

Dementia Friends

KEY MESSAGES

What is the Dementia Friends Program?

- The Dementia Friends program is a national program that aims to transform the way our nation thinks, acts and talks about dementia.
- When registering to become part of the Dementia Friends program, participants can utilise a free online learning tool, through which they can increase their understanding of dementia, and be empowered to do small, everyday things that can make a big difference to a person living with dementia.

What is a Dementia Friend?

- A Dementia Friend is someone who wants to make a positive difference to the lives of people living with dementia through increased awareness and support.
- It means you have increased your understanding of dementia and how small things you can do can help support people with dementia to remain included, accepted and connected with their community.
- A Dementia Friend is someone who understands small acts can make a big difference.
- By having a better understanding of dementia, you are empowered to do small, everyday things that can make a difference to someone with dementia.

For instance:

- Being patient in a shop queue
- Offering assistance if someone appears disoriented or confused
- Allowing extra time for inclusion in a conversation
- Or taking in how the environment might be impacting on someone's ability to focus or engage – noises, bright lights or busy activity can be challenging for people with dementia to filter.

Why the need for a Dementia Friends program?

- An estimated 425,000 Australians are living with dementia. It impacts the individual living with the condition as well as their loved ones who often provide the support and care.
- People living with dementia can find it challenging to participate actively in the community due, in part, to a lack of knowledge or understanding of the condition among the general public and how it can impact people.
- In fact, a recent survey by Dementia Australia found people living with dementia and carers reported experiencing embarrassing situations, feel strongly disconnected, feel less competent and sometimes feel useless.
- By becoming a Dementia Friend, and increasing your awareness of dementia and its impacts, you can help a family member, friend, neighbour or co-worker living with dementia feel accepted, included and involved.
- A little understanding and kindness can go a long way.

How do people become a Dementia Friend?

- Visit dementiafriendly.org.au
- Here you can listen to people with dementia share their stories and be guided through a short education module designed to increase understanding of dementia and its impacts.
- By having a better understanding of dementia, it is hoped people will be empowered to do small, everyday things that can make a difference to someone with dementia.
- Upon completion of the module participants will receive a Dementia Friend certificate and badge.
- Head to dementiafriendly.org.au and start making a difference today.