

Media Release

Support program for people impacted by early stage dementia on the North Coast

People living with early stage dementia on the North Coast, as well as their support person or carer, will benefit from additional information and support thanks to a free Alzheimer's Australia NSW educational program.

The Living with Dementia program is set to be hosted at Taree, Coffs Harbour, Forster and Port Macquarie over the coming months, giving people impacted by dementia a chance to connect and share with other people in similar circumstances.

The Hon. John Watkins AM, CEO Alzheimer's Australia NSW said, "A diagnosis of dementia can be overwhelming and can leave people unsure of where to turn.

"We know from research and participant feedback that initiatives such as the Living with Dementia program can reduce the sense of isolation, low self-esteem and distress often felt by people impacted by the disease. In providing information on the available local support services, our aim is to reassure people living with dementia that they are not alone," he said.

At each session there will be two small groups - one for people living with early stage dementia and another for their family members. Trained facilitators will, provide up to date dementia information, invite attendees to share their experiences and reflect on the impact of the diagnosis. Information will be provided on the importance of self-care, effective communication strategies, problem-solving techniques and legal and financial issues.

The program, which is funded by the Australian Government, will run for one day each week over a period of three weeks. Each session will commence at 9.30am and conclude at 3pm, with morning tea and lunch provided. **Registration is essential.**

The **Taree** program will take place on Thursday 11, 18 and 25 May. To find out if this program will meet your needs, contact Alison Fowles, Dementia Advisor, Alzheimer's Australia NSW on 02 6554 5097.

The **Coffs Harbour** program will take place on Monday 15, 22 and 29 May. To find out if this program will meet your needs, contact Marg Coutts, Dementia Advisor, Alzheimer's Australia NSW on 02 6651 7101.

The **Forster** program will take place on Thursday 8, 15 and 22 June. To find out if this program will meet your needs, contact Alison Fowles, Dementia Advisor, Alzheimer's Australia NSW on 02 6554 5097.

The **Port Macquarie** program will take place on Thursday 10, 17 and 24 August. To find out if this program will meet your needs, contact Kaylene Parker, Dementia Advisor, Alzheimer's Australia NSW on 02 6584 7444.

Alzheimer's Australia NSW is the charity for people with dementia and their families and carers. As the peak body, it provides advocacy, support services, education and information. An estimated 413,000 people have dementia in Australia. This number is projected to reach more than 1.1 million in 40 years.

National Dementia Helpline: 1800 100 500
An interpreter service is available

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(The National Dementia Helpline is an Australian Government Initiative)

Dementia is a National Health Priority Area

www.fightdementia.org.au

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