



The National Dementia Action Plan

This document is about the National Dementia Action Plan 2024-34. We call this the 'Action Plan'.

The Action Plan is a 10-year plan to improve the life and care of people living with dementia in Australia.

About the Action Plan

The Action Plan is made up of 8 actions. Each action can make real and long-lasting improvements to the quality of life for Australians living with dementia.

Dementia is a growing health problem that has a large impact on people, their families and carers. More than 400,000 Australians live with dementia, and we expect this number to double by 2058.

How did we develop the plan?

We developed the Action Plan by working with people with dementia, their families and carers. We also spoke to organisations, health professionals, researchers, and aged care and disability support providers.

How will we carry out the plan?

The Action Plan is a shared plan between the Australian, state and territory governments. We will carry it out through a series of smaller plans. The first stage will start in 2025 and will focus on helping with immediate needs.

How will we evaluate the plan?

The National Centre for Monitoring Dementia will collect data and track the Action Plan's progress. Each year, the Centre will update an online 'Action Plan Dashboard' to show how things are going.

The 8 actions

The goal of these 8 actions is to lower the risk of dementia and help people understand dementia. They will also help improve services for people living with dementia, their families, and their carers.

Action 1: Promote fairness and protect human rights

Action 2: Improve understanding of dementia and help everyone feel included

Action 3: Help people lower the risk of dementia and slow its progression

Action 4: Make diagnosing and treating dementia better

Action 5: Improve care and support for people living with dementia

Action 6: Support carers of people living with dementia

Action 7: Train workers to offer better care and support for people living with dementia

Action 8: Collect more information, improve dementia research and explore new ideas

Action 1: Promote fairness and uphold human rights

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>How people living with dementia will feel:</p> <p>My rights are respected. I can make my own choices and be myself. I am treated fairly and can live safely. I can find all the information, supports and services that I need.</p> | |
| <p>How are we going to make a difference?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By involving people living with dementia in all the steps of the Action Plan. 2. By helping more people understand how people living with dementia can be supported to make decisions. 3. By making a new Aged Care Act that is based on human rights and supported decision making principles. 4. By making sure people living with dementia are not abused or hurt in any way. 5. By making dementia information and support more suitable for First Nations people and communities. 6. By making sure all programs for First Nations people support the Priority Reforms of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021-2031. 7. By making sure that people from different backgrounds can understand and find information about dementia. 8. By making sure programs for people with dementia work for people with a disability and are made using Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031. | |
| <p>Why do we need change?</p> | <p>Being treated fairly and equally is an important part of making life better for people living with dementia. These changes will make sure they can get the services they need and live life the way they choose.</p> |
| <p>Where do we want to be in 10 years?</p> | <p>Everyone in Australia makes sure that people living with dementia and their carers are treated fairly and equally.</p> <p>People living with dementia feel safe and can live their lives with respect and dignity.</p> <p>Everyone living with dementia has access to quality dementia support that meets their needs.</p> |
| <p>How will we know if we have made a difference?</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People living with dementia will feel they have more control over their lives. 2. There will be a better understanding of supported decision making for all people living with dementia. This includes for First Nations people and people from different backgrounds. 3. There will be more resources on dementia that understand and respect the needs of people from different backgrounds. 4. People in regional, rural and remote areas will have better access to dementia diagnosis and support. |

Action 2: Improve understanding of dementia and help everyone feel included

| | |
|---|--|
| How people living with dementia will feel: I feel safe and engaged in society. I have a sense of meaning and identity. | |
| How are we going to make a difference? 1. By using real life stories and examples to grow understanding about dementia in Australia. 2. By working with people living with dementia from different cultures and their carers to create resources about dementia. 3. By helping people living with dementia to use aged care and disability support services, hospitals, public spaces, businesses and local services. | |
| Why do we need change? | We want to make sure everyone understands, accepts and is aware of dementia. This means people living with dementia can be a part of the community and enjoy life. |
| Where do we want to be in 10 years? | People living with dementia and their careers feel included, understood and supported in the community. |
| How will we know if we have made a difference? | 1. There will be more positive attitudes towards people living with dementia. 2. People will know more about dementia and how it affects people who live with it. 3. More people will: a) ask for help if they think they have symptoms of dementia. b) share their dementia diagnosis. 4. There will be more communities where people living with dementia feel welcome. 5. There will be fewer people living with dementia who feel judged or treated badly. |

Action 3: Help people to lower the risk and slow the progression of dementia

| | |
|---|---|
| How people living with dementia will feel: I am supported to do what I can to live a healthy lifestyle. I am supported to lower the risks and slow the progression of dementia. | |
| How are we going to make a difference? 1. By getting more Australians to know the risk factors and how to lower the risk and slow the progression of dementia. 2. By letting people know the health benefits of doing regular sports, exercise and movement. 3. By letting everyone know how to improve brain health and how to find and treat dementia early. 4. By working better with people from different backgrounds as well as people who have a higher risk of developing dementia. 5. By using research to lower the risk of dementia. | |
| Why do we need change? | Getting older is just one factor that can lead to dementia. Things like our health, environment, and genetics can also play a part. |
| Where do we want to be in 10 years? | People understand what can increase their risk of dementia and are supported to take actions to lower the risks. |
| How will we know if we have made a difference? | 1. Everyone will know more about the risk factors for dementia. 2. Workers will understand the ways to lower the risk and slow the start of dementia. 3. More Australians will take steps to lower their risk of developing dementia. |

Action 4: Make diagnosing and treating dementia better

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>How people living with dementia will feel:</p> <p>I know the signs of dementia and understand where to go if I have concerns. I can find health professionals who can assess my symptoms and tell me my diagnosis. I am linked with information and supports to help me, my carers and my family after a dementia diagnosis.</p> | |
| <p>How are we going to make a difference?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By updating care guidelines and principles for people living with dementia every 3 to 5 years. 2. By checking the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) every few years to make sure it's helping people to be diagnosed and cared for. 3. By making it easier for people to access dementia screening, assessment and diagnosis across the country. 4. By expanding memory clinics and reviewing how they are funded. 5. By putting memory clinics in Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to better care for First Nations people. 6. By working with experts and people from different cultures to improve thinking and memory tests. 7. By improving support, care and planning for all people living with dementia and their carers. 8. By improving services and supports for people who face extra barriers to receiving care. This includes younger adults living with dementia, children living with dementia and their families. 9. By improving supports for people living with dementia in disability support services. | |
| <p>Why do we need change?</p> | <p>Finding out about dementia early is important. Support from health, aged care, and disability services should help people living with dementia to enjoy their lives as much as possible.</p> |
| <p>Where do we want to be in 10 years?</p> | <p>People are diagnosed as early as possible. They can plan better for the future. People are connected to the right information and supports after their dementia diagnosis.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>How will we know if we have made a difference?</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There will be better care and support services offered across memory clinics in Australia. 2. More people will be assessed for dementia in memory clinics. 3. More First Nations people will be seen and supported in memory clinics, including clinics that are in ACCHOs and ACCOs. 4. More people with signs and symptoms of dementia will visit a specialist within 3 months of getting a referral. 5. It will take less time for people to get a dementia diagnosis. 6. More people living with dementia will have a chronic disease management plan with their GP. 7. More people living with dementia and their carers feel they receive good care, and they had a good experience when they got their diagnosis. 8. More younger adults living with dementia and children with dementia will have access to services and supports. |
|--|--|

Action 5: Improve care and support for people living with dementia

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>How people living with dementia will feel:</p> <p>I have hope and can access the supports I need to live with dementia as well as possible. I have this support even as my abilities and needs change. I have support to make, communicate and be involved in decisions about the services I use.</p> | |
| <p>How are we going to make a difference?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By providing supports for people with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and dementia after they have been diagnosed. 2. By offering dementia supports that use new ways to help people and new technology. 3. By improving aged care and disability support services, focusing on creating a better quality of life for people living with dementia. 4. By helping care providers to better understand and respond to the needs of people living with dementia. This includes managing changes in behaviours in an appropriate way. 5. By improving services for people with more complex or serious symptoms of dementia. 6. By improving how primary care, disability support, aged care and hospitals can work together. 7. By making sure people living with dementia have the right support when going into and leaving hospital care. 8. By improving the pathways and palliative care options for people living with dementia. 9. By making sure there are palliative care options that understand and respect the needs of people from different backgrounds. | |
| <p>Why do we need change?</p> | <p>Working together and sharing information between health care, aged care, and disability support is an important part of helping people living with dementia.</p> |
| <p>Where do we want to be in 10 years?</p> | <p>People living with dementia and their families can access services that meet all their needs. They can choose how to live their lives and are always supported to make decisions about their care.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>How will we know if we have made a difference?</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There will be more coordinated care for people living with dementia. 2. People living with dementia and their carers will find it easy to get the services and supports they need. 3. More people from different backgrounds will find it easy to access dementia services and supports that are designed for them. 4. People with dementia will feel more positive about their healthcare. They will have better outcomes. 5. More people living with dementia will receive regular medication reviews. 6. People's experience in hospital and leaving hospital will improve. 7. More people in aged care living with dementia will have positive experiences and outcomes. 8. Fewer people living with dementia will have bad experiences while in aged care. 9. There will be better planning and palliative care for people living with dementia. 10. Care and planning will be better for people from different cultures who live with dementia. |
|--|---|

Action 6: Support for carers of people living with dementia

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>How people living with dementia will feel:</p> <p>My carers are supported and can take care of their own health and wellbeing. My carers and I can have a meaningful relationship that is rewarding for both of us.</p> | |
| <p>How are we going to make a difference?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By working with carers and respecting the needs of carers from other backgrounds. 2. By helping all carers and families to learn more about dementia and its progression. 3. By having respite options that better meet the needs of people living with dementia and their carers. 4. By improving My Aged Care, the Carer Gateway and the National Dementia Helpline for carers. 5. By supporting carers during assessment processes and promoting ways to reduce burnout and stress. 6. By creating better access to emergency or short-term respite care from the community or hospital. | |
| <p>Why do we need change?</p> | <p>Carers are a big part of Australia's health system, including our aged, disability, end of life and community care systems. They need the right information and help to handle the physical, mental, and social needs of their role.</p> |
| <p>Where do we want to be in 10 years?</p> | <p>Carers have the information, training and support they need to do their job well. They have the right support to maintain their own health and wellbeing.</p> |
| <p>How will we know if we have made a difference?</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More people will know what carers experience and there will be better dementia support services and information. 2. First Nations carers will have more access to support services in ACCHOs and ACCOs. 3. More people will be able to use respite care. 4. Carers from different backgrounds will have more access to respite care that suits them. 5. There will be more support available for carers and family members of younger adults living with dementia. 6. Dementia carers will feel that their lifestyle and wellbeing is better. |

Action 7: Train workers to better care for people living with dementia

| | |
|---|--|
| How people living with dementia will feel: The people supporting me understand dementia and take time to learn about me and listen to my concerns. I am provided with care, support and information that meets my needs. | |
| How are we going to make a difference? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By improving dementia training for health, aged care, disability support and other care workers. 2. By supporting training for carers and workers from different backgrounds. 3. By helping health and aged care workers get training to better meet the needs of people living with dementia. 4. By improving dementia training for people working in key community services like police, paramedics, firefighters, emergency services and correction services. 5. By encouraging dementia awareness and training in local community services, like public transport, banks, post offices and other businesses. 6. By encouraging workplaces that care for people with dementia to treat each person respectfully and as an individual. | |
| Why do we need change? | Having the right skills is important to give the best care to people living with dementia. |
| Where do we want to be in 10 years? | All people working in the care industry have the training and support they need to provide high quality care to people living with dementia and their carers. Care improves people's quality of life, is person-centred, respects different cultures and human rights. |
| How will we know if we have made a difference? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There will be more training support and resources about dementia available for people working in health, aged care, disability, and community services. 2. There will be more medical and health professionals, aged care, disability, and community service workers doing dementia training. 3. People in caring roles will be able to work with people living with dementia better. 4. There will be more dementia care that respects the culture and needs of First Nations people. |

Action 8: Collect more information, improve dementia research and explore new ideas

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>How people living with dementia will feel:</p> <p>Research is focused on improving my life and the lives of other people living with dementia. I can participate in research. New care types are in place that make it easier for me to live well with dementia. Information about dementia is regularly reported so I can see if improvements are being made.</p> | |
| <p>How are we going to make a difference?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By encouraging more research that looks at how we can prevent, treat, slow down or manage dementia. 2. By improving dementia research in Australia and making sure people living with dementia and their carers are involved. 3. By improving how we understand the information we collect about dementia for people living with dementia from First Nations, and other backgrounds. 4. By working across all systems to improve information about dementia. 5. By improving how we collect information about dementia and using the information to plan decisions and come up with new ways of managing dementia. | |
| <p>Why do we need change?</p> | <p>Knowing more about dementia and using what we learn is an important part of preventing new cases of dementia and improving treatment and care.</p> |
| <p>Where do we want to be in 10 years?</p> | <p>Improved information about dementia is used to make policies and programs. New research and information is used to help early detection and diagnosis, treatment and care.</p> |
| <p>How will we know if we have made a difference?</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More people living with dementia will be involved in all stages of research projects. 2. There will be more high-quality Australian dementia studies. 3. There will be more dementia research. 4. There will be more information about dementia that includes people from different backgrounds. 5. There will be better national information for measuring the number of people living with dementia. |