

THE DIBA

The official newsletter of The Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance



THE DEMENTIA INCLUSIVE BALLINA
ALLIANCE IS AN INCORPORATED NOT FOR
PROFIT COMMUNITY ORGANISATION. WE
STRIVE TO WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY TO
TAKE ACTION TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF
PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR
CARERS.

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www.dib.org.au

DEMENTIA INCLUSIVE BALLINA
ACKNOWLEDGES THE TRADITIONAL
CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND ON WHICH WE LIVE
AND CARE AND PAYS RESPECT TO THE ELDERS
PAST, PRESENT AND EMERGING



IN THIS EDITION

FEATURE ARTICLE - AGING WITH A HEALTHY BRAIN: HOW LIFESTYLE CHANGES COULD HELP PREVENT UP TO 40% OF DEMENTIA CASES

UPCOMING EVENTS - 2023

WEDNESDAY ACTIVITY GROUP
10:30AM - 12:30PM THE BALLINA AEROCLUB

DEMENTIA CAFE

10AM-12PM CAFE SEBASTIAN 2ND MONDAY MONTH 2023 9TH OCT, 13TH NOV, 11TH DEC

DIGITAL LITERACY TRAINING & YOUNGER ONSET PROGRAM ENROLLING NOW

CARERS LUNCH
FRIDAY 20TH OCTOBER
Register Here



AGING WITH A HEALTHY BRAIN: HOW LIFESTYLE CHANGES COULD HELP PREVENT UP TO 40% OF ALL DEMENTIAS

STEFANIE TREMBLAY PHD CANDIDATE IN MEDICAL PHYSICS, STUDYING MRI BIOMARKERS OF DECLINING BRAIN HEALTH IN AGING, CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

PUBLISHED IN THE CONVERSATION: AUGUST 23, 2023 4.54AM AEST

A 65-year-old woman repeatedly seeks medical help for her failing memory. She is first told it's nothing to worry about, then, a year later, that it's "just normal aging." Until finally, the penny drops: "It's Alzheimer's. There is no cure."

Scenarios like this one are too common.

Dementia remains largely underdetected, even in high-income countries such as Canada where rates of undetected cases exceed 60 per cent. Beliefs that cognitive deficits are normal in elderly people, and the lack of knowledge of dementia symptoms and of diagnostic criteria amongst medical doctors have been identified as the main culprits of missed cases and delayed diagnosis.

Age-related memory losses should not be shaken off as just part of normal aging. Occasionally forgetting where we parked the car or where we left our keys can happen to everyone, but when these situations become frequent it's important to seek medical advice.

While many individuals experiencing mild changes in their ability to think and remember information will not go on to develop dementia, in others, these declines constitute an early warning sign. Research has shown that people with mild changes in cognition are at a greater risk of developing dementia later in life.

In fact, it has been demonstrated that <u>the disease process (changes in the brain's structure and metabolism)</u> starts decades before the appearance of symptoms such as memory loss. Moreover, it is <u>increasingly recognized in the scientific community</u> that interventions that aim to slow down or <u>prevent</u> disease development are more likely to be effective when initiated early in the disease course.

Despite this, protocols for early detection <u>are not standard</u> in the medical community, in part because significant gaps remain in our understanding of dementia.

Dementia and an aging population

In my research, I use advanced brain MRI methods to characterize brain health in older adults who are at high risk of developing dementia. The goal is to identify new biomarkers of early pathology, which could lead to improved detection methods in the future.



By 2050, the number of Canadians living with dementia is expected to exceed 1.7 million. (Shutterstock)

The proportion of senior Canadians is growing in our population. Dementia is strongly associated with aging, so the number of Canadians diagnosed with dementia — including Alzheimer's — is expected to rise considerably in the next few decades, reaching an expected <u>1.7 million</u> Canadians by 2050. That's more than the <u>population of Manitoba!</u>

This projected increase will put an enormous pressure on our already strained health-care systems if no significant actions are taken to reverse this trend. This means that effective prevention strategies are now more urgent than ever.

Recent <u>news about promising new drugs</u> to treat Alzheimer's disease also highlight the need for early detection. <u>Clinical trials</u> showed that these drugs are most effective at slowing cognitive decline when administered early in the disease course.

Although these new treatment options represent breakthroughs for the Alzheimer's field, more research is needed. These new therapies act on only one disease process (lowering the levels of amyloid, a substance thought to be toxic for neurons), so they may slow cognitive decline in <u>only a narrow subset of patients</u>. A proper characterization of other processes, on a personalized basis, is required to combine these treatments with other strategies.

This is not to mention the significant increase in financial and human resources that will be necessary to deliver these new treatments, which could hinder access to them, especially in low-and middle-income countries, where <u>dementia cases are rising the most</u>.

Lifestyle and brain health

Lifestyle changes, on the other hand, have been shown to decrease the risk of developing dementia with minimal costs and no side-effects. By making dementia risk assessment a part of routine medical visits for older adults, those who are most at risk could be identified and counselled on how to maintain brain health and cognition. At-risk individuals likely need those interventions the most (potentially a combination of pharmaceutical and lifestyle interventions), but anyone can benefit from adopting healthy lifestyle habits, which are known to protect from diseases not only of the brain, but also of the heart and other organs.



Seniors participating in a seated exercise class. Physical inactivity is a modifiable risk factor for dementia. (Shutterstock)

According to an <u>influential report</u>, published in *The Lancet* in 2020, 40 per cent of dementia cases can be attributed to 12 modifiable risk factors. These include high blood pressure, obesity, physical inactivity, diabetes, smoking, excessive alcohol consumption and infrequent social contact.

This means that, by adopting positive lifestyle habits, we could theoretically prevent about 40 per cent of dementias, according to the report. While there is no guarantee of warding off cognitive decline, people can greatly reduce their risk of dementia by increasing their physical activity levels, ensuring they are mentally active and increasing social contact, while avoiding smoking and limiting alcohol consumption.

Some evidence also suggests that a <u>Mediterranean diet</u>, which emphasizes high consumption of plants (especially leafy greens) while reducing saturated fats and meat intake, <u>is also beneficial for brain health</u>.

In short, by encouraging people to be physically, mentally and socially active, a significant number of dementia cases could potentially be kept at bay.



By encouraging people to be physically, mentally and socially active, we can potentially keep a significant number of dementia cases at bay. (Shutterstock)

Barriers to healthy lifestyles

At the same time, focusing on policy changes could address the societal inequalities that lead to the occurrence of several risk factors, <u>and higher prevalence of dementia</u>, in <u>ethnic minorities</u> and vulnerable populations. Despite having a universal health-care system, Canada still has health inequalities. People <u>at greater risk of health conditions</u> include those with lower socioeconomic status, people with disabilities, Indigenous people, racialized people, immigrants, ethnic minorities and LGBTQ2S people.

Policy changes could address these inequalities not only by promoting healthy lifestyles, but also by taking action to improve the <u>circumstances in which people of these communities live</u>. Examples include <u>improving access to sport centres</u> or prevention clinics for people with lower incomes and designing cities that are conducive to active lifestyles. Governments need to evaluate and address the barriers that prevent people from specific groups from adopting healthy lifestyle habits.

We must be ambitious about prevention. The future of our health-care system and that of our own health depends on it.

CHAIR - Anne Moehead

Welcome to our spring edition of the Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance newsletter. I hope all our readers enjoy this edition of newsletter

Much has happened since our last edition. Most of our time has been consumed by the planning and delivery of the Dementia Action week symposium. I won't talk too much about the symposium as Mel has provided good feedback on the event. I just want to reiterate that it was a successful venture and lifted the profile of Dementia Inclusive Ballina both with our local community, with the politicians and with the media. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to the DIBA planning committee: Gabrielle, Sue, Meg, Louise, and Mel for the fantastic effort on planning the event in such a professional manner and all the help from the rest of the committee for delivering the event over the 22nd & 23rd September. I hope we will have a bit more in the tank to do a similar event in 2024 – but let's not mention that just yet.

I do also want to extend a sincere thank you to Ballina Shire Mayor Sharon Cadwallader, Tamara Smith Member for Ballina for their support and the delivery of the opening address each day and Denise Duroux for the heartwarming welcome to country. A very special thank you must also go to Mandy Nolan for being our MC for both days. She brought laughter, skill, and such professionalism to the event.

As mentioned in our last Newsletter our committee has recognised the need to review the services and supports available for people with young onset dementia. Dr Sabrina Pit has been appointed as the project officer for the program funded by the inGRAINED Foundation in which we aim to: "Maintain life skills for people living with young onset dementia and their carers: improving daily functioning, social connection, mental health, overall wellbeing and inclusiveness". We were able to kick off the initial consultations as a part of the conference. Please contact us if you are interested in being involved in this project.

We have also undertaken a memorandum of understanding with Relationships Australia Inc. for DIBA to be recognised as a Very Friendly Organisation. Relationships Australia is a leading provider of relationship support services for individuals, families and communities, who aim to support all people in Australia to achieve positive and respectful relationships. This group aligns very closely with our DIBA vision and provides a sound partnership with us in wanting to make a difference in our local community.

On behalf of our busy and dedicated committee it is a privilege to work towards making a difference for you, our members.

We thank you.

WEDNESDAY ACTIVITY UPDATE - Meg Pickup



The group's motto is live, love, laugh and be happy. The meetings certainly achieve this through the variety of activities offered. As well as the regular gentle exercises and choir singing since the last newsletter, we have done drumming, shared life stories, enjoyed music by Peter and Joan, cooked a delicious slice eaten at morning tea, completed artworks for the 2024 calendar, started work on a mural, and used items in a museum box to stimulate trips down memory lane. In the coming weeks we'll be doing games and activities, ceramics work, having a BBQ at Missingham Park, reliving the Melbourne Cup with trivia and a hat parade, and make Christmas cards and Christmas treats. We'll end the year with a Christmas lunch to celebrate another successful year.

While the group won't meet at the aeroclub in the last week of 2023 or the first week of 2024 we will meet informally at a local café. There will be more details about this later in the year.

I'd like to thank the people who join us each week for the easy manner with which you interact with each other and join in our activities, and your sense of humour and willingness to laugh at even the pathetic jokes that Joan and I tell. A big thank you to the volunteers who assist each week. The group would not happen without your dedication.

ADVISORY GROUP CHAIR - Gwen Mapstone



How wonderful is September? The weather is warm, beautiful spring flowers and lots of birds' songs in the garden. Over the last couple of months, we have had a special time. New members have joined in the activities with the current members. We have drummed up some good sounds. Story telling about special times and looking at the mystery box and studying old useful items. Baking yummy slices and sandwiches. Morning tea is always a treat. Members sat and completed artwork for next year's calendar. Super effort! Singing our regular songs and enjoying Peter and Joan's delightful performances. A favourite song:

Sing, sing a song, Sing out loud, Sing it strong
Sing of good things not bad, Sing of happy not sad
Just sing. Sing a song.

The Symposium - You will read about it elsewhere in this newsletter. Thank you to the committee who did SO much planning and organising for the symposium! A note I found in a Fortune Cookie: "Smile Five times a day to gain positive energy every day". We Smile a lot at our Wednesday DIB get to gather's so come along and join us! Signing Off Gwen

Symposium Wrap Up

What an event! The Dementia Inclusive Ballina Symposium spanned over 2 days with the first day being for people living with dementia, carers and other community members. A big thankyou to our local Geriatrician, Dr Rachel Jones who was the keynote speaker for the event. Dr Jones shared information about the vulnerabilities facing people living with dementia when faced with natural disasters. She spoke of the importance of disaster preparedness and shared a disaster preparedness plan developed by The Queensland University of Technology for peolple living with dementia.

PREPARING FOR A NATURAL DISASTER: THE GUIDE TO USING REDIPLAN FOR CARERS OF PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA



Mandy Nolan MC, pictured with Anne Moehead, Chair of DIBA

Dementia Inclusive **FUTURE FIT OUR DEMENTIA** COMMUNITY Lessons learnt from recent events

Mandy Nolan MCed the event and provided many laughs over the 2-day event.

Other guest speakers included our very own Dr Hilton Koppe, author of "One Curious Doctor". Dr Koppe plays a key role in his work with Dementia Training Australia in training General Practitioners in the diagnosis and treatment of dementia. Associate Professor Margaret MacAndrew from QUT spoke of the risk of people living with dementia getting lost, the need to act quickly and strategies that can be put into place to avoid getting lost. Dr Frederick Graham spoke to the issues facing people living with dementia in the hospital setting and the project he has developed to improve the experience of staff and people living with dementia in the hospital setting.

Dr Claudia Meyer Senior Research Fellow Bolton Clarke (AAG) talked about situating people with dementia and their carers in the research, policy and practice. Professor Julie Jumeen Executive Dean and Professor of Midwifery, Faculty of Health SCU shared the experience of the Southern Cross University in providing a community hub to support flood affected residents and businesses following the devasting floods that affected the community in 2022. Professor Mark Hughes, Social Work Faculty of Health SCU shared his insights and research into the important topic of inclusive, respectful care for sexual and gender diverse people living with dementia.

Central to both days was the topic of supporting people with younger onset dementia (YoD) and their carers. On day 1 people living with dementia and their carers were provided a space to provide their perspectives on what is needed to better support people living with YoD. On day 2 a panel discussion which included experts in the field and people with a lived experience of YoD discussed the challenges of supporting people with YoD. A big shout out to our sponsors listed below. We couldn't have done it without you!

























Health







Important! AGM Announcement

Members are invited and encouraged to attend the DIBA Annual General Meeting. Come and learn about what has happened over the last year. While there will be elections held for positions on the committee, nominations close before the AGM so anyone who has not formally nominated can be elected to a position on the day.

When: Saturday 25th November, 2023

Where: Crowley Care, 154 Cherry Street, Ballina - Education Centre

Time: 10am

Bunnings BBQ

We held a very successful Bunnings BBQ on the Saturday before Dementia Action Week, a first for the Advisory Group. A big thank you to Home Instead whose staff - David McCurdy (Regional Manager), Leigh Matthews (Community Liaison Manager, Northern Rivers), Carol Peach (Community Liaison Manager, Gold Coast/Tweed), Sam Charles (Recruitment Officer)

and Monique Hartley (advocate and former Care Manager in the Northern Rivers) – volunteered all day. They more than lived up to the company's motto 'To Us It's Personal' and were a pleasure for Anne Moehead and Meg Pickup, who also volunteered on the day, to work with.



David, Anne, Leigh, Carol, Monique

The BBQ was so successful that we had to buy more sausages and loaves of bread and almost ran out of drinks. We made more than \$2100, the most that has ever been made at a Bunnings BBQ that Meg has been involved with. We were blessed with a warm and sunny Spring day that seemed to draw people to Bunnings. The hypnotic aroma of cooked onions also helped with sales.

Celebrating Carers

National Carers Week is an opportunity to raise community awareness among all Australians about the diversity of carers and their caring roles. National Carers Week is an initiative of Carers Australia, funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services, and coordinated with the assistance and participation of the National Carer Network.

To celebrate the important role of carers who care for people with dementia the Dementia Inclusive Alliance is holding a free lunch. People with dementia are also welcome to attend. The Dementia Alliance Committee and the Advisory Group have each received a small grant from Carers NSW to support this important activity.

Recognise and celebrate carers across Australia in 2023 from 15 - 21 October.

National Carers Week will run from Sunday 15 to Saturday 21 October 2023. It is a time to recognise, celebrate and nise awareness about the 2.65 million Australians who provide care and support to a family member or friend.

WHEN: Friday 20th October 2023

WHERE: Function Room at St Mary's Anglican Church, Burnet Street

TIME: 10:30am - 2pm

COST: Free

Numbers are limited to 50 so register early to avoid disappointment.

Register Here











2024 DIB Calendars

Featuring artworks by people living with dementia from our DIBA community

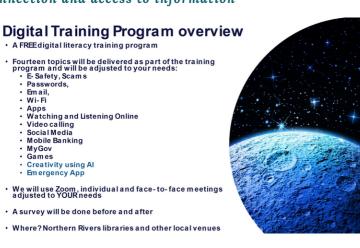
We are taking orders now for the DIBA 2024 calendar which features artwork by people living with dementia. Calendars cost \$15 for Dementia Inclusive Ballina members and \$20 for non-members. These are ideal Christmas presents for family and friends.

Order Here

Projects - Get involved!

2022-23 Investing in Women Funding Program

"Building digital literacy among women with dementia and carers: improving empowerment, social connection and access to information"



Dementia Inclusive Ballina has received a grant to improve the digital skills of community members. At the symposium attendees learnt from local emergency management teams about how to stay safe in natural disasters. They learnt about essential Apps: "Emergency Plus" and "Hazards Near Me". They also learnt tips and tools around staying safe on-line. Further work-shops will be held in the coming months. We are looking for people who would like to learn more about using computers, mobile phones or other technology

2023 Northern Rivers Grants Program inGRAINED Foundation

"Maintaining life skills for people living with younger onset dementia and their carers: improving daily functioning, social connection, mental health, overall wellbeing and inclusiveness"



At the Future Fit Our Dementia Community Symposium, a small co-design workshop was held with carers of people living with younger onset dementia (YoD). On Day 2 a panel discussion titled "Living Well with Younger Onset Dementia: Perspectives, Challenges, and Strategies" was facilitated by Dr Sabrina Pit. Panel members included experts in the field, a person living with YoD and carers of people living with YoD. An action plan will be developed based on these discussions.

Please get in contact if you are a professional that would like to get involved, a person living with YoD, a carer or a interested member of the community who would like to volunteer.

To register your interest for either of these initiatives contact Dr Sabrina Pit 0429 455 720, email dementiainclusiveballina@gmail.com or see website dib.org.au for contact information.

WATCH THIS SPACE

Carers Lunch

When: Friday 20th October, 2023 Where: St Mary's Anglican Church

38-42 Norton Street, Ballina

Time: 10:30am - 2pm

Cost: Free

Register here

Digital Literacy Training Enrolling Now!

For those who are interested in learning new or more skills about using mobile phones and computers, including cyber security, telehealth and much, much more. We will offer free sessions in the months ahead.

All levels are welcome.

Phone Dr Sabrina Pit 0429 455 720

Younger Onset Dementia Program

Please get in contact if you are a professional that would like to get involved, a person living with Younger Onset Dementia, a carer or a interested member of the community who would like to volunteer.

Phone Dr Sabrina Pit 0429 455 720

2024 DIBA Calendars

Featuring artworks produced by local people living with dementia.

Cost:

DIB Members - \$20 Non- Members - \$25

Order Here

Annual General Meeting

When: Saturday 25th November, 2023 Where: Crowley Care, 154 Cherry Street,

Time: 10am

MEMBERS SAY









Great to be back. Good company. Well run. (Judy & Dick)

Agree. Enjoy talking with new friends. (N&G)

An excellent 1st year party celebration. Many thanks to the organisers. Enjoyed by all who attended. (Lyn & Joe)

We would like to add our thanks for a great party last week. Still love the singing and getting together. Hope it continues for a long time. (Peter & Jen)

Another great day as always. Thanks for the camaraderie. (Max & Caroline)

Have had a great time. (Bill)

Job well done. (Dick)

Great company and always enjoyable morning. (Sue)

It's a pleasure to join so many happy people. (Lyn & Joe)





CAFE SEBASTIAN
BALLINA FAIR SHOPPING CENTRE

Dementia Cafe For people living with dementia and their carers

A safe space for people to come together and make new connections

When: 2nd Monday of the month (There will be no April Cafe due to Public Holiday) 8th May, 12th June, 10th July, 14th Aug, 11th Sept, 9th Oct, 13th Nov, 11th Dec Time: 10am - 12pm

Where: Cafe Sebastian
Ballina Fair Shopping Centre
Costact Mel
0409 810 735
www.dib.org.





Southern Cross

Northern NSW Local Health District

University

Health

NSW

crowlev

Calendar 2023 WEDNESDAYS, BALLINA AEROCLUB

10:30AM - 12:30PM

2nd August Drumming

9th August Life story telling

16th August Music and singing with Joan & Peter

23rd August Art Program - 2024 Calendar

30th August Art Program - 2024 Calendar

6th Spetember Baking slices

13th September Art & Craftworks

20th September Music and singing with Joan & Peter

27th September Sharing: - Bring a special item or photo

4th October Special Guest Performer

11th October Games & Activities

18th October Music and singing with Joan & Peter

25th October Art & Craftworks

1st November Melbourne Cup - Hat parade & Trivia

8th November BBQ Missingham Park - Walk & Games

15th November Music and singing with Joan & Peter

22nd November Drumming

29th November Ball Games

6th December Christmas Card Making Activity

13th December Christmas Cooking



BALLINA AND SURROUNDS SUPPORT FOR CARERS & PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

| Every Monday of school term 10am - 11:30am | BEATING HEARTS OF LISMORE A SOCIAL CATHERING FOR OLDER PROPEL LISMORE HEIGHTS SPROTS, EXCERATION AND COMMUNITY CLUB HIGH STREET, LISMORE HEIGHTS HIGH STREET, LISMORE HEIGHTS |
|--|--|
| 2nd Monday of month 10am - 12pm | DEMENTIA CAFE POR PROPAL LYING WITH DEMENTIA AND CARES CAFE DESCRIPANT DALLANA FAIR No month of the property belongs |
| 3rd Monday of month 2pm-3pm | ONLINE CARER SUPPORT GROUP FOR CARERS OF FEORLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA ONLINE SLICE THESE TO JOHN MERTING |
| Every Tuesday of school term 1-30pm - 2-30pm | BALLYAEVER PRELE FOR TENNIS FOR CAMERS. BALLING TENNOS CLUB 69 BUSINET STREET, BALLINA CLUB SEERS TO ADDRESSES. |
| 2nd Tuesday of month 10am - 12pm | CARER SUPPORT GROUP FOR CARERS OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA LIMINGS STORES AND SPORTS CLUE AND CLUTE AVE. GOOMELLARAM STORES STORES AND SPORTS CLUE AND CLUTE AVE. GOOMELLARAM |
| 3rd Tuesday of month 10am - 12pm | CASINO LIBRARY ACTIVITY FOR CAREIS AND PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA CASINO LIBRARY & CARRIAN FLACE: CARRIO LIBRARY & CARRIAN FLACE: CARRIO |
| Every Wednesday 10-30am - 12-30pm | DIB ACTIVITY GROUP FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA AND CARERS BALLINA ARROCULE DA ACCESS BOAD, SOUTHERN CROSS DRIVE, BALLINA TO THAN IN THE PEOPLE DAY ENGINEE FOR EVERTURE BROOMANDER |
| 2rd Wednesday of | THE CARERS COFFEE CLUB |

BALLINA F2F PEER SUPPORT GROUP

NEED SUPPORT

MY AGED CARE

Information and access to aged care services 1800 200 422

www.myagedcare.gov.au

THE CARER GATEWAY

Information about emergency respite and caer support 1800 422 737

THE DEMENTIA OUTREACH SERVICE

Dementia advice and support
Ballina Community Health
02 6620 6274

CARERS NSW
Information for carers
02 9280 4744

DEMENTIA AUSTRALIA 24 HOUR HELPLINE 1800 100 500 www.dementia.org.au

Meals on Wheels



FORWARD WITH DEMENTIA

Information for people living with dementia, carers and health professionals www.forwardwithdementia.au

NSW ELDER ABUSE HELPLINE 1300 651 192 www.eapu.com.au

BYRON SHIRE RESPITE CARERS COFFEE CLUB

Support group for carers Emma White - 02 6685 1629



BEATING HEARTS OF LISMORE

Is a FREE, volunteer led, weekly social gathering for older people living in the Lismore area.

Where: Lismore Heights Sports, Recreation and Community Club High Street, Lismore Heights (downstairs, enter from carpark)

When: Mondays (excluding school and public holidays)

Time: 10-11.30am