



# alzheimer's

QUEENSLAND



## Dementia Matters

### A Publication of Alzheimer's Queensland

Alzheimer's Queensland is Queensland's largest not-for-profit community whose primary aim is to maintain the quality of life of people with dementia and their caregivers. We support the desire of most people to remain living in their own home as long as possible and assist families and caregivers to facilitate this.

We aim to do this by offering the following State-wide Information, Education and Support Services

- \*24 hour 7 days per week professionally staffed Advice Line
- \*Community education Library resources
- \*Interactive website
- \*Professional education
- \*Family carer education
- \* Support groups – face to face and telephone
- \* Individualized support
- \* Fact sheets and specific information requests

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### Garden City Aged Care

**AQ has proudly operated Garden City Aged Care since late 2004. Residents at our Garden City Aged Care in Upper Mt Gravatt, Brisbane South enjoy their own personal suite, and an outdoors lifestyle.**

We offer a robust active and outdoors lifestyle program comprising a range of group and individual activities for residents, including cultural days, a music program, shopping trips, art classes and flexibility and fitness sessions located in Upper Mt Gravatt, Brisbane South.

Garden City's wellness and enablement approach is further reinforced through its residents access to a range of specialist professionals, including a dentist, physiotherapist, speech pathologist, occupational therapist and podiatrist.

This purpose-built home has three accommodation options. Firstly, single room suites with kitchenette, secondly, a home-like secure cottage called Palm Court, and finally, cottage suites. We also offer specially-designed respite and palliative care suites.

At Garden City, all residents benefit from our staff's distinct knowledge, skills and expertise in dementia care. Our staff undergo regular training in dementia care to ensure their skills are maintained, and that their care reflects our underlying philosophy based on the value and individual choices of our residents. Furthermore, Garden City has 24-hour registered nursing on site to support the complex care and medical needs of those residents requiring a higher level of care.



#### Open 24/7

Garden City Aged Care Services is located at **33 Tryon Street, Upper Mt Gravatt QLD 4122**

**T:** 07 3349 0110

**F:** 07 3849 7355

**E:** [gcdoc@alzheimeronline.org](mailto:gcdoc@alzheimeronline.org)



## Clinical Corner

# Dementia Risk Factors

Dementia is the second leading cause of death in Australia and is not normal ageing. However, 80% of people with dementia are over the age of 75 years old. There are many different conditions that cause dementia, including the more common causes such as Alzheimer's disease, Vascular Dementia and Lewy Body Dementia.

There is no cure for dementia, but evidence suggests that lifestyle changes may assist to delay the onset and progression of dementia. This includes ensuring that diabetes and cardiovascular risk factors are addressed. Assessment and management of interrelated risk factors such as hypertension, obesity, physical inactivity, smoking and blood sugar levels are encouraged. Addressing these issues in mid-life (45-65 years) is highly recommended with ongoing monitoring as we age.

### Hypertension

Which is linked to cognitive decline may be controlled by diet, exercise, limiting alcohol, stress reduction, medical review and adhering to recommended medication regimes to avoid complications such as coronary heart disease, stroke, or kidney disease.

### Obesity

In 2014-2015, 2 in 3 Australian adults were obese or overweight. Mid- life obesity is strongly associated with an increased risk of dementia. A Mediterranean diet is recommended to maintain healthy brains. Regular intake of red meat and poultry should be reduced.

### Diabetes

A risk factor for strokes, dementia and diabetes is increasing in prevalence. Stroke is the 2nd leading cause of death for a person with diabetes. Reducing modifiable cardiovascular risk factors such as hypertension will reduce the risk of stroke and also dementia. The risk of repeated hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose) increases in the elderly and can contribute to cognitive decline. Regular eating habits, healthy lifestyles, medication reviews to reduce polypharmacy and to manage chronic illnesses including renal and hepatic (liver) impairment will reduce the risk of hypoglycaemia.

### Smoking

Smoking increases the risk of cognitive decline and dementia and cardiovascular events such as stroke and coronary heart disease.

## **Physical inactivity**

Regular exercise both recreational and nonrecreational is a low cost way to lower the risk of cardiovascular events and mortality. A minimum of 30 minutes a day of moderate exercise with a medical approval is recommended for older Australians. Higher levels of physical activity does appear to further increase any benefits including improved cognitive function.

## **Alcohol**

Alcohol intake Long term heavy alcohol intake increases the risk of vitamin deficiency, cognitive decline, weight loss and falls.

## **Life-long learning and Socialisation**

Enhances well-being, maintains good cognition and function and relieves carer stress, anxiety and depression. A lower risk of dementia has been linked with higher socioeconomic groups and higher education. Learning and leisure need to reflect valued social roles, interests and activities which bring pleasure and reward.

## **Sensory loss.**

32% of people over 55years of age have hearing impairment. 80% of people over 85yrs have age related hearing loss. Alzheimer's Disease has a gradual onset and early identification is challenging but hearing loss may potentially be an early warning sign for some. Hearing and vision impairment should be thoroughly assessed as it may be related to changes to those parts of the brain responsible for processing and interpreting the information received from the eye or the ear. Vision and hearing impairment increases the likelihood of social isolation and depression. Normal age-related degenerative eye diseases such as macular degeneration, glaucoma and cataracts need to also be assessed and monitored to ensure optimal hearing and vision for the person living with dementia.



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

# Driving and Dementia

Driving and independence are linked closely in our society. For this reason people with dementia may be extremely reluctant to give up the responsibility of driving. Driving can also be a very demanding activity requiring a great deal of concentration, coordination and decision-making. Some individuals can recognise their decreased driving ability and will accept their limitations and cease driving as a welcome relief. Others may deny there is a problem or simply be unaware of their driving difficulties. While this creates a sensitive situation, it is a problem that should not be ignored because of the risk that unsafe driving poses to both the person with dementia and other drivers and pedestrians.

## Warning Signs

- \* Confusion between left and right
- \* Becoming lost on familiar routes
- \* Stopping or slowing down at green lights
- \* Uncoordinated use of the brake/accelerator
- \* Stopping or changing lanes inappropriately
- \* Driving too slowly
- \* Having small accidents
- \* Lack of recognition of traffic mistakes

Approaching the person addressing driving retirement with a loved one is never easy. Forced driving retirement can result in feelings of loss and grief and should be approached with sensitivity. Ideally, drivers will self-evaluate their driving skills and plan for driving retirement just as they plan for vocational retirement however; this is difficult for people with dementia. When you are thinking about approaching your loved one to discuss driving safety, first decide who will be the best person to initiate the topic. Consider a doctor or church pastor, someone they hold in high regard. A letter from a trusted GP may act as an 'official' reminder.

Focus on the health issue as the reason for driving retirement. It's often easier to accept driving retirement for medical reasons rather than as a reflection on the person themselves.

Acknowledge that giving up driving is difficult and normalise the situation. Most people will have to stop driving at some stage due to health or age-related issues.

Use 'I' language not 'you' language. E.g. I am concerned about your recent driving because...', rather than, 'you missed the red light back there'.

Remember to be patient and consistent. Driving is a large part of a person's life and giving it up it extremely difficult

## Licence cancellation

Discuss your concerns about the person driving with the person with dementia and their doctor. Ask the doctor to submit a medical certificate to Queensland Transport stating that the person with dementia is unfit to drive. This is particularly relevant if the person with dementia has difficulty understanding the impact of their driving behaviour on the safety of themselves and other road users. If the doctor is in doubt, your relative should be referred to an Occupational Therapist for a comprehensive driver assessment. Alzheimer's Queensland currently offers Occupational Therapy Driving assessments.

The doctor may be concerned about challenging the independence of the person with dementia and preserving the doctor-patient relationship. These important considerations need to be balanced against ensuring the safety of the person with dementia, their passengers and other road users.

## Life after Driving Retirement

Enquire about community transport options. In certain circumstances or under set criteria, the person with dementia may be eligible for entitlements to assist their mobility. Contact Council Cabs, QLD Ambulance or a general practitioner about a taxi subsidy card.

Enquire about alternative transport options. Case managers associated with home care packages may be able to assist with identifying appropriate transport options in your local area. Community agencies such as senior citizens centres may provide transport for shopping and medical and hospital appointments.

Alternatively, you may decide to sell the family car and set the funds aside for taxi expenses and public transport.

For any questions or concerns you have in relation to dementia and its management, or for specific information on services available in your area and how to access them, please contact Alzheimer's Queensland on

**1800 639 331**

# Out & About

## Amazing Views Up Mount Tamborine

On a recent outing our South Coast Multiservice Centre took a trip up Mount Tamborine for morning tea, enjoyed a walk along Gallery Walk and then enjoyed the views from many of the viewing points.



## Tour Of Government House

Our Garden City Multi Service Centre recently enjoyed an outing to Artvo in Robina. The clients (and staff) had such a wonderful time with some of the clients saying it was the best day they have ever had.



# Pet Therapy In Dementia Care

## What To Do

Interacting with and caring for animals has many benefits for older people and in particular those with Dementia. Animals can have a positive impact on physical, emotional, social and cognitive functions, as well as helping to reduce depression and anxiety.

## Benefits of Pet Therapy

Engaging with animals can assist people living with Dementia to:

- \* Express their emotions
- \* Feel validated
- \* Provide a sense of purpose
- \* Reminisce of pets they owned
- \* Improve communication
- \* Encourage social engagement
- \* Reduce aggressive behaviour
- \* Provide mental stimulation



## Who Can Benefit From Pet Therapy?

Everyone can benefit from Pet Therapy but is most likely to benefit people who;

- \* Previously had pets and enjoyed looking after them
- \* People in early stages of Dementia who may enjoy walking or brushing pets
- \* People with no known allergies to animals
- \* People with vision and/or hearing impairments and in need of tactile stimulation
- \* No history of abuse towards animals

### 5 Top Tips for a Successful Pet Therapy Experience

- \* Use accredited pet engagement programs
- \* Make sure the pet program has adequate insurance cover
- \* Ensure the animal handler understand and complies with centre protocols
- \* Ensure infection control measures are put in place e.g. hand hygiene
- \* Remember the handler is responsible for the care of the pet and the safety of the staff and clients during their visits

\*information sourced from animal assisted engagement dementia care brochure from dementia.com.au



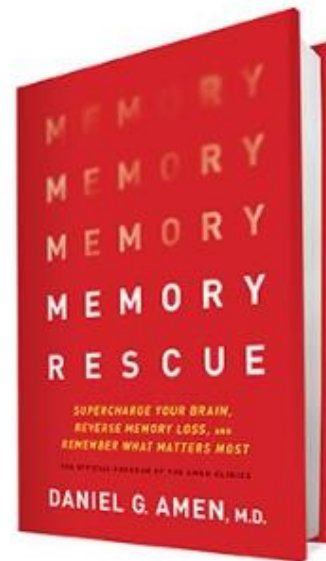
# Recommended Reading

If you would like to take a proactive role in looking after your brain health AQ's Clinical Dementia and Aged Care Consultant Tingting Chen highly recommends reading *Memory Rescue* by Dr Daniel G.Amen,MD

Dr. Daniel Amen's groundbreaking *Memory Rescue* plan can help you change your brain to improve your memory today and decrease your risk for memory-related problems in the future.

Your brain's history is *not* its destiny. Even if you have brain fog or trouble remembering now, it doesn't mean you always will. You can start having a better memory today by engaging in the Amen Clinics' simple *Memory Rescue: BRIGHT MINDS* program. What's more, the same plan will improve your energy, mood, sleep, weight, and overall success in life. Brain-imaging studies prove that the physical changes linked to memory loss actually start

in the brain decades before you show any symptoms. Based on an approach that has helped thousands of his patients at the nationally known Amen Clinics as well as the latest medical research, Dr. Amen's complete *Memory Rescue* plan—including dietary changes, physical activity, mental exercises, and even spiritual practices—can help you take control of your brain health starting today. *Memory Rescue* will enable you to:



- identify your risk factors for Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and memory problems using Dr. Amen's innovative BRIGHT MINDS approach
- create a personalized plan to overcome your own risk factors
- develop habits to improve your life by enhancing and retaining memory function
- provide constructive support to a family member with dementia or other memory challenges
- become the best person you can be in mind, body, and soul

**PIN ON YOUR NOTICE BOARD**  
**ALZHEIMER'S QUEENSLAND SERVICES AND CONTACTS**  
**WWW.ALZHEIMERSONLINE.ORG**

**Dementia Advice Line**

**1800 639 331**

Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week  
Free Call from landline and public  
phones or email:

[helpline@alzheimeronline.org](mailto:helpline@alzheimeronline.org)

For information and emotional  
support for people living with  
Dementia, families, friends and staff.

The Dementia Advice Line has a  
database of services to provide  
information and referrals. Call for free  
information e.g. fact sheets or  
brochures to be mailed out.

**AQ Rehab**

In home physiotherapy

Occupational Therapy

Speech Therapy

**1800 180 023**

**Care Services**

Our Multi Service Centres are located  
in Brisbane North, Brisbane South,  
Gold Coast, Ipswich and Toowoomba  
and offer the following;

- \* Personal care and domestic assistance
- \* Social support and transport
- \* Allied health assessments
- \* Respite – Centre based; day, overnight or emergency
- \* NDIS support
- \* Home garden maintenance

Residential Aged Care located at;

- \* Garden City Aged Care Services
- \* Rosalie Nursing Care Centre
- \* Windsor Aged Care Services

Home Care Packages at;

Brisbane South, Brisbane North, Logan  
River, West Morton, Darling Downs and  
Gold Coast.

**Carer Support Groups**

Alzheimer's Queensland Carer Support Groups provide information and support for those caring for a friend or family member with Dementia.

Please phone 1800 639 331 for more information or to be placed on the mailing list.

**Fortnightly** 09:30am – 11:30am

Brisbane North – 07 3857 2191    Brisbane South – 07 3349 0875

South Coast – 07 5613 1844    Ipswich – 07 3812 2253

**Monthly** 09:30am – 11:00am

Toowoomba – 07 4635 2966