



National Dementia Action Plan 2024-2034

Annual Activity Reporting

First Report (2025) – NSW Government



Introduction

The [National Dementia Action Plan 2024-2034](#) (Action Plan) provides a comprehensive framework for dementia policy across Australia. The Action Plan outlines a strategic approach to improving the lives and care of people living with dementia, ensuring coordinated efforts across all levels of government.

Annual activity reporting provides information about how jurisdictions are implementing the Action Plan. This first report provides an outline of activity underway aligned to the agreed national priority actions for the first 3 years. The Collective Priority Framework identifies these as:

- Action 3: Empower individuals and communities to minimise risk where they can, and delay onset and progression
- Action 4: Improve dementia diagnosis and post-diagnostic care and support
- Action 8: Improve dementia data, maximise the impact of dementia research and promote innovation.

Sub-actions are included for the priority actions in each report to reflect relevance to work underway. Reported activity may contribute wholly or in part to these sub-actions. Some activities may span more than one high-level action.

Annual reports also provide an opportunity to share information on activities underway for any actions in the Action Plan.

Future reports will provide updates on work in progress, new dementia-related initiatives or changes to existing policies and programs.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) will report on key progress indicators to show how the Action Plan is making a difference to improve outcomes for people living with dementia. This will be publicly tracked and reported through the [National Dementia Action Plan indicators dashboard](#) on the AIHW website.

Activity reporting for national priority actions

ACTIVITY REPORTING – NSW Government	
<p>Action 3 – Empower individuals and communities to minimise risk where they can, and delay onset and progression.</p> <p>Relevant sub actions:</p> <p>3.1 Improve Australians’ awareness of risk factors and preventive actions that can be taken to reduce the risk of developing, delay the onset or slow the progression of dementia. This includes health promotion and prevention programs which support overall health.</p> <p>3.2 Promote the brain health benefits of people regularly and safely participating in sports, exercise and movement.</p> <p>3.4 Develop targeted strategies and messages for people from diverse communities or at higher risk of developing dementia in partnership with relevant communities.</p>	
<p>Rationale for sub-action focus areas</p>	<p>There is strong and growing evidence that a range of modifiable factors across the life course can increase the risk of developing dementia, and that addressing these factors can reduce risk or delay onset. Fourteen potentially modifiable risk factors for dementia have been identified, many of which are shared with other chronic conditions. Addressing these shared risk factors presents a practical opportunity to embed dementia risk reduction within broader chronic disease prevention and healthy ageing efforts.</p> <p>In NSW, this approach is supported through whole-of-government initiatives that promote physical activity, healthy eating, social connection and overall wellbeing. The Ageing Well in NSW: Seniors Strategy 2021–2031 and population-level services such as the Get Healthy Service support healthier lifestyles across the population and contribute to reducing dementia risk alongside improving overall health outcomes.</p>
<p>Work underway</p>	<p>The Ageing Well in NSW: Seniors Strategy 2021–2031 is the NSW government's 10-year plan to respond to the state's ageing population. Guided by 2-year action plans, it outlines 80+ initiatives to empower older people to live safely, independently, and vibrantly in their communities. The strategy focuses on four key pillars:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Living in Age-Friendly Environments: Promoting housing options and transport access that allow seniors to remain independent and age in place. 2. Participating in Inclusive Communities: Connecting seniors through festivals, grant programs, and initiatives reducing social isolation and loneliness. 3. Staying Safe, Active and Healthy: Expanding physical and mental wellbeing programs, alongside protections against elder abuse. 4. Being Resilient and Informed: Providing digital literacy and financial security resources to ensure seniors are prepared for the future <p>To learn more visit https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/community-inclusion/seniors/ageing-well-in-nsw-seniors-strategy-2021-2031.html</p>

	<p>The NSW Government has a Health Get Healthy Service which offers free phone and online health coaching to help people make lifestyle changes to improve their health. The service covers eating healthy, getting active, maintaining a healthy weight, reducing alcohol and healthy ageing to manage and lower risk of chronic health conditions. To learn more visit https://www.gethealthynsw.com.au/</p> <p>NSW Government: Active and Healthy is an online directory of community-based programs for people aged 50 years and over. It includes general physical activity programs and physical activity programs aimed at preventing falls. The directory is searchable, enabling NSW residents to find exercise programs in their area. The Active and Healthy website contains evidence-based health information for older adults. It includes advice about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The benefits of physical activity and ways to move more in everyday life • Strategies that can help lower the risk of falling • The benefits of healthy eating and creating healthy habits <p>To learn more visit https://www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au/</p> <p>The Koori Dementia Care Project (KDCP) delivered by Neuroscience Research Australia (NeuRA) aims to inform, educate and build capacity in urban and regional NSW Aboriginal communities, and with associated service providers, about the effects of dementia on older Aboriginal people and their families. KDCP was funded by the NSW Government and supported by NeuRA and the Dementia Collaborative Research Centre. To learn more visit https://neura.edu.au/project/koori-dementia-care-project</p> <p>Caring for Spirit provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander online dementia education resources. Developed by NeuRA, this initiative stems from working in partnership with Aboriginal communities, including extensive community consultation, engagement of Aboriginal people in research, building ageing and dementia care capacity, and culturally safe resource development. To learn more visit https://caringforspirit.neura.edu.au/</p> <p>Across NSW, local initiatives are empowering individuals and communities to reduce dementia risk where possible and delay onset and progression. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • activities during Dementia Action Week, community forums and education campaigns • local targeted initiatives delivering healthy brain ageing programs and resources for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, Aboriginal communities, and other priority populations • exercise, nutrition, falls prevention and social engagement programs.
<p>Achievements and insights</p>	<p>NSW Government initiatives have strengthened the delivery of healthy ageing and dementia risk reduction at a population level. Through the Ageing Well in NSW: Seniors Strategy 2021–2031, there has been increased coordination of programs that support older people to remain active, socially connected and independent, alongside improved access to age-friendly environments and services. Statewide programs such as the Get Healthy Service and the Active and Healthy directory have</p>

	<p>expanded access to evidence-based lifestyle interventions, enabling people to engage in physical activity, improve nutrition and adopt behaviours that reduce the risk of chronic disease, including dementia.</p> <p>Targeted initiatives have also improved reach and relevance for Aboriginal communities through culturally appropriate education and capacity-building programs such as the Koori Dementia Care Project and Caring for Spirit. At a local level, community education campaigns, Dementia Action Week activities and healthy ageing programs have supported increased awareness of dementia risk factors and strengthened engagement with individuals and communities.</p> <p>There are opportunities to further embed brain health and dementia risk reduction messages within broader health promotion and prevention programs that support overall health and wellbeing. There are also opportunities to strengthen local initiatives through improved access to consistent, high-quality education resources.</p>
<p>Strategic collaboration and partnerships</p>	<p>A range of key stakeholders and sector partners in NSW collaborate to support dementia risk reduction and healthy ageing initiatives, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local health districts and specialty health networks, which lead service delivery, implement prevention and clinical programs, and support integration across hospital, community and primary care settings • Primary health networks (PHNs), which support primary care integration, referral pathways and locally commissioned prevention and early intervention programs • Local councils and non-government organisations (NGOs), which contribute to local community engagement, program delivery and access to priority populations • Dementia Australia, which provides education, advocacy and support services and contributes expertise on dementia care and lived experience • Dementia Alliances, which bring together local government, community organisations and health services to promote dementia-friendly communities, increase awareness and reduce stigma • Universities and research centres, which partner with health services to support research, evaluation, innovation and translation of evidence into practice.

ACTIVITY REPORTING – Australian Government

Action 4 – Improve dementia diagnosis and post-diagnostic care and support.

Relevant sub-actions:

- 4.3 Clarify pathways for dementia screening, assessment and diagnosis across the country, including identification of best practice.
- 4.4 Increase the capacity and reach of memory clinics and review the funding model.
- 4.7 Improve support, care coordination and planning for people living with dementia and their carers following a dementia diagnosis, including models for First Nations, CALD and other diverse communities.

4.8 Improve diagnostic and post-diagnostic services and supports for groups facing additional barriers to care, such as people living with younger onset dementia and children living with dementia and their families.	
Rationale for sub-action focus areas	<p>The National Dementia Action Plan identified that people experience significant delays in receiving a dementia diagnosis, with an average timeframe of approximately three years from symptom onset, and up to five years for people with younger onset dementia. Timely and accurate diagnosis is critical to enabling access to appropriate treatment, care planning and support. Following diagnosis, coordinated and person-centred care across health, aged care and disability systems is essential to support people living with dementia and their carers to maintain independence, quality of life and wellbeing.</p> <p>Strengthening diagnostic pathways, improving access to specialist assessment services such as memory clinics, and enhancing post-diagnostic care and coordination are therefore key priorities. A particular focus is required to address inequities in access and outcomes for priority populations, including Aboriginal communities, culturally and linguistically diverse populations, and people with younger onset or childhood dementia.</p>
Work underway	<p>Update of Primary Health Networks (PHN) Dementia HealthPathways Localised Dementia HealthPathways, developed in partnership with Commonwealth-funded primary health networks and NSW funded local health districts, have been updated to provide primary care clinicians with clear, evidence-based guidance on early identification, diagnosis and referral to local services.</p> <p>Memory Clinics There are 18 public memory clinics across NSW – 14 clinics are in metropolitan Sydney (Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Concord Hospital, War Memorial Hospital, St George Hospital, Prince of Wales Hospital x2, Sutherland Hospital, Royal North Shore Hospital x2, Hornsby Ku-Ring-Gai Hospital, Westmead Hospital, Liverpool Hospital, Mona Vale Hospital, Blue Mountains Hospital). There are 4 clinics in regional/rural servicing communities in Pottsville, Albury Wodonga, Dubbo and Shoalhaven.</p> <p>System-level analysis has been undertaken to inform potential approaches to improving memory clinic capacity and access to diagnosis across NSW. NSW Health has partnered on a Medical Research Future Fund research project with The Australian Dementia Network (ADNeT) to pilot a Hybrid Virtual Memory Clinic (hVMC) model in Orange to improve access to dementia care in regional, rural, and underserved areas. It combines virtual assessments with face-to-face care and shared intake.</p> <p>The NSW Childhood Dementia Roundtable event was held in 2024 to better understand the current state of access to health services for children living with dementia; identify strengths and gaps in service provision, and explore linkages to both paediatric and adult support services for people living with dementia. It brought together leaders in the field in NSW and advocates for children living with childhood dementia. The outputs of the roundtable will guide NSW Health's approach to</p>

	<p>supporting children living with childhood dementia in response to the National Dementia Action Plan 2024-2034.</p> <p>Dementia Advisory Services or similar</p> <p>Many local health districts provide Dementia Advisory Services or similar funded by the Commonwealth Home Support Programme. These services support post-diagnostic care by providing specialist advice, care coordination, education and service navigation for people living with dementia, their carers and the broader health workforce.</p>
<p>Achievements and insights</p>	<p>NSW Health has strengthened the foundations for more timely and coordinated dementia diagnosis and post-diagnostic care. The update of Dementia HealthPathways, developed in partnership with primary health networks and local health districts, has improved access to consistent, evidence-based guidance for primary care clinicians, supporting earlier identification, clearer referral pathways and more coordinated access to local services.</p> <p>Work to improve access to specialist diagnostic services has progressed, including system-level analysis to inform potential expansion of memory clinic capacity and innovative models such as the Hybrid Virtual Memory Clinic pilot in regional NSW. This model demonstrates the potential to improve access to diagnosis and specialist support for people in rural and underserved communities through a combination of virtual and face-to-face care.</p> <p>At a system level, there has also been increased focus on identifying and addressing gaps for priority populations. The NSW Childhood Dementia Roundtable has strengthened understanding of service needs for children living with dementia and their families, providing a foundation for future service development and improved integration across paediatric and adult systems.</p> <p>Post-diagnostic support has been enhanced through the continued delivery of Dementia Advisory Services and similar roles across local health districts, which provide specialist advice, care coordination, education and service navigation. These services contribute to more coordinated, person-centred care and support for people living with dementia and their carers.</p> <p>Key insight: Progress has been made in strengthening pathways, building system understanding and trialling new models of care, variability in access to diagnostic services and post-diagnostic support remains, highlighting the need for continued focus on equitable access and system coordination.</p>
<p>Strategic collaboration and partnerships</p>	<p>NSW Health and its organisations work in partnership with a range of key stakeholders to strengthen dementia diagnosis, improve access to services and enhance post-diagnostic care and coordination across the system including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary health networks • ADNeT • Dementia Australia • Dementia Services Australia • Childhood Dementia Initiative • Universities and Research Institutes • Dementia Alliances.

ACTIVITY REPORTING – Australian Government

Action 8 – Improve dementia data, maximise the impact of dementia research and promote innovation.

Relevant sub-actions:

8.1 - Encourage investment in research, innovation and research translation on prevention, risk reduction, diagnosis, treatments (including a cure), holistic care and management for all types of dementia.

8.5 - Improve health, social and aged care data collection, accessibility and integration to support research, inform policy and service planning, monitor improvements and reporting on outcomes for all types of dementia.

<p>Rationale for sub-action focus areas</p>	<p>Research is critical to improving outcomes for people living with dementia across NSW. Translating evidence into practice and leveraging innovation can support earlier detection, diagnosis, and more effective, person-centred care.</p> <p>Strengthening dementia data within NSW will enhance the ability to understand population needs, plan services, inform policy, and evaluate program impact. As the number of people living with dementia continues to grow and associated care costs increase, robust and reliable data is essential to support sustainable service planning and targeted investment across the NSW health system.</p>
<p>Work underway</p>	<p>Dementia care and management in primary health care settings within NSW</p> <p>In 2025, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) funded NSW Health, to gain insights on dementia care and management in primary health care settings within NSW using the Lumos data asset. The Lumos data asset is a comprehensive, state-wide healthcare database in. It securely links de-identified patient records from general practices (GPs) with hospital, emergency department, ambulance, and mortality data. It aims to map patient journeys across the healthcare system. The project objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify people with a recorded diagnosis of dementia in general practice and hospital data in NSW • provide insights into dementia diagnosis and treatment pathways • help identify current dementia data gaps in existing NSW primary health care records • develop recommendations for addressing dementia data gaps in NSW primary health care records <p>This report will be published by December 2026.</p> <p>NSW partnerships in Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Dementia, Ageing and Aged Care (DAAC) Mission funded research</p> <p>NSW Health has partnered with researchers on 10 successfully funded dementia projects and contributed to the development of many additional proposals that were not funded. To learn more visit https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/medical-research-future-fund-mrff-grant-recipients?language=en</p>

<p>Achievements and insights</p>	<p>NSW has strengthened dementia data and research capability through its partnership with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), improving visibility of diagnosis and care pathways across primary care and hospital settings. This work has identified key data gaps and informed practical recommendations to enhance data quality. NSW has also partnered on 10 MRFF-funded dementia projects and contributed to a broader pipeline of research proposals, strengthening the evidence base for care.</p> <p>Early findings highlight variability in how dementia is diagnosed and recorded in primary care, along with gaps in continuity between primary care and hospital data. These limitations reduce visibility of patient journeys and outcomes. Improving data linkage and standardisation will be critical to support more effective planning, policy, and care delivery.</p>
<p>Strategic collaboration and partnerships</p>	<p>NSW has strengthened strategic collaboration across the dementia research and care system through its partnership with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), aimed at advancing data and insights in primary health care settings. This work has enabled closer alignment between primary care, hospital services, and research partners, supporting a more integrated understanding of dementia care pathways. NSW Health has also worked closely with researchers from NSW based universities and research institutes, partnering on 10 successfully funded Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) dementia projects and contributing to the development of a broader pipeline of research proposals. Together, these collaborations are enhancing the evidence base and supporting more informed policy, planning, and service improvement for people living with dementia in NSW.</p>

Other activities underway

Governments undertake activities across the breadth of the Action Plan. The table below provides an opportunity to showcase any activities that support the broader actions, in addition to the identified priority actions.

ACTIVITY REPORTING – Australian Government		
OTHER ACTIVITIES UNDERWAY		
<p>Note: Australian Government programs and initiatives listed in this section represent a snapshot of key activities or changes relevant to the high-level actions in the reporting period. For more information about current dementia programs visit https://www.health.gov.au/topics/dementia/what-were-doing-about-dementia.</p>		
NDAP Action(s)/ sub-action(s)	Activity	Achievements and Insights
Action 2	Dementia Tech Innovation Showcase, NSW Parliament House	Dementia Australia, with the Parliamentary Friends of Dementia, held a tech innovation showcase at NSW Parliament House on 8 May 2025.
Action 2	Dementia Awareness Event, NSW Health 1 Reserve Rd	The NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation with Dementia Australia hosted a dementia awareness event: Nobody can do it alone: working together to improve dementia care. 150 staff from across NSW Health and its agencies attended.
Action 4	Aged Care Outreach Services	The Aged Care Outreach Services is funded by the Commonwealth’s Strengthening Medicare initiative. It offers time-limited, non-admitted clinical care supporting older people in residential aged care homes and the broader community to manage acute and sub-acute deterioration in their health. The focus is on comprehensive care to older people, including those with dementia, through locally appropriate models of care.
Action 4	Mental Health Residential Aged Care Partnership Services	NSW Health provides top-up funding to a network of specialist residential aged care facilities to support older people with complex mental health needs, including severe BPSD. These mental health-residential aged care partnership services involve specialist clinical and partnership support from NSW Health mental health services and have enabled many older people with complex mental health needs, including severe BPSD, to transition out of hospital into residential aged care with appropriate care and support.
Action 4	Statewide Extreme BPSD Consultation/Liaison Service	This innovative statewide service, funded by NSW Health, has been operational since late-2022 and provides expert clinical review, advice and support to NSW Health inpatient facilities in the management of people experiencing extreme Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia.
Action 5	Built environment	The Australasian Health Facility Guidelines are the nationally endorsed guidelines that set out how health facilities are

		<p>planned, designed and built across Australia and New Zealand. NSW Health has recently participated in a revision of the inpatient unit standardisation with a focus on older people and people living with dementia. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • room sizes, adjacencies and standard components • safety, infection prevention and accessibility • design to support contemporary models of care. <p>In addition, Health Infrastructure has developed a functional briefing framework that describes design requirements for services caring for patients with behaviours and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD) and identifies practical strategies that can be adopted in existing wards to improve the hospital environment for people living with dementia.</p>
Action 7	Dementia Education and Training modules HETI training	<p>The Health Education and Training Institute (HETI) offers a series of eLearning modules on dementia designed for NSW Health staff.</p> <p>https://www.heti.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/694310/Differentiating_dementias_flyerA4.pdf</p>