



THE DIBA



The official newsletter of The Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance



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

dementiainclusiveballina@gmail.com
www.dementiainclusiveballina.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

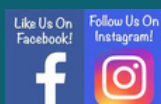
FEATURE ARTICLE - ROUND UP FOR 2024

UPCOMING EVENTS - 2024 - 2025

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

DEMENTIA CAFE
 10AM-12PM CAFE SEBASTIAN 2ND MONDAY MONTH

YOUNGER ONSET DEMENTIA CARER SUPPORT PROGRAM
 10-12PM EVERY 1ST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH,
 LOCATION: SUMMERLAND FARM, ALSTONVILLE



WOW! 2024 WHAT A YEAR

CHRISTMAS TIPS

Christmas means many things to many people—from food, family and festivities, to religious observance and quiet reflection. But for people affected by dementia it can be more difficult.

There is always so much to consider at Christmas, and that's especially true for carers.

So, with help from our online community [Dementia Support Forum](#), we've compiled a few tips to help you make the most out of the festive season. Here are some tips to help you support your loved one (and yourself) this Christmas.

Here are 8 ways you can support people with dementia at Christmas.

1. Put decorations up gradually

Introduce the Christmas environment slowly. Think about putting decorations up gradually over a few days so it doesn't come as a big change to the person's usual setting. If possible, try and involve the person in putting up the decorations.

2. Keep it simple and familiar

Someone with dementia may feel overwhelmed over the Christmas period, so it's best not to overdo it. Keeping the day's activities low-key will help your loved one to relax. If they usually go to church around this time but are unable to, consider online or televised services. Sticking to a familiar routine is also a good idea where possible. Having meals at regular times and in familiar surroundings will help to limit any potential confusion.

3. Get everyone involved

There are many ways to involve people living with dementia at Christmas time – from something as simple as putting up the nativity scene or hanging a bauble on the tree, to doing a spot of Christmas shopping. Playing Christmas music and singing favourite carols can be a simple way to involve the person in the festivities. The important thing is that they feel included.

4. Create a quiet area

A large number of guests can be overwhelming, so ask family and friends to spread out their visits over the festive period. If things do get busy, designate one room or space in the home a 'quiet area' where your loved one can relax without loud noise. For some people, listening to music on headphones can be a good way to block out the noise and feel calmer. This will help reduce the possibility of the person feeling overwhelmed, and allow them to be involved at their own pace.

5. Bring back old memories

Whether it's an old song they used to enjoy or a classic Christmas film, find something you can take part in that is important to the person. Making a family photo album or memory box could be a nice way to spend time together. Be mindful that there may be things the person does not wish to reminisce about, such as upsetting events and people that they miss.

6. Be mindful of food

Although many people eat a lot at Christmas, a full plate can be daunting for someone who has difficulties with eating. If you're doing the serving, try not to overload your loved one's plate, or consider finger foods instead. We've also got lots more general tips to help with [eating and drinking](#) on our website.

7. Be flexible

It's easy to get caught up in Christmas traditions, timings and how things have always been done in the family, but your festive season might begin to look different as [dementia progresses](#). It's always worth having a plan B, and be prepared to change your plans if a particular element isn't working.

8. Plan ahead

Consider minimising situations where the person with dementia is put on the spot to remember names. Think about giving a gentle reminder each time a new person arrives, or ask that people introduce themselves. Speaking with family members in advance, especially younger children, may help avoid embarrassing moments for someone with dementia too.

If the person with dementia is living in a care home, it can be helpful to ask the home in advance what their plans are for Christmas Day - particularly if they have restrictions on visiting times or amount of people allowed at any one time.

This article was first published in 2018 and was most recently updated in October 2024.

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/blog/how-support-dementia-christmas>



CHAIR - Anne Moehead

Merry Christmas to every one of our members and good health and wellbeing for 2025.



Its hard to believe the year has flown so quickly. Is this something that happens as we age?? Well, that's my excuse anyhow.

We are a not-for-profit organisation. Our main aim is to deliver support, resources, activities, and information for our community. Any funds raised are used to facilitate this. For us to be sustainable, we regularly seek opportunities to engage in fundraising activities, applying for grants, as well being fortunate to have received donations for which we are grateful. All these efforts have improved our financial position. Our committee has been tireless in its pursuits. We received several small grants throughout the year generally targeting specific projects, thanks to Sabrina and her diligence and skill in applying for grants. One outstanding donation was from the Rippon family from the sale of a cow!! Our annual symposium delivers a positive impact on our finances and is well worth the effort it takes to organise. I extend my appreciation to all members of our team for their contributions hard work and vision in taking us through 2024.

Our membership is growing slowly, and Kylie has taken on the challenge to update our renewal system. Of course, we would like to encourage more folk to join us. Please invite anyone you know to become a member.

I would like to acknowledge each of the organisations who have supported us with various activities and events throughout the year: Alstonville Plateau Sports, Ballina Lions Club, Ballina Aeroclub, Ballina Heating & Outdoor Leisure, Bunnings Ballina, Café Sebastian, Loida's Garden Centre, Paradise FM, Rainbow Region Dragon Boat Club, Rotary club of Ballina on Richmond, Ballina Shire Council, Ramada Ballina, Healthy North Coast PHN North Coast, TAFE NSW, Nutricia, Southern Cross University, Tamar Village Pharmacy, Home Instead, RSL Ballina Club Grants, North Coast Orthopaedics, Queensland University of Technology, St Andrews, Carers NSW, Honey Bee Homes, Summerland Bank, AIDACare, Aspire 4 Life and Dementia Services Australia. As well as the following for ongoing and In-kind support: Crowley Care, Copy That @profsec, NNSWLHD, Dementia Australia, Dementia Training Australia, Forward with Dementia, Mandy Nolan.

There are several untiring volunteers, who need to be recognised and thanked, they continue to support us with baking, singing, lots of wisdom, information technology and kindness: Ann McInnes, Susan Burgess, Jeanette Dodd, Judy Latta, Jai Lamerton, Robert Lingard, Leigh Matthews, Joan Pickup, Laurel Thurn, Rosemary Simeon, and Valda Smith, I am sorry if I have omitted anyone. Sandra, Meg and Sabrina follow with an update of activities at the Aero club, the monthly Dementia Café at Café Sebastian and the Younger Onset Dementia Group.

Our 2024 Symposium: *Fostering Resilience to Dementia: Recognising and Reducing Risk*, held on 25 October was a great success. Approximately 140 delegates attended. We were so privileged to have Professor Sue Kurrle and Professor Ian Cameron as our keynote speakers, plus, other recognised speakers in the field of dementia who generously donated their time and expertise to present. Mandy Nolan delivered her role as MC with flair and individuality. We thank her for her support.

I think I speak on behalf of every member of our team, when I say the most important impetus for us is the engagement with the coming together, and support we are offering to our community. The activities over the past year demonstrate the importance of connection and interaction that is offered, which remains a priority for us.

As I reflect on our achievements over the past year, I feel excited to be part of a great team, I sincerely thank each of you and especially my Co-Chair Val and Meg who always keep me on the right path. We plan to continue our good work and look forward to new and exciting projects for 2025.



What is important to Chris and I and others suffering with Dementia !

- ❖ The importance of identifying young onset Dementia and provide more resources to look after younger patients
- ❖ Early Diagnosis
- ❖ Early intervention with family support
- ❖ Family role with Death planning, carer support, power of Attorney, enduring guardianship and documenting a will.
- ❖ Early coordination of services, NDIS that provides funding and a pathway forward....
- ❖ Need for funding for **DEMENTIA CARE NURSES**
- ❖ Understanding that we are living the dreaming and nightmare at the same time...
- ❖ More Education and awareness of Dementia.

WEDNESDAY ACTIVITY UPDATE - Meg Pickup



SUMMER ACTIVITY GROUP REPORT

The Wednesday Activity Group continues to provide an engaging program for people living with dementia and their carers. We have a core of regulars as well as people who have newly joined attending each week. Attendance ranges from 25 to 44 with the average about 30 each week. One carer commented "its hard to get hubby out of bed every day except Wednesday, he just gets up and dressed by 7am ready to come to the activity group".

We now have 50 matching chairs at the aero club thanks to the generosity of Ann McInnes, one of our carers, who donated \$5000 towards the purchase, with the remaining amount covered by a donation from Ballina Lions Club. Shiela Aveling from Ballina Heating and Outdoor Leisure ordered the chairs and covered the cost of transport to the Aero club from Brisbane, and disposing of the rubbish. The Activity Group is most appreciative of the support we've received to update the chairs, which will remain DIBA's property.

A highlight of September was the very successful Bunnings BBQ, where we made almost \$2100. Home Instead staff were rostered on the whole day. The BBQ could not have been held without their help. Deb Riemann a carer also volunteered on the day. A big thank you to Leigh Matthews who organised the Home Instead staff, and Deb for your support for this important fundraiser.

In October the DIB committee in conjunction with the Advisory Group held a very successful carers luncheon during Carers Week held at Crowley Care. In November, we celebrated the Lismore Show, one of the oldest agricultural shows in NSW. As well as talking about the various events at the show our volunteers prepared mini hot dogs and mini-Pluto pups, (also known as Dagwood dogs) for morning tea. Popcorn and fairy floss also featured.

Bunnings undertook gardening at the aeroclub, weeding out the garden beds and planting new plants. The gardens looked good initially. Unfortunately, the weeds have started to come back, and the rabbits have had a feast on some of the new plantings.

The annual Ballina-on-Richmond Rotary Duck Race was held in Novemebr. We entered a duck in the best-dressed duck event. The duck was dressed by four generations of June's family, with the youngest member naming the duck Pom Pom! We thought Pom Pom was beautiful, although she didn't win a prize, the other ducks had to be impressive to beat her. Pom Pom has pride of place at the Aero club. DIBA was one of the beneficiaries of the funds raised advice is we will receive \$4000. Thanks so much to Rotary.

The Activity Group will share **Christmas lunch on December 18th** the last formal meeting of the year. However, members have the opportunity to meet informally at Café Sebastian, Ballina Fair on Friday, December 27th 2024, and Friday, January 3rd 2025, from 10:00-12:00. Contact Meg on meg.pickup1@gmail.com if you would like to attend by Thursday, December 26 and January 2 so she can let Karen from the café know.

The Activity Group will start back up at the Aero club on Wednesday, January 8, 2025. We are the only group that meets 52 weeks of the year. We recognise the importance of people living with dementia and their carers having a routine.

Best wishes for the festive season to all DIB members. May 2025 be full of all you wish for and more. I'm looking forward to catching up in the New Year.

The 2025 DIBA Calendar with artwork created by people living with dementia is now on sale. They cost \$15 for DIB members and \$20 for non-members. Calendars will be printed as ordered. They can be ordered through the Activity Group or by email to meg.pickup1@gmail.com or admin@dementiainclusiveballina.org.au

ADVISORY GROUP CHAIR - Sandra Signorini

Dementia can often lead to feelings of confusion and isolation. With our Wednesday Calendar of Activities in preparation for 2025, we try to select suitable activities tailored to the interests of our members which can rekindle joy and promote a sense of purpose.

Engaging in creative endeavours such as arts and crafts, music, gardening, or even simple puzzles can stimulate cognitive function and enhance emotional wellbeing. These activities not only help reduce anxiety but can also create cherished moments for families to share.

As with our activities physical exercise is essential for everyone, but it holds particular importance for individuals suffering from dementia. Exercise can improve mood, enhance social connections, and boost overall health so our meetings each week commence with gentle exercise everyone can participate in.

Creating an environment that nurtures engagement toward physical activities and healthy eating is more crucial than ever. We continue to encourage families, caregivers, and communities to come together to support individuals with dementia. Share stories, ideas for group activities, and nutritional tips: collaboration fosters increased well-being and creates a stronger network of support so come along to our Café Dementia on the second Monday of each month 10.00am to 12.00pm at Sebastian Café, Ballina Fair Shopping Centre.

I attended the DIBA Symposium, which offered valuable insights and fostered important conversations about this issue in our community. As a caregiver, I found the presentations and discussions interesting and informative.

We would also like to highlight the creative contribution from our member, Judy Latta. Judy has been working tirelessly to create beautiful mosaic ceramic pots, each uniquely crafted and planted with lovingly donated plants. The Loida's Garden Centre fundraiser not only added beauty but also serves as a testament to the talent within our community. Stay tuned for the next raffle.

Our Bunnings BBQ was another event that raised an impressive \$2,100! A heartfelt thank you to everyone who volunteered their time, cooked, served, and, of course, to all who stopped by to support our cause. Your generosity fuels our mission and helps us make a difference in our community

Sandra Signorini Advisory Group Chair



CHRISTMAS ICE CREAM CAKE

Ingredients

2L tub vanilla ice cream
1 packet Maltesers
1 Mars bar
1 Milky way bar
1 Picnic bar
1 Cherry ripe bar

Method

Soften ice cream
Line 2 or 3L bowl with 2 layers of glad wrap
Cut Maltesers in half
Cut each of the bars into pieces about the same size as the Maltesers
Mix dry ingredients into ice cream
Put mix in bowl, cover with 2 layers of glad wrap
Return to freezer
Turn out on plate
Serve

The ice cream can be loaded with as much of the dry ingredients as you want
Thanks to Valda Smith for this delicious Christmas recipe
ENJOY !!



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE - Kylie Strom



Our membership renewal period has commenced, memberships are due on **December 1 2024 for the year of 2025**, please accept this as a friendly reminder to update you membership per the below. Thank you to those who have renewed promptly already.

For those who joined us from 1 September 2024 you do not need to renew.

The annual subscription fees are as follows:

A. Individual Concession \$5.00 -Person with dementia, Carer/Advocate, Pensioner, Student

B. Doubles Concession \$5.00 - for two people: Person with dementia and carer /advocate

C. Full fee \$15.00 - All other individual membership

Of our 100 member, it is interesting to note;

- 37% include people who are living with dementia
- 20% of our members are carers
- 43% are professionals or interested parties

We are always very keen to increase our membership benefits and distribution, if you have any ideas or feedback on how we can do this please let me know.

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Kylie Strom
Membership Officer

Fees can be deposited directly to:
Summerland Bank: Dementia Inclusive Ballina
BSB: 728 728 Account Number: 22334456

PLEASE NOTE YOUR INITIAL, FAMILY NAME AND MEMBERSHIP ON YOUR TRANSACTION
E.G., A SMITH MEMBERSHIP

DONATIONS ARE VERY WELCOME

If you have any feedback or wish to cease your membership, please do not hesitate to contact Kylie Strom on 0401 648 938 or email dementiainclusiveballina@gmail.com



Younger Onset Dementia Carer Support Group by Dr Sabrina Pit

What have we been up to?



All things evaluation

In 2024, we started a more formal evaluation of our work to see what kind of impact we have. In this newsletter we discuss our 2nd aim.

Aim 2: Increased confidence in daily functioning

Positives:

- Tips and tricks that are being shared.
- Having a laugh if things go wrong.
- Sharing information that helps us improve daily functioning such as accessing services and places to go.

Negatives

- There is not much we can change in improving the daily functioning for the people we look after. Regardless of what we do daily functioning will go down over time so a support group can't help with that, but the support group provides empathy and understanding that other people can't give us because they don't understand.

A lot of activities have happened in the last 3 months! We thank all those who have helped us organise activities and supported our work. I thank Chris McNally in particular for all her guidance and wisdom.

- **4th October**, we had a coffee morning to catch up.
- **11 October**, we hosted a carers lunch in Bangalow. This was funded by the NSW Government Department of Communities and Justice via Carers NSW.
- **25th October**, we hosted a YoD panel session at the Symposium to increase carers and professionals YoD knowledge. This has been reported on elsewhere in the newsletter. Chris and Craig McNally were the stars by sharing their lived experiences. Some carers were also funded by DIBA to attend the conference and catch up.
- **1 November**, we welcomed Honeybee Homes as guest speakers to discuss respite and longer term care for people with YoD.
- **6 December**, was a lovely Christmas catch up
- We have won a grant from **Australia Post**, This allows us to continue our monthly meetings and continue our research and advocacy work.
- We have promoted our group in the National Special Interest Group YoD newsletter.
- We have also completed two radio interviews on Young Onset Dementia in September and October, with a special thank you to Kylie Strom.

Whats next?

- **Every 1st Friday of the month 10-12 noon at Summerland Farm, Alstonville..**
- Please check our website for event updates.

Our group is not limited to Ballina. People are from across Northern NSW, so please share with your patients, clients, friends and family. When you talk to others, it will help raise awareness of young onset dementia and we can find other people who may just need some social connections with other people to feel a little bit better and heard!

We love to hear from you, please contact Sabrina on 0429455720 or admin@dementiainclusiveballina.org.au:

- If you are a professional & would like to share knowledge at a meeting or promote our work with your clients
- If you would like more information
- If you are interested in providing funding or in-kind donations for future activities.

I AM GOING TO USE PICTURES AND VISUAL CUES AS REMINDERS ON THE KITCHEN CUPBOARDS - CARER

WEDNESDAY ACTIVITY CALENDAR
AERO CLUB BALLINA

NORTHERN RIVERS YOUNGER
ONSET DEMENTIA CARER
SUPPORT PROGRAM

DECEMBER 2024 TO FEBRUARY 2025

December-Christmas

- 4th: Christmas craft making
- 11th: Christmas cooking – Decorating gingerbread men/house
- 18th: Christmas Lunch
- 25th: Christmas Day no group
- 30th: Post Christmas catch up 10am at Café Sebastian’s Ballina Fair

January

- 2nd: New Year catch up 10am at Café Sebastian, Ballina Fair
- 8th: Music with Stan
- 15th: Reminiscing with museum box
- 22nd: Australia Day activities
- 29th: Lunar New Year activities

February

- 5th: Craft
- 12th: St Valentine’s Day activities
- 19th: Drumming
- 26th: Music with Stan

March

- 5th: Art/Craft/Games
- 12th: Music Muster
- 19th: St Patrick’s Day activities
- 26th: Reminiscing – medical improvements in our lifetime

WHEN:

- FRIDAY 3 JANUARY 10-12 NOON
- FRIDAY 7 FEBRUARY 10-12 NOON
- FRIDAY 7 MARCH 10-12 NOON
- FRIDAY 4 APRIL 10-12 NOON

WHERE: SUMMERLAND FARM, 253 WARDELL ROAD, ALSTONVILLE NSW 2477

JANUARY TOPIC: TBA
FEBRUARY TOPIC: TBA
MARCH TOPIC: TBA

Phone Dr Sabrina Pit 0429 455 720



WATCH THIS SPACE

Younger Onset Dementia Program

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

Contact Dr Sabrina Pit 0429 455 720 or admin@dementiainclusiveballina.org.au

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR NEWS OF THE 2025 SYMPOSIUM

October 17th 2025 Ballina RSL





BALLINA AND SURROUNDS

SUPPORT FOR CARERS & PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

Every Monday
of school term
10am - 11:30am

BEATING HEARTS OF LISMORE

A SOCIAL GATHERING FOR OLDER PEOPLE
LISMORE HEIGHTS SPORTS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY CLUB
HIGH STREET, LISMORE HEIGHTS
No need to register Not run on public holidays



2nd Monday of
month
10am - 12pm

DEMENTIA CAFE

FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA AND CARERS
CAFE SEBASTIAN, BALLINA FAIR
No need to register Not run on public holidays



3rd Monday of
month
2pm- 3pm

ONLINE CARER SUPPORT GROUP

FOR CARERS OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA
ONLINE
[CLICK HERE TO JOIN MEETING](#)



Every Tuesday
of school term
1:30pm - 2:30pm

RALLY4EVER

FREE & FUN TENNIS FOR CARERS
BALLINA TENNIS CLUB, 69 BURNET STREET, BALLINA
[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



2nd Tuesday of
month
10am - 12pm

CARER SUPPORT GROUP

FOR CARERS OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA
LISMORE WORKERS AND SPORTS CLUB, 202 OLIVER AVE, GOONELLABAH
No need to register



3rd Tuesday of
month
10am - 12pm

CASINO LIBRARY ACTIVITY

FOR CARERS AND PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA
CASINO LIBRARY, 4 GRAHAM PLACE, CASINO
No need to register



Every Wednesday
10:30am - 12:30pm

DIB ACTIVITY GROUP

FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA AND CARERS
BALLINA AEROCLUB, GA ACCESS ROAD, SOUTHERN CROSS DRIVE, BALLINA
No need to register [VISIT WEBSITE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION](#)



3rd Wednesday of
month
10am - 12pm

THE CARERS COFFEE CLUB

FOR CARERS
HOTEL BRUNSWICK HEADS, 4 MULLUMBIMBI STREET, BRUNSWICK HEADS
Contact Emma White Phone: 66851629



Last Wednesday of
month
10am - 11:30am

BALLINA F2F PEER SUPPORT GROUP

FOR CARERS
CHERRY STREET SPORTS CLUB, 68 CHERRY STREET, BALLINA
Contact Chris de Brenni Phone: 0497176945



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 carer 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

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 / LBH Ward C7 fundraiser

28th September 7pm Rochdale Theatre

<https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1280938>



Beating Hearts of Lismore

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

JOIN US:

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

Cost: FREE