

Quality Dementia Care Initiative

Action Plan 2022-23





Contents

Why Quality Care Matters	5
Quality Dementia Care: Key Focus Areas	7
Quality Dementia Care Action Plan	9
Key Enabler: people living with dementia are firmly at the centre	10
Key Focus Area One: Dementia support pathways	12
Key Focus Area Two: Building workforce capacity	14
Key Focus Area Three: Dementia friendly design	18
Measuring Impact	20
Quality Dementia Care: Partner Organisations	21
About Dementia Australia	23



If we can **get it right**
for people living with
dementia, **we can get**
it right for everyone. ”

Person living with dementia.



Why

Quality Care

Matters

Quality dementia care needs to become an intrinsic, core element of aged care in Australia. We acknowledge the range of reform activity now occurring in the aged care sector and the impetus of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, but note that Dementia Australia's focus on quality dementia care began back in 2018, with an exploration of what quality looked and felt like for people living with dementia, their families and carers. We were clear that it is only by articulating clearly what defines and differentiates quality dementia care that we can provide clear and measurable expectations and we tested a number of metrics with people with a lived experience.

The resulting Quality Dementia Care Action Plan is a cross-sector commitment to those initiatives we believe will collectively improve quality care for people living with dementia, their families and carers. By bringing together the most significant influencers of quality care—and drivers of policy and program change—we are taking a collective view of some key activities we and others are undertaking to improve quality dementia care.

Quality dementia care
needs to become an
intrinsic, core element
of aged care in Australia

The key focus areas have been informed by consumers, as articulated in **Our Solution: Quality care for people living with dementia** and refined further in our **Roadmap for quality dementia care**. It is through the implementation of effective partnerships and the translation of key themes into measurable practices—all of which will be checked with consumers and the workforce on the ground—that makes this action plan truly embedded in consumer experiences of quality. We are not looking at individual activities by specific organisations but rather the collective impact of our efforts on consumers and workforce: because the two most important components of quality dementia care are engagement of the individuals themselves and a workforce that has an appropriate level of dementia training.



Change of this scale takes **time**.

We are not expecting to see an immediate uplift in consumer and workforce experiences of quality dementia care, due to the significant volume of reform initiatives underway and the time it takes to enact the kind of culture change across the sector that is required. Instead, we are focusing our collective and unified effort on working together to start to enable change that is firmly grounded in the perspectives of people living with dementia, their families and carers and what they defined as critical elements to improve quality care.

People with a lived experience of dementia want to ensure that their voices are heard, that quality dementia care involves them, and that their contribution leads to greater inclusion, support, respect and ultimately, improved quality of life. This is not just about quality dementia care; it is about providing quality aged care to people living with dementia as well as their families and carers.

In the words of a person living with dementia, **“if we can get it right for people living with dementia, we can get it right for everyone”**.

Quality Dementia Care Action Plan: Key Focus Areas

Quality Dementia Care



Key Enabler:

People living with dementia are firmly at the centre

Objective: Dementia is core business - people living with dementia are at the centre of the frameworks within which they are supported and live



Key Focus Area One:

Dementia support pathways

Objective: People living with dementia, their families and carers have optimal access to the integrated services and supports they need to live the life they choose.



Key Focus Area Two:

Building workforce capacity

Objective: The workforce, leadership and culture understands and supports dementia and has the skills and knowledge to sustainably embed quality dementia care



Key Focus Area Three:

Dementia friendly design

Objective: Physical environments support people living with dementia to be as independent as possible





Quality Dementia Care

Action Plan 2022-23

Key Enabler:

People living with dementia are firmly at the centre



Objective: Dementia is core business - people living with dementia are at the centre of the frameworks within which they are supported and live

Dementia Australia

- Support people living with dementia to be represented on government, peak and industry committees.
- Develop a Consumer Engagement Framework.
- Contribute to addressing gaps in dementia data.
- Delivery of National Dementia Support Program and expansion of services and supports for people living with dementia.
- Develop a social change campaign to tackle discrimination against people with dementia.

Aged Care Quality And Safety Commission

- The Commission's purpose is to protect and enhance the safety, health, wellbeing and quality of life of aged care consumers. This is reflected in the first Strategic Priority in our Corporate Plan: We place the consumer at the centre at all times.
- Strengthening engagement with consumers to ensure that we are listening carefully and acting on the issues that matter to them, and also supporting consumers to work closely with their provider/s to jointly plan their care and services.
- This includes special consideration of the most effective ways for the Commission to communicate and engage with vulnerable consumers who are isolated, have impairments and/or experience difficulty engaging through our regular channels and have no one to advocate on their behalf.

- We are:
 - strengthening partnerships with consumer organisations including those representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, culturally and linguistically diverse and LGBTIQ elders and older people with disability and dementia; and
 - ensuring that our communications are inclusive and are accessible for consumers from different cultures and language groups, consumers with disability, and consumers with dementia.

Aged Care Workforce Industry Council

- Continue to provide a unified body to oversee, coordinate and sequence the implementation of the 14 Strategic Actions in Australia's Aged Care Workforce Strategy 'A Matter of Care'.

Department Of Health And Aged Care

- Develop a new joint National Dementia Action Plan (NDAP) with state and territory governments to better integrate dementia services across jurisdictions and drive improvements for people living with dementia, their carers and families
- Involve people with lived experience of dementia through workshops and broader consultation, which is central to the development of the NDAP.
- Appointment of two consumer representatives living with dementia to the Dementia Expert Reference Group established in late 2021 to provide advice to the Department of Health on the design of the NDAP and individual dementia and broader aged care reforms.
- Almost doubling the funding for the National Dementia Support Program (NDSP) over the four years to 2024-25.
- Continuing to work with Dementia Australia and other organisations as they broaden and diversify the program to meet the needs of all people living with dementia, their carers and families.
- Maintain Departmental Committees, including The National Aged Care Advisory Council (NACAC) and the Council of Elders, which both include members with an interest in dementia.

Key Focus Area One: Dementia support pathways



Objective: People living with dementia, their families and carers have optimal access to the integrated services and supports they need to live the life they choose.

Dementia Australia

- Deliver the 24-hour helpline
- Deliver an integrated and specialist service response with a single access point through a centralised, national telephone and online service that complements My Aged Care, the Carers Gateway and the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- Collaborate with Primary Health Networks to embed best practice dementia pathways and timely diagnosis.
- Work with memory clinics to embed stronger referral networks for people living with dementia.
- Develop better connections between the National Dementia Helpline and referrers.

Department Of Health And Aged Care

- Fund Primary Health Networks to develop or enhance existing dementia referral and support pathways within their local region. These dementia pathways will support health professionals (GPs, practice nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, allied health and primary care teams) to provide advice, referrals and connections for people living with dementia or mild cognitive impairment. The initiative also spans the development of consumer resources.



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Optimal access to the integrated services and supports they need to **live the life they choose** ”

Key Focus Area Two: Building workforce capacity



Objective: The workforce, leadership and culture understands and supports dementia and has the skills and knowledge to sustainably embed quality dementia care

Dementia Australia

- Contribute to the development of National Dementia Education Standards and learning pathways, in partnership with Dementia Training Australia.
- Deliver Cert 4 in Dementia Practice.
- Support development and delivery of Communities of Practice, in partnership with Dementia Training Australia.
- Develop a Dementia Practice Health Check for home care.
- Establish and implement compulsory dementia education for the aged care workforce.
- Implement the revised dementia unit of competency for the Certificate III in Individual Support.
- Increase the take up of the Dementia Practice Health Check to achieve comprehensive assessments of the current workforce dementia capability to understand where best to target future education in residential aged care and home care. This is contingent upon ongoing funding.
- Collaborate with Dementia Training Australia and Dementia Support Australia to identify areas of synergy and optimal impact, including strategies for rural/remote Australia.
- Host conference with Dementia Support Australia and Dementia Training Australia.
- Collaborate with Boards to include dementia as a standing agenda item and strategic priority.

Aged Care Quality And Safety Commission

- Continue to build dementia knowledge into assessor training, including dementia seminar/webinar and working collaboratively with families.
- Review and addition of dementia case studies to the guidance materials for Aged Care Quality Standards to ensure that dementia-specific issues are addressed.
- Implement **The Governing for Reform in Aged Care Program**, which has been developed to improve the quality of care and services delivered to senior Australians by strengthening the corporate and clinical governance capability of governing bodies and executives of approved providers of Australian Government regulated residential and home aged care services.

Aged Care Workforce Industry Council

- Ongoing refinement of the Workforce Planning Tool, based on user feedback. The tool includes a future focus feature that allows providers to forecast their dementia care needs based on predicted incidence and prevalence levels. (Strategic Action 6).
- Transitioning the Voluntary Industry Code of Practice (VICOP) into a best practice program for the aged care sector. The new best practice program will see the VICOP reimagined as a program that uplifts the sector and supports providers and employees to deliver high quality, consumer-driven care, using continuous improvement to drive positive outcomes.
- Complete Phase 1 of a project to begin mapping aged care career pathways and job architecture (Strategic Action 4).
- Begin second phase of the career pathways and job architecture project in October 2022.

Department Of Health And Aged Care

- Almost doubling funding for the Dementia Training Program which provides a national approach to accredited education, upskilling and professional development in dementia care. Training includes:
 - vocational level dementia care training courses, free to eligible care workers in residential, respite, community care or the wider health services.
 - continuing professional development training on recognising, diagnosing and managing dementia for GPs, nurses and allied health professionals.
 - tailored onsite training to aged care providers who request assistance.
- Implement range of measures as part of the expanded program including:
 - development of a National Dementia Training and Education Standards Framework for the multidisciplinary workforce that supports people living with dementia in different settings and to support standardisation of training in dementia.
 - development of dementia training pathways for health professionals and aged care workers to more easily identify high quality dementia training that is relevant to them.
 - delivering training for the aged care sector on managing behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia and how to prevent the use of restraint (restrictive practices) through appropriate behaviour supports.
 - improving access to dementia training in regional and rural areas.
 - providing advanced dementia training and support for senior care workers to operate as leaders in dementia care in their organisations.
 - supporting a new national network of practice leaders that will champion best practice dementia care through the opportunity to share. experiences and insights.
 - delivering additional dementia care training GPs and GP registrars.



Key Focus Area Three: Dementia friendly design



Objective: Physical environments support people living with dementia to be as independent as possible

Dementia Australia

- Contribute to a new aged care accommodation framework development, in partnership with University of Wollongong and Dementia Training Australia.
- Develop community and in-home resources and supports to enhance the physical environment for people living with dementia.
- Lead and deliver physical design audits, including large scale opportunities with Brisbane City Council and University of Queensland.

Department Of Health And Aged Care

- Dementia-Friendly Design in Aged Care
 - Develop a new Residential Aged Care Accommodation Framework, including design standards, which will be introduced from 1 July 2024 and address accessibility and dementia-friendly design in residential aged care, as well as the role of smaller group home models, reablement and respite settings, as recommended by the Royal Commission.
 - Roll out the Aged Care Capital Assistance Program (ACCAP), which has now replaced the Aged Care Approvals Round as the mechanism by which capital grant funding will be administered. ACCAP will deliver \$397 million over four years with the first of several open or targeted grant rounds expected to open towards the end of 2022. ACCAP will continue to have a dementia-care focus within the broader intentions of the program which are to improve access to quality aged care services for identified special needs groups.



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Support people living with dementia to be as **independent as possible**”

Measuring Impact

We are in the process of developing an annual report card which will not only measure progress against the individual initiatives by each key partner, but also measure the impact of collective transformational change in the aged care sector.

Change takes time. By taking a global view of quality dementia care as articulated by people living with dementia, we expect that activity may not immediately translate into impact. We do know that if we consistently and collectively strive toward the key focus areas as articulated by consumers, experiences of quality care will be improved over time.

We will engage with consumers with dementia and the workforce on the ground to test if what we are doing as a collective is making a difference to improving quality dementia care in practice.



Quality Dementia Care: Partner Organisations



Australian Government
**Department of Health
and Aged Care**



Australian Government
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission





**Experiences of quality care
will be improved over time.** ”



About Dementia Australia

Dementia Australia is the source of trusted information, education and services for the estimated half a million Australians living with dementia, and the almost 1.6 million people involved in their care. We advocate for positive change and support vital research.

We are here to support people impacted by dementia, and to enable them to live as well as possible. Founded by carers more than 35 years ago, today we are the national peak body for people living with dementia, their families and carers.

We involve people impacted by dementia and their experiences in our activities and decision-making, to make sure we are representative of the diverse range of dementia experiences. We amplify the voices of people impacted by dementia through advocating and sharing stories to help inform and inspire others.

No matter how you are impacted by dementia or who you are,
we are here for you.

National Dementia Helpline

1800 100 500



For language assistance
call **131 450**

Find us online

dementia.org.au

