



A publication of  
Alzheimer's  
Queensland Inc.

# Dementia Matters

In this edition...

- Upcoming Education
- Windsor Aged Care Sensory Gardens
- "Committing Dementia to Memory - Healthy ageing and the latest research into Alzheimer's and Dementia"
- AQ Rehab - Private Allied Health Services
- Dementia and Falls Prevention
- Dementia and Vision



# Upcoming Education:

For service providers, the following paid education series for the first half of 2014 is held at the Alzheimer's Queensland Resource Centre at \$40 per person per topic.

## Topics and Dates:

### What is dementia?

Date: Tuesday 11th February

### Dementia and night time behaviours

Date: Tuesday 4th March

### Swallowing difficulties in people with dementia

Date: Tuesday 25th March

### Depression in Dementia

Date: Tuesday 8th April

For more information about or to register for any of the above education sessions, please phone the Helpline on **1800 639 331**



## Alzheimer's Queensland

Alzheimer's Queensland is Queensland's largest not-for-profit community organisation 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:

### Statewide Information, Education and Support Services:

- 24 hour 7 days per week professionally staffed Helpline (ph: 1800 639 331)
- Community education
- Library resources
- Interactive website at [www.alzheimersonline.org](http://www.alzheimersonline.org) including carer support chat lines
- Professional education
- Family carer education
- Support groups – face to face and telephone support groups
- Individualised support
- Fact sheets and specific information requests posted as required
- Dementia Matters newsletter

### Alzheimer's Queensland

47 Tryon Street  
Upper Mt Gravatt Qld 4122  
Telephone: (07) 3422 3000  
Fax: (07) 3343 2557  
Email: [helpline@alzheimersonline.org](mailto:helpline@alzheimersonline.org)  
Website: [www.alzheimersonline.org](http://www.alzheimersonline.org)  
Helpline: 1800 639 331

# Windsor Aged Care Sensory Gardens

Following the purchase of Windsor Aged Care Services by Alzheimer's Queensland in December of 2012, there have been many improvements made to the residents living environment but perhaps the biggest and best to date is the development of our gardens in both the Hostel and Nursing Home courtyards. Quotes were obtained and final garden design was developed in conjunction with Beau Horgan from "Street Gardens". The staff, residents and their families had input at resident meetings into what type of plantings they wanted, i.e. fruit, vegetables and herbs, for all residents to touch, taste, plant, water, harvest, smell, and flowers for vibrancy. Maintenance staff contributed many weeks of hard work to complete the landscaping in conjunction with Beau and volunteers from Northy Street Gardens in Windsor. Our chickens were relocated from the Hostel courtyard to the Nursing Home garden after the completion of a new 'chook palace'. A butterfly enclosure was created and all garden beds were raised to enable access to the plants, and pathways created for wheelchair access and walking residents. Residents are now watering daily, assisting to plant weekly and harvesting the produce to use in our daily cooking group where they prepare the vegetables for the evening soup. Families and residents are increasingly making use of the new outdoor space; and the community involvement has been really beneficial as some of our residents now also volunteer at Northy Street Community Gardens. Our weekly Art classes are also contributing to the gardens aesthetes by creating outdoor mobiles and additional points of interest.



## **“Committing Dementia to Memory - Healthy ageing and the latest research into Alzheimer’s and Dementia”**

Held at the Queensland Brain Institute on 29th August 2013.

There are currently 280,000 Australians living with Dementia. Without a significant medical breakthrough this is expected to soar to 1.2 million by 2050. Dementia is Australia's third leading cause of death, after heart disease and strokes, and to date there is no cure.

Guided by Professor Jurgen Gotz, researchers at the Clem Jones Centre for Ageing Dementia Research (CADR) within

the Queensland Brain Institute (QBI) are mapping the changes in the brain that occur in dementia, whilst exploring new therapeutic approaches to treat the disease. They are hopeful that this research will not only prevent and delay disease onset, but also reverse cognitive decline. This seminar highlighted QBI's understanding of physiological brain function and how this research is helping to address ageing dementia related questions. Further information will be in the next issue.

# AQ Rehab - Private Allied Health Services

AQ rehab was borne out of an identified need that there are limited options for private services that offer the flexibility of in-home services and clinic-based services. With this, AQ Rehab would like to introduce to you our stellar staff. Our core team members come with a high level of skills, expertise and experience in their fields. The manager for AQ rehab is Sanjeeta Mackrani.



Sanjeeta is an Occupational Therapist by profession and holds a Bachelors and Masters degree. She has predominantly worked with adults over the past 13 years. Her expertise is adult physical rehabilitation; working with people who require home modifications, assistive equipment and re-engagement strategies for work and life activities. Having worked in multiple countries including the USA and taught in a Masters degree program, she is well versed with the most current effective practices in her profession.



The principal Physiotherapist for AQ Rehab is Debra O'Connor. Debra has over 30 years of experience as a Physiotherapist. She has worked predominately in aged care, but also comes with experience in rehabilitation and chronic disease management. Prior to joining AQ, Debra worked at Queensland Health for many years. She was instrumental in developing training and service programs, such as the Home Based Exercise Program.



Prudence O'Connor, a registered Physiotherapist. Throughout her career, Prudence has worked in a variety of clinical areas and settings including community health services, residential aged care facilities, rehabilitation day therapy units, musculo-skeletal outpatient departments, neurological rehabilitation wards, intensive care units, and acute medical and surgical wards.



AQ Rehab's lead Occupational Therapist is Marnie Combes. She graduated as an Occupational Therapist in 2004 and has predominantly worked in stroke rehabilitation and a Private Rehabilitation unit. In addition, Marnie has worked in community care and privately within the vocational rehabilitation field with clients with catastrophic injuries in a complex case management role. Her special interest, is Disability Driving Assessments and she completed post graduate qualifications at La Trobe University in Melbourne in 2008. Marnie has established a Disability Driving Assessment Service with AQ Rehab.



Our resident Speech Pathologist is Gemma Willis. Gemma has worked in Queensland, Singapore and the United Kingdom and has experience working with adults from 18 to 98 years old with communication and swallowing difficulties. She is passionate about increasing the awareness of swallowing disorders and increasing access to services.

# Dementia and Falls Prevention

People with dementia have a high risk of falling. In the general population, 1 in 3 people over 65 fall each year. This proportion rises to approximately 2 in 3 in people with dementia. Falls can result in injuries that reduce the ability to move around and affect a person's level of independence. In the case of the fall resulting in a more severe injury, such as a hip fracture, life expectancy can be reduced.

The "Dementia and Falls Prevention" education session was held on Wednesday 16th October at the Alzheimer's Queensland Resource Centre. Participants gained an understanding of why people with dementia fall and how their risk of falling can be reduced. A fall is most often the result of a combination of factors including problems with footwear, vision, balance, medications, physical activity, environment and nutrition, as well as behaviours associated with dementia such as agitation, wandering and impulsiveness.

At Alzheimer's Queensland we have health professionals who can provide in-home falls risk assessments for people with dementia and advice on how to make the necessary changes to decrease the risks. This may include simple exercise programs to improve strength and general physical function, minor changes to the home environment including equipment prescription, and swallowing and nutrition reviews.

The "Dementia and Falls Prevention" education session will be held again next year, so please look out for the 2014 education series timetable in a "Dementia Matters" publication soon.



## Dementia and Vision (part 1)

A common problem that is seen in many people with dementia is some degree of vision change. As many as 60% of people with dementia will have difficulties with what is called Visuospatial Perception.

Problems in Visuospatial Perception occur when the visual cortex of the brain is affected by the same disease that causes dementia. This can often result in a variety of consequences including changes in colour perception, spatial and depth perception, motion perception as well as contrast sensitivity (e.g. object and facial recognition).

Changes in colour perception include the inability to recognise certain colours, in particular colours in the blue to violet range. Spatial and depth perception is also commonly affected, where 3-dimensional objects may appear flat or be lost in shadows.

When motion perception problems occur, it makes it difficult to notice movement in the environment, often resulting in the person getting "lost". Contrast sensitivity refers to the minimum amount of contrast needed to differentiate an object from its surroundings, which affects object and facial recognition.

The described visual perceptual changes lead to a number of 'visual mistakes' as the person struggles to make sense of their perceived environment. Illusions are one form of visual mistake. These are distortions of reality, for example mirrors and reflective surfaces creating an illusion of a lift full of people. Misperceptions are another, where the person makes incorrect assumptions, for example, a lady walking down a long dark corridor thinks she is at the train station.

These visual mistakes and changes can have significant impacts on the person. One of the most worrying aspects is an increased chance of falls because the person may not notice a step or is confused with the environment. It also makes it difficult for the person to recognise family or friends or interact with common objects in the environment to complete daily tasks, such as a toileting.

Unfortunately, because of the other problems in dementia, visual changes may sometimes not be noticed. This is why it is important to notice and implement strategies to help address these changes. There are many ways in which simple strategies may be used to compensate for these problems. We will publish part 2 in the next edition, that will give some ideas.



Alzheimer's  
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## Pin on your notice board

### Alzheimer's Queensland Services and Contacts [www.alzheimersonline.org](http://www.alzheimersonline.org)

#### Helpline

**1800 639 331**

Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Free call from landline and public phones.

Or email: [helpline@alzheimersonline.org](mailto:helpline@alzheimersonline.org)

For information and emotional support for people with dementia, staff and anyone interested. The

Helpline has a database of services in Queensland to provide information and referrals.

Call for free information

e.g. fact sheets or brochures to be mailed out.

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#### AQ Rehab

In home - Physiotherapy

Occupational Therapy

Speech Therapy

**1800 180 023**

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#### Respite and Care Services

##### Seven days per week including:

- Centre Based Day Respite
- Overnight Respite
- Respite for Working Carers
- Emergency Respite
- Personal Care
- Home Maintenance
- Allied Health
- Social Support

##### Multi-Service Respite Centres located at:

- Gordon Park
- Mt Gravatt
- Ipswich
- Toowoomba

##### Residential Care

- Garden City Aged Care Services
- Rosalie Nursing Home
- Windsor Aged Care Services

Call the Helpline for vacancies for permanent and respite care

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### Carer Support Groups - 2014

Providing information and support for those caring for a friend or family member with dementia.

**Toowoomba:** 1st Monday of every month

11am - 1pm: Groom Room, Civic Hall, Ruthven Street

3 Feb, 3 March, 7 April, 5 May, 2 June, 7 July, 4 Aug, 1 Sept, 13 Oct (NB: 2nd week due to public holiday), 3 Nov, 1 Dec

#### Qld Wide Telephone Support Group

Last Wednesday of every month 1.00pm - 2.00pm:

AQ organises telephone link up at no cost to members

29 Jan, 26 Feb, 26 March, 30 April, 28 May, 25 June,

30 July, 27 Aug, 24 Sept, 29 Oct, 26 Nov, 17 Dec

(NB: 3rd week due to public holidays)

**Evening:** 2nd Wednesday of every 2nd month

6pm - 8pm: 47 Tryon Street, Upper Mt Gravatt

8 Jan, 12 March, 14 May, 9 July, 10 Sept, 12 Nov

**Ipswich:** 3rd Wednesday of every month

10am - 12 noon: Calvary Baptist Church,

83 Cherside Road, Ipswich

15 Jan, 19 Feb, 19 March, 16 April, 21 May, 18 June, 16 July,

20 Aug, 17 Sept, 15 Oct, 19 Nov, 17 Dec

**Newmarket:** 1st Thursday of every month 10am - 12 noon:

LifeTec, Cnr Enoggera & Newmarket Rds, Newmarket

6 Feb, 6 March, 3 April, 1 May, 5 June, 3 July, 7 Aug,

4 Sept, 2 Oct, 6 Nov, 4 Dec

**Redcliffe:** 1st Thursday of every month

2pm - 4pm: Redcliffe RSL, Irene Street

6 Feb, 6 March, 3 April, 1 May, 5 June, 3 July, 7 Aug, 4

Sept, 2 Oct, 6 Nov, 4 Dec

**Mt Gravatt:** 1st Friday of every month

10am - 12 noon: 47 Tryon Street, Upper Mt Gravatt

7 Feb, 7 March, 4 April, 2 May, 6 June, 4 July, 1 Aug, 5

Sept, 3 Oct, 7 Nov, 5 Dec

**Young Onset Dementia:** 2nd Saturday of every

2nd month 10am - 12 noon: LifeTec, Cnr Enoggera &

Newmarket Rds, Newmarket

8 Feb, 12 April, 14 June, 9 Aug, 11 Oct, 13 Dec

For further details or to register please contact the Dementia Helpline.