



THE DIBA

The official newsletter of The Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance



THE DEMENTIA INCLUSIVE BALLINA ALLIANCE IS AN INCORPORATED NOT FOR PROFIT COMMUNITY ORGANISATION. WE STRIVE TO WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY TO TAKE ACTION TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR CARERS.

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DEMENTIA INCLUSIVE BALLINA ACKNOWLEDGES THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND ON WHICH WE LIVE AND CARE AND PAYS RESPECT TO THE ELDERS PAST, PRESENT AND EMERGING



IN THIS EDITION

FEATURE ARTICLE - FLOOD PREPAREDNESS

UPCOMING EVENTS

WEDNESDAY ACTIVITY GROUP
10AM - 12PM THE BALLINA AERoclub - RECOMMENCES 11TH JAN 2023

DEMENTIA CAFE
10AM-12PM CAFE SEBASTIAN 2ND MONAY MONTH 2023
19TH JANUARY, 13TH FEBRUARY, 13TH MARCH, 8TH MAY

DIGITAL LITERACY TRAINING (TBC)

MUSIC MUSTER (TBC)

DEMENTIA SYMPOSIUM (22ND, 23RD SEPT 2023)



FLOOD PREPAREDNESS

by Dr Sabrina Pit, Dr Louise Horstmanshof,
Dr Robert Lingard

As we write from New South Wales' Northern Rivers region, other parts of eastern Australia are facing conditions that recall uncomfortable memories from the 2017 floods and those in March this year. Many people are fatigued and still coming to terms with those devastating natural disasters.

We know from previous research people with pre-existing mental health conditions and poorer health are more likely to live in flood zones.

Val, a dementia advocate who has been diagnosed with the neurodegenerative disease, knows this all too well.

My house flooded in March and then I spent a week in a local evacuation centre because I could not get home. My house was covered in mud like so many other houses, and we had to throw out a lot of things. Eight months later, drips of disappointment continue. I still think, I'll go downstairs and get that but no, it has
It's important carers are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing too.



Extreme weather events are increasing [globally](#) and so are the numbers of people [living with or expected to develop](#) dementia. Floods are stressful for everybody – especially [Australians living with dementia](#) and those [who care for them](#). But planning and preparation can help.

Read more: [Getting urgent medicines in a flood zone can be a life or death challenge](#)

Stressful situations

In stressful situations, such as flooding and exposure to other natural disasters, people living with dementia may respond in unexpected ways. This might include disorientation, restlessness, wandering or not being able to recognise people or things.

Symptoms may increase as will the risk of [functional decline](#) (a decrease in the daily tasks a person can do independently). All this also adds extra stress for carers.

Dementia Australia gives the following seven [tips](#) every carer can use to support people living with dementia:

- look for simple changes to make home life easier, such as prepared meals or cleaning help
- allow extra time and space for the person to do things for themselves as much as possible
- listen without always trying to jump in and problem-solve
- give the person with dementia extra time to search for words they can't find immediately
- make use of clever technology, such as reminder alerts or safety warnings
- help them plan social activities
- encourage safe active movement and healthy choices.

These principles apply to preparing for, responding to and recovering from an emergency too.

Be prepared

To simplify the emergency experience for someone living with dementia and engage them in the process, there are several tools to help you prepare for natural disasters. These include the [Emergency Preparedness Toolkit for People Living with Dementia](#) or the checklists in [Preparing for a Natural Disaster – the Guide to Using RediPlan for Carers of People with Dementia](#).

Based on our first-hand experiences of working in flood evacuation centres, we know they can be very loud, chaotic and disorienting spaces.

Stay connected online

People need digital skills to be able to access information and for communication during disasters. Social media is often used for information exchange and disaster warnings. But access can be a barrier for older people.

However, there is increasing evidence digital technologies, such as mobile phones and computers, can prevent social isolation and loneliness in dementia. We found this in our local community as well.

Last year, Dementia Inclusive Ballina ran a digital training program with 50 carers. We found the number of people who had talked to loved ones in the previous four weeks online had doubled after extra training in the use of Zoom, WhatsApp, and other communication tools.

The federal government's Be Connected program for older Australians is a network of community organisations who support older Australians to improve their digital literacy.

You can help by teaching people living with dementia and their carers how to access natural disaster information and how to connect during a disaster. These skills are an important part of any digital training program for older people.

Have a network of people around you

The caring role can be an all-consuming one. People living with dementia and their carers are at high risk of being socially isolated. That means they can be hard to reach, especially during disasters.

Carers should be identified and supported to look after their own health. Prioritising carers' health and living environment enables them to continue to look after their loved ones after a disaster.

You can help them by

- reaching out and asking if you can help. Practical assistance might be cleaning up after the disaster, assisting with shopping, charging phones if there is a power outage, or just lending a helpful ear so carers can debrief
- following up down the track when post-traumatic stress can surface. Care is crucial to support long-term recovery
- taking it a step further and creating a dementia-inclusive community with a group of local people.

Dementia Australia has useful resources to make your community dementia inclusive (in Ballina, for example, we draw on research evidence to connect carers and people with dementia in the region) and there's an International Standard too.

Emergencies like floods are incredibly stressful for everyone. With preparation, online connections and a strong social network they can show the strength of community and caring, especially for people living with dementia, and their carers.



A WORD FROM THE CHAIR - Ann Moehead

Welcome to our very first Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance newsletter.

I hope this is the first of many linking the work of our committee to our membership.

On reflection the past 12 months has been a challenging and busy year for our committee and the membership.

We all remain firmly focused on the future in relation to especially increasing our voice and influence at the local level with the aim to promote:

Our vision which is to respect, support and empower people living with dementia and their carers. and

Our goal which is to promote the acceptance and inclusion of people living with dementia and their carers within the local community so that they can enjoy the best quality of life possible.

Our team has been successful in achieving incorporation as well as charitable status, this assists us in applying for grants and donations that will aid in achieving our vision and making a difference for the people at the centre of efforts.

We have had success in establishing the weekly connection and interaction activities at the Ballina Aero club, delivered the Carers lunch and the education update both in October. Our membership has grown to 62 members, a fantastic achievement over a few short months.

A number of the committee has had the opportunity to attend meetings with local politicians, members of council and to be a voice for people living with dementia and their carers, and of course we are very mindful of the words of Christine Bryden and the Dementia Advocacy Group “nothing about us without us”. It is for this reason we invite you to contact the committee to discuss any issues you want to raise.

On behalf of the committee Merry Christmas each of you and your families and good health and prosperity for 2023



A WORD FROM THE ADVISORY GROUP CHAIR - Gwen Mapstone

The weekly program for People living with dementia and their carers commenced in July and I know well that each meeting has been well received and participants have enjoyed the activities.

Members have contributed to the meetings as well with giving suggestions and also following through with ideas such as short session of easy exercises.

Morning tea is a good time to catch to one another.

We had a great sharing time about what education and employment we did in our early days. It is all voluntary discussion and so you can feel ok if this doesn't suit you.

Musical programs are enjoyed using our memories and voices. Thank to Peter and Joan and Tamara.

The program “Get on Line” was well attended and appreciated for the information provided

A highlight has been The Dementia Update - Forget Me Not Luncheon at Wollongbah TAFE.

Presentations were excellent with experienced and knowledgeable guest speakers. Thank you to the DIBA committee and sponsors for promoting ‘Dementia’ in Dementia Action Week. Another highlight has been the luncheon to celebrate Carers Week.

I would encourage interested carers and people living with dementia to come and experience the friendly atmosphere at the Wednesday Activities. Sometimes it's not easy at the beginning but a friendly and caring welcome awaits you.

Meeting each Wednesday 10.00am at Ballina Aero Club



Advisory Group Activity

by Meg Pickup

The Alliance's Advisory Group holds a weekly activity session for people living with dementia and their carers on Wednesdays from 10-12 noon in a welcoming and safe environment. The activities are held at the Ballina Aero Club, located at the Ballina Byron Gateway Airport, off Southern Cross Drive near the Ballina Community Recycling Centre. Each week participants join in gentle exercises followed by conversation over morning tea then an activity such as storytelling, life story diary, demonstrations, digital tech support, presentations on topics such as scams and fire safety, outdoor activities, and musical performances. Volunteer helpers assist each week. One carer summed up the value of the activity sessions when she commented that because participants share similar experiences, she now has people she can talk with about dementia. She felt she could not do this with friends because they lacked understanding of the condition or were unsure how to respond.

If you have dementia or care for a person with dementia you are welcome to attend regardless of where you live. Alliance members are charged \$5 and non-members \$7 for morning tea. You can become a member, which costs \$5, the first time you attend. Just turn up and spend enjoyable time with others, who have similar experiences to you. Roadside parking is available close to the venue.



Members Say



"So good to be able to meet weekly - Friendships are established and I love to see Robin and Robyn switched on singing and dancing" - Val Schachie

"Gordon and enjoy the morning what a great group of people very friendly both of us enjoy talking to every one" - Gordon and Valda Smith

"I love my Wednesday outings at Dementia Inclusive as I feel very comfortable and able to talk to others there. I may not make much sense but no one judges me. I love the activities especially the dancing. I get picked to dance. But the best part is the morning tea. So yummy and delicious. I am so happy this group started as it makes me feel happy and I look forward to going every Wednesday." - Bruce Wil



Joke Time!

1.Q Why aren't koalas actual bears?

A. They don't meet the koalafications.

1.Q. What do Alexander the Great and Winnie the Pooh have in common?

A. They have the same middle name.

1.Q.What do you call bears with no ears?

A. B-



Thanks Gary and Marion Faulks for suggesting this link to a beautiful rendition of Amazing Grace performed in The Barcelona Cathedral:

Concerto Catedral Sagrada Família Barcelona, Espanha. - YouTube Music



Wednesday Activity Calendar 2022
 WEDNESDAYS, BALLINA AERoclUB, 10AM - 12PM

2nd November
Melbourne Cup hat parade

9th November
Music and singing with Tamara

16th November
Music and singing with Joan and Peter

23rd November
BBQ in the Park - Location TBC

30th November
Activity TBC

7th December
Christmas craft activity

14th December
Christmas activities, carols, fire prevention with Barry TBC

21st December
Christmas lunch - Venue and cost TBC

Activities recommence Wednesday 11th

Dementia Inclusive Ballina
 Respect • Support • Engage

Dementia Inclusive Ballina

CAFE SEBASTIAN
 BALLINA FAIR SHOPPING CENTRE

Dementia Cafe
 For people living with dementia and their carers

A safe space for people to come together and make new connections

When: 2nd Monday of the month
 (12th Dec, 9th Jan, 13th Feb, 13th March, 8th May, 12th June)

Time: 10am - 12pm

Where: Cafe Sebastian
 Ballina Fair Shopping Centre

Contact Mel
 0409 810 735
 www.dib.org.au

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SAVE THE DATE

DEMENTIA ACTION WEEK 2023

SYMPOSIUM

Friday 22nd September 2023
 Event for People Living with Dementia, their supporters and other interested individuals

Saturday 23rd September 2023
 Event for professionals working in dementia care

DETAILS TO BE CONFIRMED
www.dib.org.au

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NEED SUPPORT

MY AGED CARE
 Information and access to aged care services
 1800 200 422
www.myagedcare.gov.au

THE CARER GATEWAY
 Information about emergency respite and carer support
 1800 422 737
www.carergateway.gov.au

THE DEMENTIA OUTREACH SERVICE
 Dementia advice and support
 Ballina community health
 02 6620 6274

CARERS NSW
 Information for carers
 02 9280 4744
www.carersnsw.org.au

DEMENTIA AUSTRALIA
 24 HR HELPLINE
 1800 100 500
www.dementia.org.au

FORWARD WITH DEMENTIA
 Information for people living with dementia, carers and health professionals
www.forwardwithdementia.au

NSW ELDER ABUSE HELPLINE
 1300 651 192
www.eapu.com.au

BYRON SHIRE RESPITE CARERS COFFEE CLUB
 Support group for carers
 Emma White - 02 6685 1629
emmawhite@byronrespite.com.au

Carers Coffee Club

Are you caring for someone with dementia?

If so, we'd love to see you at our monthly Carers Coffee Club held in Brunswick Heads.

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday the 16th of November from 10:30 - 12:00pm.

If you are interested in joining us, please email Emma on: emmawhite@byronrespite.com.au or telephone 02) 6685 1629 for more information.

NSW GOVERNMENT | **Health Northern NSW Local Health District**

crowley care

Meals on Wheels Ballina

Southern Cross University

dementia australia™

BE EMPLOYED IN AGED CARE AND NURSING | **ENROL TODAY**
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