



THE DIBA



The Official Newsletter of The Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance



WELCOME 2025

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 - WHATS NEW FOR 2025

UPCOMING EVENTS - 2025

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

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



PREPARING FOR A NATURAL DISASTER

Natural disasters and people living with dementia

by Dr Meredith Gresham, Centre for Healthy Brain Ageing (CHeBA)

Our thoughts are with people on the east coast of Australia affected by the recent storms and flooding, and especially those people affected who are living with dementia and their families. For some, the flood peak has passed and the thankless task of cleaning up is just commencing.

It can be especially challenging for people living with dementia to cope with, and mentally process, the devastation. For carers, coping with the crisis and maintaining the care and support role can be overwhelming.

After a major flood in the US, researchers* reported carers of people living with dementia saying they “knew how to be a carer” and they knew basically “how to manage in a disaster” (most had experienced flood before) but they felt ill-equipped to manage the two roles together.

Most carers reported the person they support found managing an evacuation very distressing, and that distress negatively affecting other people. For people with dementia living alone, or those supported by family who lived at a distance, communication was difficult, or became impossible as telecommunications were cut off.

Managing care and support in a natural disaster

Carers described preparedness as key.

- Be prepared to disclose that you, or the person you support, has dementia so people will understand that you may need additional help.
- Ask for what you need, such as sitting in a quieter area. Evacuation centres can be noisy and chaotic.
- The person with dementia and the carer should carry each other's contact details and any emergency medical instructions. This is especially important if you are separated.
- Remaining calm is essential, but easier said than done. Turn off blanket media coverage of the disaster. Use music to calm and distract. Headphones and a playlist of familiar music can help.
- Write a recovery plan. In a crisis it can be hard to think straight but writing down what needs to be done after the crisis may help. A plan will help you feel more in control. For example, if your home has been inundated, you will need:
 - temporary accommodation;
 - help to inspect safety of your home before going inside;
 - help clean out your house;
 - help to apply for disaster relief payments and insurance claims.
- When family or friends offer help, it can also be overwhelming. Use your recovery plan to allocate jobs to trusted family and friends.
- Dementia will affect a person's ability to process a crisis. If someone else is providing support for the person you care for, write down basic information about their routine, things they enjoy and take comfort from.

What family and friends can do

If you are a friend or family member not affected by flood there are things you can do to help:

- Listen and be patient. Talking about the crisis helps people process the trauma. Be aware that some people who experienced trauma will talk about it in their own time.
- Where possible, spend time with the person with dementia. Listen to their experiences and remain positive.
- Help the person with dementia resume as normal as possible routine as soon as possible. If your family member has been evacuated they may want to get home quickly, but can only do so when State Emergency Services have given an 'All Clear'.
- Work with your family member to develop a flood recovery plan and allocate jobs to trusted family members, friends or contractors.
- Help with documentation. Take photos and keep records of damaged goods and discarded items as this can be helpful for insurance claims. Keep receipts for new items and cleaning supplies.

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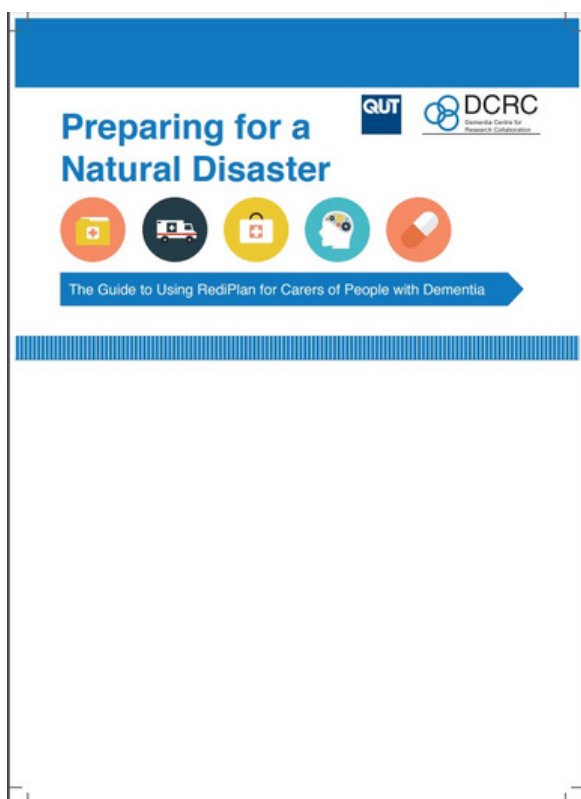
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Watch out for donation scams

- Be aware of fraud. Disasters bring out the best in people, but also sometimes the worst. Some people with dementia may be very trusting. Be on hand or on the phone to support decisions, e.g. do not pay in full in advance for any repair work, ensure that your family member does not give out personal information or bank account details
- Psychological trauma from disasters is common. For some, it may remain long after the disaster. Supportive counselling for the person with dementia and carer may be helpful. For support call the National Dementia Helpline counselling service on 1800 100 500.
- Dementia Support Australia (1800 699 799) provide advice and assistance for the person with dementia who has psychological or behavioural support needs.
- Your GP can also help to arrange a Mental Health Care Plan with subsidised visits to a psychologist or social worker.

For more information on this website, visit the article: [5.13 Plan for emergencies.](#)

*Gibson, A., Walsh, J., Brown, L.M. (2018) A perfect storm: Challenges encountered by family caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's disease during natural disasters. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work.* 61 (7) 775-789. doi.org/10.1080/01634372.2018.1474158



Here is a great resource compiled by QUT: click on the picture and download the resource.



Take heart the sun will eventually shine again

CHAIR - Anne Moehead**WELCOME 2025**

I am writing this newsletter whilst the North Coast is facing a once in a life time weather event 'Cyclone Alfred'. I am thinking of all of our members and the difficulty that a natural disaster can present especially if you are a person living with dementia or a carer of someone with dementia. We all face adversity in a very individual manner, often based on our past experiences and our personal resilience. It is a time when we often have to ask for help or reach out to someone and offer help. Many lessons were learnt from the 2022 Lismore flood: the emphasis on networking, accessing specialist knowledge and insights about the needs and characteristics of the local community, identifying particularly client groups who are often vulnerable to the immediate and longer-term impacts of disaster events, and being prepared. Following the event the importance of sharing disaster recovery that affects human and social wellbeing and assisting in informing the wider community of recovery operations and engaging the community in the recovery process.

We do this in the hope that future events will be better managed and the impact will be lessened, well that's the hope anyway. As we come out the other side of this major event and review how we coped there maybe many more lessons to be learnt.

My thoughts are to be prepared and if possible access all the resources that can be of help.

The Emergency App is one that I can definitely recommend as well as putting together a plan well in advance of any future emergency.

Stay safe!!

Requesting Assistance – Stay informed

- 000
- Mobile App
- Emergency Plus
- Stay informed
- Emergency Broadcasts
- Fires Near Me



YOUR PLAN

Have an individual Plan should include the following considerations

- How will I receive Emergency Alerts and Warnings
- What is my housing plan
- How will I evacuate and what route
- How and I going to communicate with family/friends
- What do I need if I have to evacuate
- What will I do with my pets and anything left behind.

Evacuation - Emergency Go Bag

Needs to be small
and easy to carry

- Documents (Insurance Currency Certificates, Passports, pet ownership including microchip details, Bank Account details, Wills)
- Valuables (What is important to you)
- Money
- Medication
- Change of Clothes
- Water and food (small amount)
- Phone and (spare battery)



WEDNESDAY ACTIVITY UPDATE - Meg Pickup



The Activity Group has been very active since the December Newsletter. A diverse calendar of events for our weekly meetings has been developed. The word is getting out about the group, so we are averaging 30 people including volunteers attending each week. The group has a wonderful feel about it. It is like a large family gathering each week.

Our self-catered Christmas lunch was celebrated with the singing of Christmas carols, a visit by Santa Claus, Kriss Kringle presents beneath a Christmas tree, lucky door prizes and entertainment by Helen Jarvis, *see below photos of the day*.

Since starting back at the Aero Club we've been entertained by guitarist and singer Stan Blundell with songs from the 50s, 60s and 70s. We keenly joined in with the sing-along and some people were motivated to dance.

The next week we used the Museum Box, created using items to stimulate memories. Reminiscing is encouraged for people living with dementia, their carers, family members and friends. The items chosen from the box stimulated interesting comments, which people enjoyed.

Australia Day was celebrated with party pies, lamingtons, bags of typical Australian lollies, a matching activity of Aussie slang words and their meaning and the singing of Classic Australian songs.

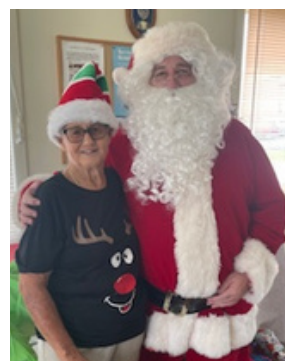
Lunar New Year commenced on January 29 heralding the beginning of the Year of the Snake. *Kung hei fat choi* - "Wishing you prosperity!" is the Cantonese greeting for the New Year. We shared fortune cookie messages, distributed *lai sees* and individual credit card-sized cards of personalised information about the Lunar Zodiac, which is based on 12 animals. This included date of birth, Zodiac animal, and the animal's personality traits. For example, the snake's traits are charming, gregarious, introverted, generous, and smart.

Other activities included a games day, celebrating St Valentine's Day and drumming. It's always wonderful to watch people living with dementia and carers enthusiastically working together at their chosen activity. The competitive spirit was alive and well. St Valentine's Day was celebrated with beautifully decorated cup cakes made by Jeanette, information about its origins and finished with a pass the parcel activity, enjoyed by all. Drumming was a hit. The drumming patterns were shown on the television and the session led by Susan and Robert.

The first session in March was cancelled because of Cyclone Alfred. This only the second time we've had to cancel a meeting since we started in early July 2022. The 12th March will be the Seniors Music Muster at the Ballina RSL Club. Premier Chris Minns said Alfred is like 'an unwelcome guest: arrived late and stayed too long'.

A big thank you to the volunteers. Without their support there would be no activity group. Special thanks to Jeanette, Valda and Rosemary for their cooking and Valda and the two Susans for their sandwich making. They create a wonderful morning tea, which people look forward to each week.

I hope all people who attend the activity group have fared well in the recent foul weather and when we gather again we can share stories about our experiences.



ADVISORY GROUP CHAIR - Sandra Signorini

The Advisory Group is a membership of people living with dementia and their carers who provide and campaign for enhancing the environment for those living with dementia.

A critical area that has emerged to us is the urgent need for improved availability of Respite Care for caregivers. We recognize that the mental and physical health of caregivers is paramount, yet the current options for respite in our area are inadequate and not widely promoted. This is an area where we can advocate for change, ensuring that caregivers receive the support they need to continue their essential roles.

On a personal note, I recently took a three-week break from caregiving at the end of last year. I did a tour of Antarctica, which was not only magnificent but refreshed me immensely. This time away significantly improved my well-being and has positioned me to tackle the challenges of the year ahead with renewed energy.

I encourage all caregivers to consider the importance of self-care and the benefits of taking time for themselves.

Thanks Sandra for sharing these amazing photos from the The Western Peninsula in Antarctica



CHOCOLATE BIRDS NESTS



Preparation

Using butter or cooking spray, grease a 12-count muffin tin.

Total Time 10minutes

Ingredients

3 cups Rice Bubbles

1/2 cup smooth peanut butter

1 cup milk chocolate chips

1tbs maple syrup

36 Cadbury mini easter eggs

Method

Melt the chocolate in the microwave safe bowl,
on low power for 30-second intervals.

Tip: Stir in between each interval until the chocolate is fully melted.
Stir the peanut butter into the chocolate as soon as you take it out of the
microwave.

Add the melted chocolate, peanut butter mix and maple syrup
to the bowl of Rice Bubbles and stir until cereal is fully coated.

Scoop the mixture into the prepared muffin tin so that cups are full.
Hollow out the centre of each bird nest with a round measuring spoon.

Tip: When you are forming the nests, make sure that the edges come up
enough so that the eggs won't roll off the sides.
Place muffin tin in the fridge or freezer until the bird nests are hardened.
Place Cadbury Mini Eggs in the centre of each nest.

Enjoy!

Storage:

To Store: Store the nests in an airtight container in the fridge
for up to 1 week.

To Freeze: Freeze in an airtight container for up to 1 month.
Place in the fridge to defrost before serving.

Thank you Susan for this delicious receipe

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE - Kylie Strom



Thank you to everyone for renewing your membership for 2025 and welcome to those who are new to our group.

This year our group comprises of:

- 16% of people having an interest or on the DIBA committee
- We have an even 38% each for people living with dementia and carers. We have had an increase in carers joining us from last years members.

Please encourage people in the community to join us....Your membership is what keeps us going.

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

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



Welcome Helen Rankin Jarvie

We are so fortunate to welcome Helen Rankin Jarvie to our committee following her election at the 2024 AGM.

Helen has a strong background in management and has recently retired from her position as the practice manager at Alstonville Clinic.

For the last 5 years, Helen has also been the primary carer for her mother, who is living with dementia. This experience has given Helen a greater empathy and understanding for the challenges that families and individuals face in caring for their loved ones.

For Helen, finding a balance between her nurturing role, her family responsibilities and her love of sport and travel, is both challenging and rewarding. "I love that I can spend this time with my mum...doing things that we both enjoy."

The committee is so fortunate to have Helen join our group and share her experiences and knowledge.

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 3rd aim.

Aim 3: Increased feelings of social inclusion

Positives:

- We are socially inclusive as we also welcome: young adult children who regularly attend support groups, parents of children with Down Syndrome, and health care providers.
- Family outings are highly positive
- We include professional NDIS carers during family ad-hoc outings as well, which leads to more information sharing and better quality care for our loved ones.

- We have had some sad moments with two people living with Younger Onset Dementia passing away in the last few months. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families.
- **16 January**, we had a fun social activity at Byron Bay Wildlife Sanctuary with about 25 family members, NDIS carers and people living with dementia, enjoying a lovely morning tea followed by interaction with the animals and informative talks. Some people were very daring in holding a snake and had their photo taken!
- **7 February** meeting was a coffee meeting and included discussions about the aims of the group and how we can further improve our work.
- We had a special speaker planned **7 March** who would talk about carer wellbeing. This meeting has been postponed due to Cyclone Alfred.
- A big thank you to **Australia Post** for supporting our monthly meetings and for us to continue our research and advocacy work.
- We have completed **our third radio interview** on Younger Onset Dementia in February 2025, with a special thank you to Kylie Strom.
- We have also started our **Whatsapp group** to make communication easier for carers who want to share things, events or thoughts with each other.

We have various speakers lined up for April, May, and June.

Whats next?

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

• THE YOD GROUP IS A VITAL WAY FOR CARERS TO CONNECT AND FEEL PART OF A LARGER COMMUNITY, OTHER THAN THEMSELVES. CARER

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 younger 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 be 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.

WEDNESDAY ACTIVITY CALENDAR AERO CLUB BALLINA MARCH 2025 - JUNE 2025

March

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

April

2nd: BBQ at Missingham Park
9th: Music with Stan
16th: Easter activities including Hat Parade
23rd: ANZAC Day commemoration activities – ANZAC biscuits
30th: Falls prevention

May

7th: Team Games
14th: Mothers day activities
21st: Mural painting/other craft activities/games
28th: Music with Stan

June

4th: World Environment Day activities
11th: Scone making
18th: Reminiscing with museum box
25th: Armchair travel – favourite holidays



**2025 SYMPOSIUM:
SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS**
Optimising Well-Being through Social Prescribing and Connectedness

October 17th 2025 Ballina RSL

NORTHERN RIVERS YOUNGER ONSET DEMENTIA CARER SUPPORT PROGRAM

WHEN:

- FRIDAY 7 MARCH 10-12 NOON
- FRIDAY 4 APRIL 10-12 NOON
- FRIDAY 2 MAY 10-12 NOON
- FRIDAY 6 JUNE 10-12 NOON

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

MARCH TOPIC: Carer Wellbeing
APRIL TOPIC: NSW Carers Gateway
MAY TOPIC: TBA
JUNE TOPIC: Depression and Anxiety

Phone Dr Sabrina Pit 0429 455 720



TINTENBAR UP FRONT ...OPEN MIC

TINTENBAR HALL 2 GEORGE STREET, TINTENBAR NSW 2478
SOCIALISE BEFORE HAND
ON THE DECK MUSIC 3.30PM
YUMMY SUPPER PROVIDED
OR BRING YOUR OWN
ONLY \$10.00 PAY AT THE DOOR
NO NEED TO BOOK JUST TURN UP
www.tintenbarupfront.com

When
13TH APRIL 2025
3.30 PM – 6.15 PM

3.30 - ON THE DECK - XXXX
4:00 - BRONNY AND THE BISHOPS:
satirical antics guitar, keys, vocals
4:20 - TONY KOELLNER:
poetry to laugh to
4.40 TBA
5:00 - AFTERNOON TEA AND
SOCIALISING
5:30 - HEADLINERS CHORUS:
great songs in 4 part harmonies

Charity: Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance



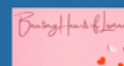
BALLINA AND SURROUNDS

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 SPROTS, 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

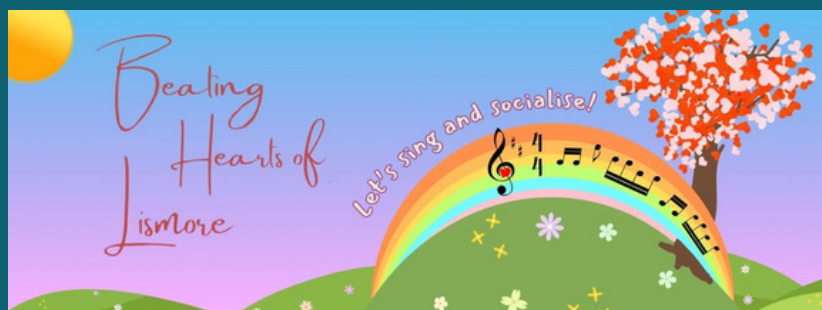
1300 651 192

www.eapu.com.au

BYRON SHIRE RESPITE CARERS COFFEE CLUB

Support group for carers

Emma White - 02 6685 1629



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

