living with the condition. These early interventions approach each person as an individual and consider their own unique life experiences. They view dementia as just one part of the whole person.

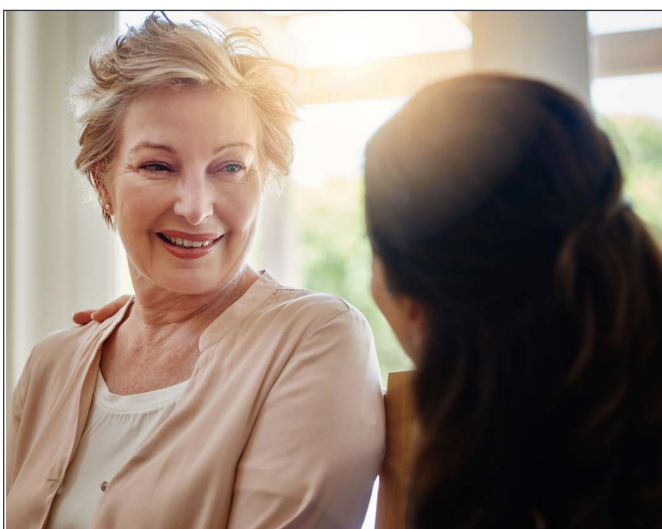
An example of an emerging support for people with dementia is occupational therapy. Traditionally used to help people get back to work after injury, occupational therapy is proving to be an invaluable tool to support people with mild cognitive impairment through to the later stages of

dementia. Why occupational therapy? It combines practical advice with changes to the way a person approaches a task - such as preparing a meal or getting dressed - in a way that is specific to that person. Not only can occupational therapy support a person's existing abilities, it can help to reduce carer burden and stress, and ultimately contribute towards improving the overall wellbeing of a person with dementia and their carer.

When a person is diagnosed with dementia they are still the same person as they were before - however now they are living with dementia. Just as another person may live with a diagnosis of diabetes, cancer, heart disease or any other type of potentially life limiting condition.

It is true dementia is a terminal disease, and there is no cure. However people diagnosed with dementia can live well for a number of years. Although this does not lessen the impact of dementia on a person - it is still a life changing and traumatic experience - it is a long time to sit around in your home and do nothing other than 'get your affairs in order'.

There is still a lot of living to do if you are diagnosed with dementia. The journey is different for everyone.



Dementia Therapy Services

If you are living with dementia, occupational therapy services from Alzheimer's WA can help you with everyday living tasks.

Whether you need help with managing your appointments, independent showering and dressing or preparing meals, our occupational therapists will work with you in your own home and provide you with practical strategies to complete tasks independently and safely.

Call us on 1300 66 77 88 | alzheimerswa.org.au

alzheimer'swa
the dementia experts

Assistive Technology - a bright future for digital health in dementia care

At a time when staying connected and engaged with loved ones has never been more important digital health, assistive devices, independent living aids and adaptive equipment can help with independent living and support carers.

Assistive technology is equipment, software or digital devices that are used to increase and maintain health, overcome cognitive impairment difficulties and disabilities.

Falls, getting lost and disorientated are common concerns for people living with dementia and their families and assistive technology can make their daily living activities such as dressing, bathing, grooming and meal preparation easier, and live longer with greater independence.

Examples of assistive technology include screen reading assistance; audio, video and hologram communication with families through tablets and smartphones; robotics for operation of appliances, memory and reading assistance; telemedicine, smart medication management; telemetry and home sensor technology predicting and identifying the occurrence of falls in the home; and brain training games for therapy and relaxation.

But what does the future of assistive technology look like?

By utilising a series of unobtrusive smart sensors in the home to monitor sleep, temperature, movement, use of microwave, refrigerator, washing machine, door open/close sensors, bathroom visits and resting, real-time information can be gathered on a person's activity, routine and health indicators. This profile then helps families and care professionals define, monitor and assess care plans and strategies enhancing their quality of life and confidence.

Artificial intelligence learns the profile of the person and then alerts carers if there is any deviation from normal activities or if a door has been left open. As an example, the person may visit the bathroom at 9pm, go to bed at 10pm, spend an hour watching television and turn the lights off at 11pm, and routinely get up

once during the night. Carers will be alerted if this pattern changes such as the person getting up more often in the night to use the bathroom, which could be indicative of an early onset urinary tract infection.

The family and carers can also play an active role by accessing the mobile app on their smartphone or tablet providing both parties with a view into the person's wellbeing and any action needed to address incidents or issues with their daily routine.

Devices such as wearables, GPS pendants for location tracking and emergency alerting outside of the residence, smart smoke detectors and RCD devices, and remote biometric devices such as blood pressure cuffs, smart scales and vital statistic monitoring devices can also be integrated.

What kind of assistive technology is right for your family?

Assistive technology comprises a wide range of products and devices and there are a few tips to help:

- » Focus on the actual task where assistance is needed
- » Find solutions that can be integrated into your normal routine without causing confusion, anxiety, or with minimal disruption
- » Involve the person living with dementia in decisions about which product or solution to use, ensure they understand the ethical issues of using assistive technology and ensure their consent
- » Introduce assistive technology when the dementia is still at an early stage, so the person can gradually get used to new ideas.

Most often, the choice of assistive technology is a decision you make with your loved one, other family members and you can seek assistance from a specialist from Alzheimer's WA.

The author of this helpful guide is Warren Harding, Deputy Chair, Alzheimer's WA and the full article is available at alheimerswa.org.au/bright-future-for-digital-health.

Research report

New project explores integrating intergenerational environments

A \$1 million, five year research project is being funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council to explore how integration between schools and aged care / retirement living environments can improve health and social outcomes. The project, undertaken by several Australian universities and an architectural firm, hopes to develop a new model of shared living which will break down the silos that exist in aged care and improve learning outcomes in school-aged children, as well as maximise the use of buildings, technology and equipment, and promote career opportunities for young people.

Researchers hope for dementia vaccine

Researchers from Flinders University in South Australia have developed a possible vaccine for dementia, which will be trialled with human test subjects within the next two years. The vaccine's main task is to enable the immune system to recognise and remove accumulations of toxic proteins in the brain. It has been designed as both a preventative measure and a way of treating existing disease. The vaccine will be trialled predominantly in the United States due to funding, but the researchers hope some trials will also occur in Australia.

No evidence for link between PPIs and dementia

Researchers say there is little evidence to support claims of a link between proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) and dementia risk. Recent reports in the media have suggested PPIs (medications used to treat such conditions as reflux and peptic ulcers) increase dementia risk, causing many people to cease their prescriptions unnecessarily out of concern for their cognitive health.

Study shows no link between statins, cognitive decline

Statins may not pose a dementia risk, as previously claimed by some studies. Instead, research by scientists at the Garvan Institute says the cholesterol-lowering medications may even protect people who are at risk from developing dementia. The study looked at 1,037 community-dwelling people aged between 70 and 90 years. Cognition and memory were tested over six years, and brain volume measured via MRI scans. No differences in the rate of decline in memory or global cognition between statin users and never-users was evidenced.



Therapy at home helping people with dementia

According to a new study led by the University of Queensland, occupational therapy at home can be effective for people living with dementia. Occupational therapy aims to enable people to perform activities of daily living, such as showering, doing housework, going shopping or looking after their garden. Finding new ways of doing things, modifying home environments and facilitating participation means occupational therapists can assist people to live a better quality of life. The results from 15 studies worldwide showed that both carer and person living with dementia benefitted from the support occupational therapists provide, with reductions in stress, agitation, repetitive behaviours and other responses to unmet needs.

Courses and workshops

In this time of uncertainty, our focus is on continuing to support people who are living with dementia and their families. In response to the growing demand for virtual training, we have transitioned some of our workshops to online delivery.

Dementia Advisory Service

Our Dementia Advisory Service is one of the ways we can help a person with a diagnosis of dementia, and their carer or loved one, work out what their next steps might be.

It is a non-threatening way to find out a bit more, to help ease any anxiety or stress you may be feeling about your diagnosis, or about some of the changes you may be experiencing. Setting up your free phone or video call appointment is as simple as giving us a call*. Our professional team are here to offer you support and to also link you with other services that may be suitable for you and your family.

*Some eligibility criteria apply.

Adjusting to Change program

The Adjusting to Change program, now delivered via video call over a six week period, provides relevant information, emotional support and practical assistance for people in the early stage of dementia and their support person (family member or friend).

This free* program covers a range of topics including:

- » Symptoms and diagnosis
- » Planning for the future
- » Relationships with family and friends
- » Practical strategies
- » Staying positive
- » Communication
- » Community services

Join the program to meet and share experiences with others who are in a similar situation, discuss different coping strategies, express feelings and emotions in a safe environment, and consider future options.

*The Adjusting to Change program is free for people who are funded under the Community Home Support Program.

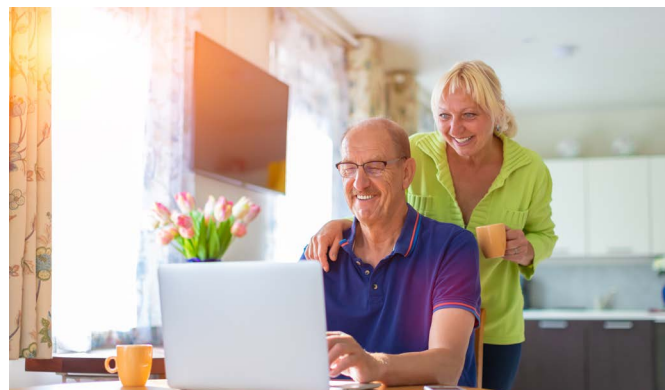
Family and Friends course

The Family and Friends course is now available as an interactive webinar with one of our experienced trainers. The course will be conducted over five sessions of one hour each, at no cost to participants.

The Family and Friends course is suitable for people who know or care for a person living with dementia. The course provides an understanding of dementia, what happens to a person when they develop dementia and offers communication skills to best support a person living with dementia.

Please call 1300 66 77 88 to find out more about any of our courses and workshops.





Legal seminars

In partnership with HHG Legal Group, legal seminars are currently being delivered as virtual webinars.

The seminar aims to address any concerns you may have and provide you with the right information that is current, relevant and beneficial. Topics covered include Enduring Power of Attorney and Guardianship, and executors of a deceased estate. Legal seminars are free for people with dementia and their carers.

Financial seminars

In partnership with Bruining Partners, financial seminars are currently being delivered as virtual webinars.

If you are worried about your current financial position and how it will look in the future, this seminar is for you. The free two hour webinar is designed specifically for the families of people living with dementia and is split into two sessions with questions and answers at the end. Topics include tax, superannuation and pensions.

Although this information was current at the time of printing, it may change due to the evolving coronavirus situation. For the most up to date information please contact us on 1300 66 77 88, email support@alzheimerswa.org.au or visit alzheimerswa.org.au.



Customer support line

Now more than ever it is important to stay in touch.

If you have any questions or concerns, or just for a reassuring chat, our friendly staff will be here to answer your call.

Call us on 1300 66 77 88 | alzheimerswa.org.au

alzheimer'swa
the dementia experts



#StayConnected

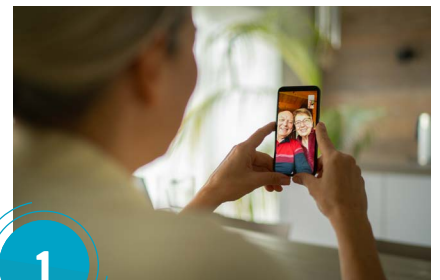
**Now, more than ever,
we must stay connected.**

In these uncertain times, and with so much attention on our physical health, it is easy to overlook our emotional and mental health. Alzheimer's WA works tirelessly to ensure no one faces dementia alone. Help us spread the love and stay connected during this time. It's easy, check out our three simple ways of staying connected.

Support the cause

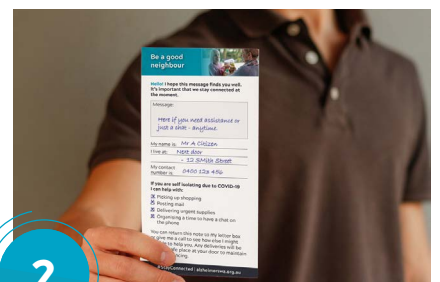
Visit our website for more information at alzheimerswa.org.au/stay-connected.

alzheimer'swa
the dementia experts



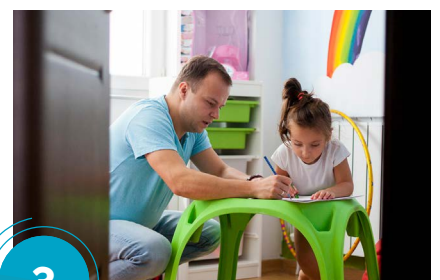
1

Don't forget to call



2

Be a good neighbour



3

Become a Pen Pal