



**Creating a dementia  
friendly community**

**Partner Toolkit**



Proudly supported by  
Woolahra Council

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# What is a dementia friendly community?

Dementia-friendly businesses and organisations take a holistic approach with their customers. They are aware of differing needs, inclusive and approachable. They recognise people living with dementia as equal members of the community, which also translates to people living with other disabilities, parents with prams, people with English as a second language and older residents.

"These organisations respond to the needs of their customers, clients, staff or volunteers living with dementia. To do this, they're willing to make small changes that improve accessibility, inclusivity and connectedness." Dementia Australia 2022

# Why should your workplace consider becoming dementia friendly?

- Increase customer base and business opportunities
- Receive a recognition certificate from WDA to display in your workplace
- Exposure through Woollahra Dementia Alliance, Holdsworth and Woollahra digital pages, including logo listed on website
- Helps you to meet your obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act
- Improved community rapport and reputation

**More than 400,000 people are living with dementia in Australia and its expected to increase to more than 800,000 by 2058.**

**Dementia Australia, 2023**



# Ways to encourage a dementia friendly environment at your workplace

- Encourage staff awareness of dementia including the best ways to communicate with someone who you may think is living with dementia
- Get to know your regular customers
- Create loyal customer base
- Consider your internal and external business layout
- Allocate times in your business week where background noise is reduced, and lights are slightly turned down or dimmed, but not dark for example a 'Quiet Hour.' This may be even on a daily basis.
- Encourage your staff to become a dementia friend through [Dementia Friendly Communities](#)
- Gain formal recognition as a Dementia-Friendly Organisation from [Dementia Australia](#)
- Engage in additional online training eg: '[Understanding Dementia](#)' from the [University of Tasmania](#) - it's FREE!

## Some quick tips from Holdsworth

Each individual is different, and therefore behaviours can vary between individuals. Be careful not to label everyone you meet as having dementia just because of a fleeting meeting.

It can be exhausting and frustrating for people living with dementia to go out of their home and navigate the world around them due to busy sounds, overload of senses, traffic noise, moving escalators, poor signage, bright lights, loud music and the list goes on. Sometimes people living with dementia just might need time to settle in a quiet safe place to catch their breath and thoughts on what's happening around them.

Here are some basic guidelines for good customer service practices:

- Be courteous and treat everyone respectfully
- Be patient, calm and reassuring
- Acknowledge the individual and what they are saying. LISTEN to them!
- Use positive body language



# A dementia friendly checklist

Indicate yes or no to the following questions to help determine if your are dementia friendly!

Do you or your staff know what dementia is?

Dementia isn't always visible and obvious; Are your staff aware of how to identify if someone may have dementia?

Would you or your staff know how to respond best to someone who has dementia or is displaying behaviours outside of what most people would consider normal behaviour?

Is your business well signed and easy to locate?

Does internal signage provide clear, simple and essential information?

Is your important signage at eye level?

Is the location of your toilet clearly signed?

Is your space clear from clutter with ample opportunity to move freely?

Is your business area noisy?

Is your business area brightly lit?

Other comments

**Unsure or want to find out more?**

The Woollahra Dementia Alliance are here to help you! Why not speak to our dedicated team, and find out how we can support you to become dementia friendly and work together to create an inclusive community in Woollahra.

# The Woollahra Dementia Alliance

The Woollahra Dementia Alliance (WDA) was established to increase awareness of dementia in our local Woollahra community by:

- Improving accessibility for people living with dementia in and around the community
- Encouraging local businesses to improve their dementia literacy by becoming a registered Dementia Friendly Organisation

The WDA meets bi-monthly to progress an action plan to make Woollahra more dementia-friendly, by raising awareness of issues faced by local people with dementia and taking actions to improve the lives of people with dementia and their carers.



See our latest documentary (screened Oct 2022)



'Breaking Down The Barriers'

## What is dementia?

Dementia is an umbrella term describing a collection of symptoms that are caused by disorders of the brain. It's not one specific disease. There are more than 100 types of dementia.

Symptoms lead to a progressive decline in a person's cognitive functioning and may include loss of memory, intellect, rationality, social skills, physical functioning, changes in personality and sensory challenges. Despite these challenges, people living with dementia are still capable with support, to contribute to all aspects of community living.

## Want to find out more?

The WDA are here to help you! Why not speak to our dedicated team, and find out how we can support you to become dementia friendly!

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Scan the QR code to connect with us on Facebook!

