



Welcome

- Introduction
- As a national peak body, 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 are here to support people impacted by dementia and to enable them to live as well as possible.
- Acknowledge traditional custodians
- Acknowledge organizers

Overview

- What is dementia
- Men's Sheds & Dementia
- Supporting Men Impacted by Dementia
- Supporting Male Carers
- Next Steps

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Overview:

Brief overview of dementia, why Men's Shed's need to know about Dementia and supporting those living with Dementia, the impact on carers particularly male carers and whats next if you want to become more Dementia Friendly

What is dementia?

Dementia is an umbrella term to describe a **set of symptoms** caused by brain disease.

Typical signs of dementia are gradual **changes in thinking** that get in the way of a person doing everyday things.

No two people are affected in exactly the same way.

It is not a normal part of ageing.

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Dementia is a term used to describe a collection of symptoms of a range of disorders that impact the brain.

It is **not** one specific disease.

It is **not** a normal part of ageing. Dementia can happen to anybody, although the risk increases with age younger people are diagnosed with dementia.

No two people with dementia will be the same. Everybody's experience is different and their support and needs will vary over time.

Dementia is **progressive** and currently there is *no* cure.

Types of dementia

There are more than
150 types
of dementia.

**Alzheimer's
disease**

**Vascular
dementia**

**Lewy body
disease**

**Fronto-
temporal
dementia**

These are the more common types.

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- There are over 150 different causes and types of dementia but the main cause is Alzheimer's disease which accounts for between 50-75 per cent of cases.
- Each cause of dementia affects the brain differently but essentially nerve cells and the connections between nerve cells in the brain are dying progressively and this leads to changes in the person's behavior, emotions, and abilities.
- Dementia is progressive and currently there is no cure. But the rate at which dementia progresses varies from person to person.
- No two people living with dementia are the same. When you have met a person with dementia, you have met one person with dementia.
- And it is important to note that people can live well with dementia so long as they are supported to do so.

Symptoms include changes to:

- memory
- language
- comprehension
- judgement
- planning
- mood and personality
- spatial orientation.

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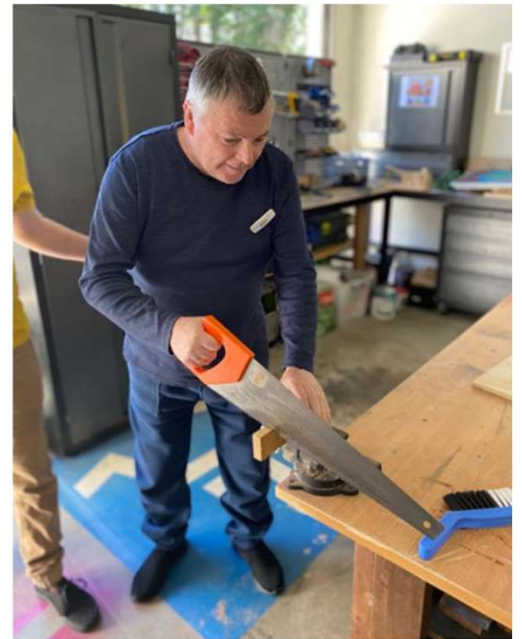
Common symptoms of dementia can include changes to:

- **Memory** – Usually recent memories are lost first – this is particularly apparent in Alzheimer's disease since the part of the brain responsible for storing new information is likely to be damaged early on in the disease process. However, it is important to note that there are some causes of dementia where memory remains intact for quite some time.
- **Language** – Being able to form words and use them appropriately may become problematic for many people. Words may be lost from a person's vocabulary. They may start to speak in general terms using pronouns such as 'this' and 'that' rather than naming an item specifically.
- **Comprehension** – Understanding what is being said, or what is happening around the person may become increasingly difficult. The person may hesitate to respond, or become confused or overwhelmed in certain situations, especially if there is a lot happening at once.
- **Judgement** may become impaired so that a person can no longer make appropriate decisions or be able to problem solve (that is why, for some people, driving can become problematic).
- **Planning** – The person may not be able to forward plan – an example might be

something simple like being able to plan the evening meal, or what to wear that day.

- **Spatial Orientation** – The person may have difficulty ‘reading’ and ‘interpreting’ their environment – they may not know which direction is home, or be able to judge distances between themselves and objects – they may get lost if taken out of their familiar environment.
- **Mood and Personality** – The person may become increasingly emotional – this could be a natural reaction to everything else that is going wrong for them, but it could also be that the part of the brain which helps to stabilize emotions has become damaged so the person’s emotional responses may not match what is actually happening at the time. Similarly, for some people, their personality may change – a person who was once placid, may become easily angered and vice versa.
- **Not everyone has all these symptoms happening at once** and may exhibit them quite differently from another person. However, as the disease process progresses, they are more likely to experience more and more symptoms as more parts of the brain are affected.
- **However, when a person living with dementia is well-supported**, that is, the people around them understand what is happening, are patient and provide visual and verbal prompts to help the person, he or she is likely to be calmer, happier and better able to manage their symptoms. (For example, not rushing a person is one of the best ways to ensure the person with dementia remains calm and can process information more easily).

Sheds and Men impacted by Dementia



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In Western Australia there are an estimated 44,300 people living with dementia. By 2058 this number is predicted to rise to more than 108,000 people living with dementia.

It is therefore probable that the shed you are involved in will encounter either a participant or a spouse being diagnosed.

More than half of people who have dementia are living with an early or mild form and do not generally need assistance with daily activities. Depending on their interests and skills they can still meaningfully contribute to activities at your shed.

For people living with dementia doing something meaningful and being engaged socially is shown to increase QoL and self worth and we now know that this can also slow down the progression of their dementia – so what better place for them to be engaged but at a Men's Shed!

Sheds and men with Dementia

- What is the level of ability is required?
- Health and Safety issues?
- Membership eligibility?
- Can Carers provide support at the shed?
- Can female carers provide support?
- What insurances need to be in place?

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Sheds and their members can have some concerns about men with dementia at the shed, most often this is due to a lack of understanding and not having the right tools to support you. There are of course important considerations that you need to make from the outset in relation to membership eligibility, insurance, health and safety, whether carers can attend and if they can be female carers.

These are really important considerations and these decisions will depend on each individual shed.

Supporting Men with Dementia.

Communication is Key!

- Body Language
- Background noise
- Short sentences – one instruction at a time
- Gestures
- Allow more time

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The single most important area is around communication and having open and effective communication right from the outset.

In every day communication consider making adaptations,

People living with dementia may not always understand or process the words being said and they begin to rely more on tone, body language and gestures.

Smile, stay calm, eye contact

Where possible talk in a quiet place or where distractions are minimised, face the person

Use touch where appropriate (handshakes, pat of the back)

Speak slowly and clearly,

Use nouns and names – can you pass the hammer (and GESTURE to the hammer)

Allow more time and limit the options (rather than what do you want to work on today – do you want to paint the planter boxes or sand the furniture)

Check: Are their hearing aids working, are their glasses clean

It takes most of us 7 seconds to process and begin to respond, for a person living with dementia it can take 20 seconds, this can be uncomfortable to us to sit in silence, I challenge you to try it with a friend, delay your response and see what their reaction is, they will likely begin speaking again to fill the silence, imagine the frustration of not participating in a conversation just because you need more time to respond.

Supporting Men with Dementia.

- Structure and predictability
- Environment
 - Signage
 - Lighting
 - Flooring/accessibility
 - Ergonomic adaption
- Encourage independent / semi-independent activities where possible
- Learn about dementia,
- Have a transition plan.

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When supporting a member with Dementia its important to know the person well, speak to them and their loved ones to know what their skills and abilities are, what they are interested in, what they can still do and what they might need help with.

Changes you make to be more Dementia Friendly will make the Shed more accessible for everyone.

Consider adaption you can make to structure and predictability, consider day planners or checklists. Consider your lay out, be clear about areas that are out of bounds.

Consider your environment – avoid clutter and obstacles, have good lighting, consider task lighting, increase your signage, consider ergonomic adaption, clamps or modified tooling.

Match activities to abilities, focus on one thing at a time, provide simple instructions – use visuals if you can, take photos to create step by step guides, use silhouette boards to show how things are put away etc.

Reducing visit times – people living with dementia often have times of the day that are better, consider having them attend at this time.

Adopting a different role – they could be the head caterer, the coffee maker, the sander.

Task breakdown and allocation – break tasks down to a level that encourages the person to

be as independent as possible, rather than the whole task can they do an element of the task such as sanding the furniture, painting or assisting with clean up.

Support Workers or family – consider if a support worker or family member attending to support is an option, aged care and ndis funding these days will pay for these type of support for the person

When its time to say goodbye: inevitably there will be a time when members with dementia will no longer be comfortable or able to participate. Plan for this transition to happen with dignity, perhaps they can still come for a cuppa or to the Christmas party or other special events, ask if they still want to receive updates from the shed, speak to their loved ones about useful ways to continue to support them where relevant, find out if there are supported options (such as via Alzheimers WA / Local Councils or other Aged Care Providers) available in your area and perhaps support this transition.

Blokes in a Caring Role



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Caring can be emotionally and physically demanding. Carers need support to look after themselves and accepting what is happening to the person they are caring for. Men can find the task of caring even more challenging as they may not have the emotional support network to women and therefore they may need extra help.

Be willing to listen

Find out what assistance they need

Help them locate that support

Dementia Australia, via generous funding from Lotterywest run a Blokes in the Caring Role program to better facilitate access, help seeking, enable expression of thoughts and feelings but most importantly to improve carers coping skills. We also run VR workshops that explore what it is like to be a person living with dementia, if you have a group of men who are in a caring role or you are men from a shed supporting a member living with dementia perhaps consider inviting us to run a workshop at your shed?

What Next

- Dementia is everyone's business
- It starts with you!
- Dementia Australia is here for you.
- Visit: dementiafriendly.org.au
dementia.org.au

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Including men living with dementia has an impact not only on the people with dementia and their carers but other men at the shed gain an increased understanding of dementia and improved their skills in communicating and working with people with dementia. They gain a sense of purpose and worth by helping the men s well as an ability to identify and assist men with early stages of dementia who were already members of the shed.

We have heard some fabulous stories from clients of our about how they have been included and valued as members of various sheds and I thank those sheds for the work they have done and continue to do as it really does start with you and everyone in our community.

Dementia Friendly Organisation training.



National Dementia Helpline
1800 100 500



For language assistance
call **131 450**

Find us online
dementia.org.au



- Facilitator concludes workshop by referring participants to the **National Dementia Helpline – 1800 100 500** if they, or someone they know, is wanting help or support in relation to dementia. This is a free service active between 8am-8pm Mondays to Fridays.