

Our

Mind Matters

October 2024



THIS ISSUE

A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Lois Wolker shares her inspiring journey as a volunteer in the new season of The Restaurant That Makes Mistakes

Page 8

FEATURES:

**BRAIN HEALTH:
IN YOUR HANDS**

Page 4

**BARRIERS & ENABLERS ON
THE DEMENTIA JOURNEY**

Page 10

**POST PLACEMENT
SUPPORT**

Page 13

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 Organisational update
- 2 Human Forever - movie premiere
- 3 An attitude of gratitude
- 6 The transition
- 7 Words and wisdom
- 10 Barriers and enablers on the dementia journey
- 12 Craftsmanship in caring
- 13 Post placement support
- 16 Banking support after a diagnosis
- 18 Summerset advertorial



THANK YOU

We truly appreciate all the amazing volunteers, sponsors, friends, donors, funders and supporters. Your kindness and generosity make it possible for us to make a real difference.

Thank you to the families, friends and generous donors

- The Trusts Comm
- R.A. Johnston
- Four Winds Foundation
- R J & M I Ross No.2 Charitable Trust
- Walker & Hall Trust
- Betty Bethell
- Whakatapu Aotearoa Foundation
- Trillian Ltd
- N H Taylor / Perpetual Guardian
- Estate of Irene Dorothy Marsters
- Elaine Butterworth
- Pub Charity
- Ara Lodge No.348 Ic Ch
- Robert Strevens
- Blue Water Community Trust
- Betty Lim-Yip
- The David & Genevieve Becroft Foundation
- Grassroots Trust
- Lion Foundation
- Jim & Helen Grayson
- Stanley Hoffmann
- Betty Willis
- Foster Construction Ltd
- BlueSky Comm



P.O. Box 5720, Frankton, Hamilton, 3242
 info@dementia.nz
 www.dementia.nz

facebook.com/DementiaNewZealand
 instagram.com/dementia.nz



Registered Charity: CC54078

To contact the editor, please email
 nicola.williams@dementia.nz

COVER PHOTO: Lois Wolkers, volunteer from the new series of The Restaurant That Makes Mistakes.

UPDATE from Dementia New Zealand



Haere Mai, welcome to the October 2024 edition of Mind Matters.

Last month marked World Alzheimer's Awareness Month, and I want to acknowledge and celebrate the incredible mahi happening across Aotearoa. Whether you are a carer providing hands-on support, a funder helping to sustain vital services or part of the wider whānau who stands with us, your contribution is deeply appreciated.

I also want to acknowledge the tireless efforts of our Dementia New Zealand affiliate network. This issue of Mind Matters highlights inspiring work across the motu, from Post-Placement Support in Canterbury to woodworking workshops in Hawkes Bay and a personal story about the emotional challenges of placing a loved one into care. These stories reflect the diversity of work across the network and shared experiences of our wider community.

A key focus this month is dementia prevention and brain health. The recently released Lancet Commission report introduced two new modifiable risk factors - untreated vision loss and high cholesterol - bringing the total to 14. This is a significant step forward in understanding how lifestyle changes and health interventions can reduce dementia risk. These findings remind us that adopting healthier habits can prevent or delay nearly half of all dementia cases. Dr Matthew Croucher's article in this issue explores these risk factors in greater detail and offers practical insights on how we can make a difference in our own lives.

We recently had the privilege of supporting the screening of Human Forever, a powerful documentary exploring how we can make the world more dementia-friendly. I was very moved by the courage and compassion of Teun, a 24-year-old nurse in the Netherlands who lived in an aged care setting for two years, to really understand what makes a difference in people's lives. His experiences in the Netherlands and several other countries he and documentary maker Jonathan De Jong spent time in, are a moving reminder of the global nature of dementia mate wareware and how communities around the world are looking to provide more culturally relevant and inclusive futures for those with dementia.

Additionally, we were honoured to be chosen as the charity for this year's Grocery Charity Ball (GCB). Our sincerest thanks to the GCB Trustees for selecting Dementia NZ as their 2024 charity and to all the generous donors who supported the event by gifting auction items, volunteering, and attending the night. As a result, we will be able to offer critical support in the first 90 days post-diagnosis, a time often overwhelming for families.

Finally, we are excited for the return of The Restaurant That Makes Mistakes to our screens in October with chef Ben Bayly. This series features some of our Dementia Auckland and Dementia Waikato clients, and we are grateful to each of them and their whānau for supporting the show. We know it will help foster greater understanding of dementia and provide wonderful examples of how important it is for people to have opportunities to be involved and continue to be contributing members of the community.

Ngā mihi nui to everyone who continues to support our mission. Whether through your time, energy, or resources, your contribution makes a real difference to the lives of those living with dementia mate wareware and their whānau.

Cathy Cooney
 Chief Executive
 Dementia New Zealand



HUMAN FOREVER

an independent film by
JONATHAN DE JONG
TEUN TOEBES

an attitude of

Gratitude

Gratitude does not always come easy when life is hard. When the life you are living is not the one you signed up for. When you feel trapped, when circumstance robs you of the things you want to be doing. When you looked forward to travelling the world in your retirement, but you became a carer instead - and adding salt to the wound, you are watching your friends go on the trips you have dreamed of. It can easily illicit feelings of resentment, thoughts of "why me, what have I done to deserve this?" These are natural, valid feelings. But staying in this mindset is not going to do anything to maintain your mental wellness.

Gratitude and trauma can co-exist in the same space. So basically, fake gratitude until you feel gratitude. To write a list of things you are grateful for is easier than you think if you are mindful of the small things, such as clean sheets, a smile from a stranger, or nice weather on your morning walk.

There are many studies that have proved the benefits. In one University of California study, those who wrote down what they were grateful for each day for 10 weeks were shown to have higher level of emotional wellbeing, which in turn motivated them to exercise more and, significantly, they had fewer doctors' visits than the control groups.

Gratitude can be the spontaneous feeling you have when you receive kindness, but it is increasingly recognised as a practice whereby we make a conscious effort to identify the good in life. We suggest this self-care strategy not to minimise your challenges but to prevent you from being swallowed by them all.

Studies show that people can deliberately cultivate gratitude - and there are important social and personal benefits to doing so. The emotion generates a climate of internal positivity that also radiates externally.

Gratitude strengthens relationships, and its roots run deep in evolutionary history - emanating from the survival value of helping others and being helped in return. Studies show that specific areas of the brain are involved in experiencing and expressing gratitude. Brain scans of people assigned a task that stimulates the expression of gratitude show lasting changes in the prefrontal cortex that heighten sensitivity to future experiences of gratitude.

Putting this into practice could involve sharing with your household the

things you are grateful for, expressing it through prayer or meditation and keeping a journal. Writing down a few things daily that you have appreciation for will soon turn into a book reflecting immense good in the world around you.

Showing appreciation to others is also one of the best things you can do to improve your own wellbeing. Thank you cards may have gone out of fashion with the convenience of sending a text message, but put them back in vogue. According to Psychology Today, thank you notes can elevate our relationships, strengthening bonds and our own self-esteem, as well as physical and psychological health. We can get as much of a pay-off as the recipient, making showing appreciation the best selfish thing we can do.

Those who have never sent a thank you card may feel reservation, as if it would be an unusual thing to do in an era where pen and paper are no longer common. But no one is going to have an unfavourable reaction to being acknowledged. It will probably be the thing they feel grateful for that day, and it will ignite an uplifting chain reaction where they also want to thank others - making the world a more positive place, one thank you card at a time.

By Nicola Williams

A thought-provoking documentary hit the screens in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch recently during World Alzheimer's Month.

The film follows 24-year-old humanitarian activist Teun Toebes' quest to understand more about dementia care across the globe. He embarks on an adventurous three-year journey across four continents and 11 countries with his good friend and filmmaker Jonathan de Jong.

They explore how dementia is dealt with globally and what can be learned from the different approaches to make the future more inclusive for those with the disease. In some countries the state of dementia care was tragic and largely indifferent, while others presented a more positive, optimistic picture.

The quest is not just a personal story, it is a realistic and sometimes painful account of a global crisis, while contributing to ongoing efforts to destigmatise the disease.

The number of New Zealanders diagnosed is expected to more than double by 2050.

In a panel discussion afterwards, Dementia NZ CEO Cathy Cooney talked about the organisation's aim of "Helping people live their best possible lives" by providing easy access to support, research and education.

She said the film highlighted why the sector's call for the Dementia Mate Wareware Action Plan to be implemented is so important.

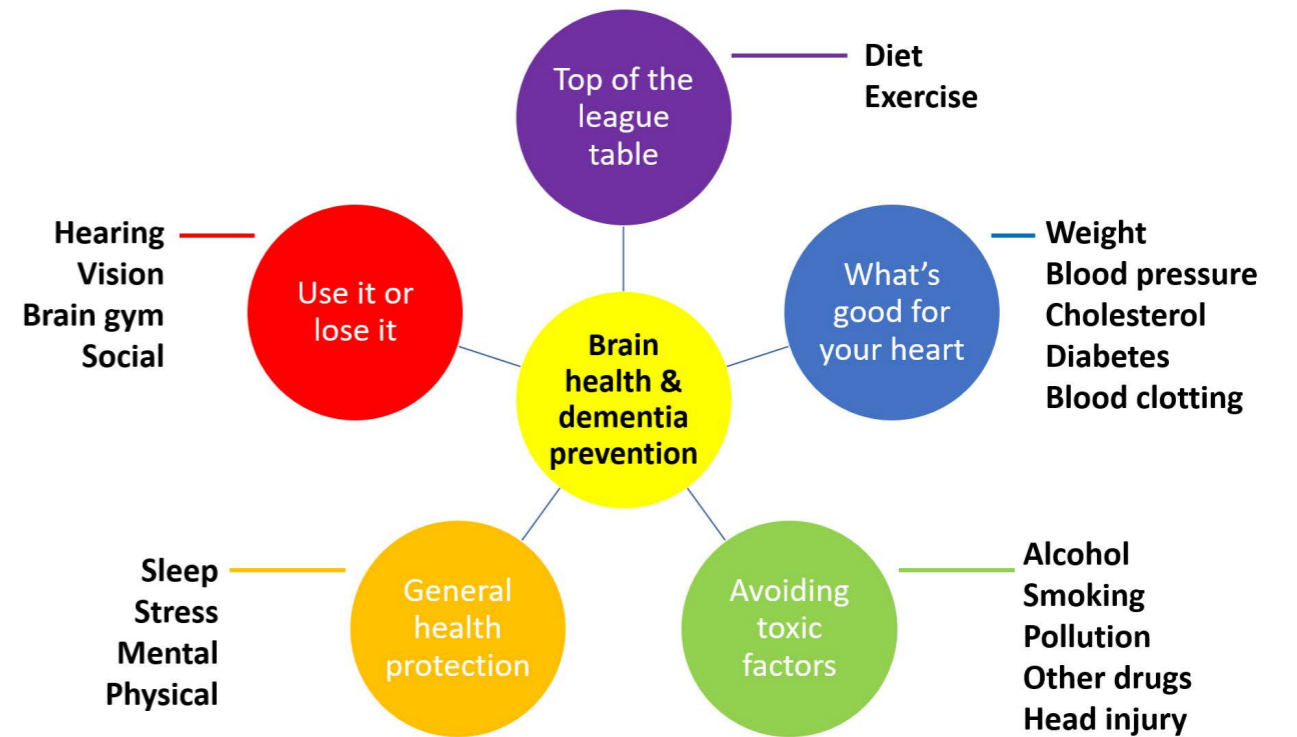
There is a planned screening in **Thames on Saturday 23 November 2024, at 2pm in The Thames on Kirkwood.** We suggest you take the tissues!

To register your interest in tickets for this screening, please email events@dementia.nz. You will be notified once tickets go on sale.





BRAIN HEALTH: IN YOUR HANDS



Dr. Matthew Croucher is a psychiatrist of old age based in Ōtautahi Christchurch with a long history of support for Dementia NZ. Here he empowers us to modify controllable risk factors for developing dementia.

Every year, more scientific evidence supports the idea that the way we choose to live our life can improve the health of our brain, and either prevent or delay the onset of dementia. That means it is never too early or too late to improve our our brain health!

The Lancet Commission on Dementia Prevention, Intervention and Care currently estimates that 40% of the global burden of dementia could be prevented if a range of twelve modifiable risk factors were able to be managed well (for example, if people's exposure to air pollution could be reduced to safe levels).

If you follow the news you will regularly hear about "dementia breakthroughs" that hold the promise of preventing or even curing dementia illnesses. But where does that leave us if we want to do the best we can to improve the health of our brain?

I like to summarise current knowledge with this diagram (above). It organises all the different levers we know about that we can adjust to improve our brain health and perhaps even prevent or slow dementia illnesses.

Diet and exercise are at the "top of the league table" because the evidence supporting their benefits is strong and making improvements is within reach of all of us. One key is not to think 'all or nothing' but to accept that we will never arrive at a perfect diet or perfect exercise regime.

The question is not "Am I doing enough?" but "How could I improve things one notch further?"

The category "What's good for your heart" prompts us to book in for a regular general health check-up at our GP practice. This is not only good for our heart and general health but also good for our brain. "Avoiding toxic factors" encourages us to lower our exposure to brain-damaging activities and substances. "General health protection" encourages us to focus on the whole of our lives in a holistic way when it comes to health promotion.

"Use it or lose it" first asks us to pay attention to reduced hearing and vision later in life because our brain struggles to be healthy if the quality of the information coming in

drops. This category also reminds us that, just as physical exercise is critical for physical fitness, regular brain exercise is essential for brain fitness. Sudoku is great, but would you design a fitness programme that only consisted of repetitively lifting a dumbbell with your left arm? It's important to stay socially active and to keep engaging in new things because it exercises our brains on multiple levels and keep our minds stretching, no matter how able we are.

There are a few helpful extra 'tricks' that science is also telling us, particularly that working on several of these 'levers' at once is better than picking one. We also know that moving to healthier choices is more effective if we do it together with our family and friends.

You might feel discouraged seeing this diagram if your attention was caught by the one or two factors you have little control over: "There's nothing I can do because I had a bad head injury when I was young / I live with terrible insomnia / my blood pressure is too high". Or maybe seeing 20 potential levers feels overwhelming.

The right way to look at it is **completely the reverse** because none of us can control all these factors, and even if we could, they are not the complete story. Instead, the best way forward is to ask each other, "Which of these 20 levers are we able to move in a better direction, and which two or three will we start on together?" Go for it!



CARER STORY

The Transition

Doff Manu became a full-time carer to her Dad, Sam Mclean, after her Mum passed away in 2019. Sam was diagnosed with Vascular dementia two years prior. Doff shares the emotional experience of her Dad going into residential care after years of being by his side.

When I moved to Whitianga to look after Dad, it took a while to adjust to my new role and transition from daughter to carer, but then Dad and I got on with it and muddled our way through the next five years of our life together.

It was happy, sad, easy, hard, lonely, thankless, funny, frustrating, rewarding; it was never-ending, the same but different, scary, nice - and sometimes it was all these things in the same day.

Eventually, due to an increase in Dad's mood swings and aggression, the decision was made to place him into care.

Two years earlier I put his name down at Victoria Place Life Care in Tokoroa as Dad had lots of family connections there, which would make him feel safe and secure.

When I got the call to say there was a space for Dad, panic, regret, sadness, betrayal, failure, guilt and fear all hit at once.

How can I give up on my Dad? What kind of daughter am I?

After a whānau kōrero, a plan was made. My brother and sister-in-law took Dad

to Rotorua to visit his youngest sister and stay the night in a motel.

I stood at the gate and waved them off for the last time, then went to Tokoroa to get Dad's room ready for his arrival the next day.

We hung the photos from home on his walls and got him a small fridge to store his goodies in. His room was fitted out with his La-Z-Boy, photo albums, favourite books, TV, CD player and music to make it feel like home.

Because we have so many connections in Tokoroa, most of the people at the home knew Dad and were ready to welcome him, along with his children, grandchildren and whanaunga.

My brother had spoken to him that morning about what was going to happen, Dad was very calm and seemed to know what was to come.

Staff came out to greet him with open arms, friendly smiles, hugs, laughter and a big loud "Hey Papa! Don't you worry, we will look after you."

He liked his room in the dementia unit and all the photos on the wall, he wandered around and walked through the garden. Everything was very relaxed and welcoming. We each left one at

a time until my brother was the last remaining. He had a karakia with Dad and blessed the room.

The nurse then took Dad for a cuppa so my brother could leave, and that was that.

We were advised to stay away for at least a week to let Dad settle in. I rang on day four of him being there and we had a good long talk. Dad ended the conversation with, "I love you very much bub," to which I replied, "I love you too Dad."

That was when I went back to being his daughter and he went back to being my Dad.

God, did it do my heart good to hear it and to say it back, because for the past five years we had been so busy battling dementia, each other, emotions, role reversal, power play and circumstance that we just got lost.

Dad is happy, healthy and content in his new home. He is well cared for, loves the company and all the visits he gets from friends and whānau. He feels safe and secure in his surroundings; we couldn't wish for a better place for our Dad to be.

Thank you to Victoria Place Life Care management, staff, friends and whānau.



WORDS AND WISDOM

The pages of a book hold more than an engrossing read at a Rotorua library - they offer the chance for connection through the dementia-friendly book club that meets there.

The ethos is about helping participants continue to enjoy reading and sharing books, which can improve their quality of life and enhance their feeling of inclusion in the community.

The group was formed by psychogeriatrician Dr Sally Rimkeit, who provided training for the facilitators. They help readers relate the text to their own lives and freely share memories and new ideas evoked by the text.

It is well supported by the passionate facilitators, another book group in Nelson where some resources were sourced, and library staff.

While enjoying the music and rhythm of a literacy classic, the achieved outcome is also laughter and friendship.

Quotes from the group members tell their own story:

"I'm realising how many clever people are in the group"

"I love coming to the book group"

"I'm learning from members of the group. Very Interesting".

"I'm less anxious about mucking it up".

"It is good to be amongst people who are going through the same journey".



Our online education seminars are to assist carers, families and health professionals to cope with the journey through dementia.

UPCOMING MASTERCLASSES

18 October at 10am
Transition into care and supporting someone in care

15 November at 10am
Preparing for the holidays and travelling with someone with dementia

BOOK NOW
www.dementia.nz/events



A Recipe for Success

By Nicola Williams



The most heartwarming, captivating show on television is back with a new cast of ten brave and capable people who are living with Young Onset dementia – where symptoms are present before the age of 65.

Waikato resident Lois Wolkers is one of participants helping challenge public stereotypes and their own expectations of what they can achieve by working alongside renowned chef Ben Bayly in *The Restaurant That Makes Mistakes*.

The restaurant environment is a pressure cooker, providing many obstacles for someone with dementia. They need to learn how to prepare and serve meals, even though learning new things and retaining information is one of the most pronounced challenges the disease serves up.

They need to multi-task, recall orders, and work for several hours when they tire easily. They need to focus in a sensory-overload situations and face greater difficulty in emotionally regulating when things get overwhelming. Taking on the job takes a great inner strength, but doing so while cameras are rolling takes this bravery to the next level.

Over a four-week filming period at Origine Restaurant in the heart of Auckland's fine dining district, participants were able to defy expectations of what someone with dementia is capable of. Behind the scenes crew were dedicated to encouraging and guiding them with the use of visual cues, repetition and prompting, with an ethos that it is okay to make mistakes. They utilised the concept of enablement, which focuses on what the participant can do, not what they can't.

Lois, 52, says the immensely enjoyable experience was also a great confidence booster, and she was able to draw upon her long-held love of hosting friends for dinner.

"It was valuable to meet the other participants, who included a former lawyer, a scientist, an engineer and a journalist.

We all had something in common, we felt connected," she says.

Part of her motivation for participating was to help others who may see themselves reflected on the show, and to raise awareness that younger people are affected by the disease too.

"Each of us was on a different journey and had a story to tell. There were moments of joy but also moments of raw emotion and lots of tears. Some of the interviews and questions were very confronting and left me exhausted at the end of it."

One of the show's strengths is giving the viewer an insight into participants' life, helping people to see the person behind the disease.

Lois recounts a stressful time leading up to her diagnosis. She moved to New Zealand with her teenage son Ethan while her husband Frank was finishing a work contract in Saudi Arabia,

"I was apart from Frank and had to find suitable schooling for Ethan and make a new life in New Zealand. In 2020 my mother died, and Ethan and I went to South Africa for her funeral. We returned to New Zealand just in time for the Covid lockdowns."

It was a challenge to find work, schooling and to buy a house on her own. When she started having concentration and memory issues, her GP put it down to perimenopause and she was treated with hormones. It was only after her memory issues caused her to lose her much-loved job at a doggie daycare that her GP referred her for an MRI scan.

"The day that I received the results of my brain scan I was devastated. It was hard news to hear. I was emotional for some time.

"I came to acceptance within a few weeks and started telling everyone. I cried a lot but found an inner strength that allowed me to accept things. I do get very frustrated when I lose my words and cannot finish a sentence. It has been difficult to accept when I need help because I have always been a very fit, busy, active and independent woman."

Frank says the experience was positive and affirming for Lois, whose new-found capabilities gave her a stronger sense of purpose.

"She loved connecting with the others; she started caring a lot about them which made her forget about the stress that she was going through."

Although it was draining "due to pure output of good energy" she loved every moment.

"She had great admiration for all who took part, she constantly talked about their achievements at the restaurant. I felt proud of how she took it all on, it reminded me so much of the women I married - so driven and confident."

Frank says there is still low public awareness about Young Onset dementia, but the show will be a step toward remedying that.

"This should let people understand those affected are still capable, they still have value to add to life and all have wonderful personalities."

Lois is now working as a swim instructor, lending her hand to fundraising efforts to support others with Young Onset dementia, and lavishing time with her grandson, all with a new outlook on living well with dementia.

Season 2 of *The Restaurant That Makes Mistakes* begins on Monday 14 October, at 7.30pm on TV1 and TVNZ+.



Barriers and Enablers on the Dementia Journey

By Brendan Hallam, Dementia Auckland Educator

What are some of the barriers that can make the dementia journey more difficult for people living with dementia and their families?

What are some of the enablers that can support people living with dementia and their families along the dementia journey?

Last month Dementia New Zealand hosted a conversation, asking these questions to three health professionals working in different services supporting people living with dementia and their families. We were joined by Dr Gary Cheung (Psychiatrist for Mental Health Services for Older People, Dr Sarah Cullum (Old age Psychiatrist for the Memory Team and Associate Professor at University of Auckland), and Lara Hitchcock (Registered Nurse, Memory Assessment clinic at Te Whatu Ora Waitaha Canterbury). These were some of the key talking points:

The Diagnosis Procedure

One of the first stages of the dementia journey is getting a diagnosis. Typically, people will see their GP to discuss any initial concerns and the person may get referred to a specialist. Dr Cullum works for the Memory Team, which is a specialist team aimed at assessing and diagnosing dementia, based at Middlemore Hospital in Counties Manukau.

When discussing the benefits of an early diagnosis Dr Cullum stated:

“It gives an understanding of what is going on. The other thing is being able to plan for the future. We often

suggest setting up an enduring power of attorney. It may not be needed for years but it’s a good thing to have set up.”

Setting up an enduring power of attorney as early as possible can reduce potential barriers later in the dementia journey when family members may need to make financial or health decisions on behalf of the person living with dementia. Another barrier that Dr Cullum noticed is being able to access specialist services like the memory team in Counties Manukau.

“One of the big barriers is funding. We would love to have more staff. We currently have a long waitlist for

people with low risk, it is about seven months.”

If you have concerns that someone may have dementia, don’t delay in contacting their GP due to the wait time for an assessment.

E-Diva: Training Website To Empower Carers

One of the barriers that carers can sometimes face is getting access to practical information about how to deal with certain situations at home and how to feel more confident as a carer.

Dr Cullum discussed some of the latest research aimed at increasing online support for caregivers. e-DiVA offers access to educational content and caring information with over 50 informative videos.

Dr Cullum was asked further questions about its benefits and how to get access to the website.

“Sometimes, carers need information and support right then in the moment and this (e-DiVA) is a website that people can access.”

“We are piloting this project at the moment. We have reached our quota for non-Māori participants but are still recruiting for Māori participants.”

If interested in joining this study and receiving access to e-DiVA, please contact Dementia New Zealand.

Cognitive Stimulation Therapy: a programme to enable people living with dementia

Cognitive stimulation therapy is a brief treatment delivered for people living with mild to moderate dementia. A range of activities and discussions in a group are designed to engage and stimulate people living with dementia to improve cognitive and social skills.

Professor Cheung provided his take on the importance of cognitive stimulation therapy for enabling people living with dementia:

“Cognitive stimulation therapy has

been proven to improve cognition (memory and thinking abilities) and improve quality of life in people living with mild-to-moderate dementia.”

Professor Cheung went on to add that after three sessions, “a switch on effect” can often happen.

“The programme uses different activities to stimulate the brain. Through the exercises, the person’s brain can become more activated and stimulated. We have had primary carers come to us and explain the person living with dementia is becoming more alert at home as well.”

Cognitive stimulation can give people living with dementia more confidence and enable them to focus more on what can be achieved rather than the skills that might have been impaired.

Mental Health Services for Older People

Mental Health Services for Older People (MHSOP) is a service that aims to support people living with dementia and their families when challenging symptoms, such as hallucinations, depression, or aggression are present. A MHSOP referral can be requested via the GP. Family can request a referral to MHSOP when these challenges are present. Please contact your local Dementia Advisor for specific regional advice.

Barriers to Accessing Services for Asian People

The Dementia Economic Impact Report 2020 highlighted that Asian people access dementia services the least of all ethnic groups and this is thought to be because of lack of relevant and accessible resources, as well as the stigma around dementia. Professor Cheung provided his experience of working in health services and a community project he is helping with to increase awareness and support within Asian communities.

“In New Zealand, we have Chinese, Indian and Korean as the main Asian communities. Where English is not

the first language, it’s a barrier to navigate services to seek help”.

Professor Cheung is involved in an initiative to improve culturally specific help. Chinese New Zealanders can visit the Caring for People with Dementia Together website for information.

Dementia Auckland is passionate about supporting people from all communities to access information and support in their respective language or culture, so please feel free to contact your Dementia Advisor for information specific to your local community.

Barriers to people with Young Onset dementia

Lara works in a clinic providing support to people living with Young Onset Dementia. Young Onset Dementia is when a person is diagnosed under the age of 65 and can therefore have different challenges along the dementia journey, as Lara explained:

“At the stage in your life in your 50s and 60s you’re still working, may still have dependents at home, and your situation is quite different.”

“A barrier for people under 65 is that getting a diagnosis can take longer. That can be partially because any changes might be attributed to hormonal changes, stress relating to work or increase in depression or anxiety. When they go to the GP they might not think of dementia. It can take several visits to the GP and a push for the referral to get on the cognitive pathway.”

“People can have an impression that someone living with dementia is very old, very frail, very disabled and this is not the case for most people living with dementia. They are doing what they love doing and staying at home.”

Some of the enablers to help people with Young Onset dementia are age-appropriate social groups. There are Young Onset groups in Auckland, Hawkes Bay, Wellington and Canterbury. If you are interested, please contact your Dementia Advisor.

The aim of the panel was to get an insight into the barriers and enablers along the dementia pathway, according to the experience of the health experts. We plan to have further conversational panels discussing the topic with a range of different viewpoints.

Useful Websites:

Dementia New Zealand
dementia.nz

Dementia Auckland
da.org.nz

Dementia Waikato
demetiawaikato.org.nz

Dementia Lakes
dementia.nz/dementia-lakes

Dementia Hawkes Bay
dementiahb.org.nz

Dementia Wellington
dementiawellington.org.nz

Dementia Canterbury
dementiacanterbury.org.nz

E-Diva
https://ediva.org/

Caring for People with Dementia Together
www.chinesedementia.org.nz



CRAFTSMANSHIP IN CARING



A Hawkes Bay woodworking workshop is building a sense of belonging for participants with mild dementia. Twice a week, the workshop turns into a bustling and productive creative space under the supervision of experienced workshop facilitator, Trevor Marsh.

Groups design, plan, problem-solve and complete projects as a team, fostering communication, collaboration, and creativity. Woodworking offers a combination of physical therapy, cognitive stimulation, and social interaction. Using non-verbal mediums in a relaxed, cooperative atmosphere often prompts memories, encouraging the work shoppers to share personal stories - even when they find it difficult to contribute to conversations in other situations. Participants can maintain a life-long interest or reconnect with a past skill set. They have consistently impressed family and friends with their ingenuity, producing a unique range of wooden toys, garden art, planters, bird feeders and bird houses.

They are also getting a huge sense of fulfilment by selling the wooden flowers they crafted to support Dementia Hawkes Bay and partner charities.

The initiative aligns with the principle of **“Ki konā tāua hui ai - Meeting you where you are”**. No matter where people are in their journey, Dementia Hawkes Bay will meet them there.

To find out more, please visit www.dementiahawkesbay.org.nz



Post-Placement Support

Making the decision to place a person with dementia into residential care is one of the most difficult we are likely to face. It's important to address the emotions involved in going from being a full-time caregiver to entrusting that care to someone else.

Dementia Canterbury started the Post Placement Programme to help people navigate this time. The programme explores the decision-making process and the transition period. It covers how to have a good working relationship with the facility staff. As the family know a person with dementia best, participants are advised to ensure that specific wants and needs are communicated and adopted by residential staff.

It encourages understanding of the rights of residents and their whānau and how to be good advocates. It acknowledges the work involved in dealing with grief and loss.

The hidden treasure found over the three sessions is bonding over shared experiences, making participants feel they are not walking the road alone. Opening up emotionally is a courageous and empowering outcome for many.

Evaluations show that participants have found the course content and the camaraderie to be of great value,

and some have made some continuing connections after the course.



One of the participants, Pat, says she enjoyed the programme and she found it beneficial to hear that everyone processes the transition differently. Although it came with some relief that husband Neville was now in care, she also grappled with grief. On adjusting to her new normal she said “Every night I hop into bed and think – I miss my lovely husband!”

Quotes from other group members also provide an insight into the grief process

and the benefits of the course:

- “I spend much of my time in the garage, because it’s not the same inside the house without her there.”
- “Thinking about clearing out my wife’s things is such an emotional task. I have only just removed her perfume from the dressing table, and it’s been six months.”
- “The only thing you should do is what you feel you want to do.”
- “This has been the only group that I have felt I belonged – because I can focus on our reality, which is not helping Mum to stay at home, but her needing to be in care. I have learnt so much about the process of transitioning into care, what is reasonable to expect in terms of care, and how to be a good advocate for Mum - even when I feel overwhelmed.”
- “Finding common ground despite all of us being different. We are still dealing with the same thing. We all have different versions of the same day.”

The programme is open to Canterbury carers who have recently made this transition. If interested please contact your Keyworker.



The Grocery Ball: A Night of Impact, Collaboration, and Community

On Saturday, 7 September, we had the privilege of attending and being hosted at the Grocers' Ball, the premier event on the grocery industry's social calendar. This annual gathering, established in 2004, has directed over \$5 million to charitable trusts over the past 20 years, supporting important causes like ours.

A little over a year ago, we were approached by the Grocers' Trust to apply and 'pitch' for the charity of choice. With a focus on positivity, we embraced the theme: "Let's create great memories and a night to remember."

Held at the Viaduct Event Centre and attended by over 500 guests, the event offered a tremendous opportunity to raise awareness about brain health and highlight the vital work we do on the front lines of dementia care.

A show of hands in the room revealed just how many people have been impacted by dementia. While the fundraising totals are still being finalised, we anticipate the funds raised will support ongoing research, community engagement and education programs.

It was also a privilege to host the Minister for Seniors and Associate Minister for Health, the Right Honourable Casey Costello, at the event. Her presence provided a valuable opportunity to further our dialogue on critical issues related to brain health and dementia care. Engaging with her on these important topics reinforced the shared commitment to supporting seniors and enhancing the impact of our ongoing work in the community.

We are immensely grateful to the Grocers' Ball committee, our facilitator Jenny Alison, and Westpac Bank, which provided a team of volunteers pre-event. A special thanks to Type 40 Events and our amazing volunteers who supported us on the day through until 1am.

It was truly a night to remember, and we are excited to continue making a positive impact.

By Jocelyn Weatherall





Banking support after a diagnosis

At Westpac New Zealand, our employees are trained to recognise, understand and respond to the needs of customers living with dementia. We're proud to be New Zealand's first dementia-friendly bank and have partnered with Dementia NZ since 2015.

Our aim is to help people with dementia to plan ahead, access financial services and get help to remain independent for as long as possible. With the help of our Extra Care team, we've put together a list of things you might want to consider and different ways we can support you.

- **Talk to us.** Following a diagnosis get in touch with your local branch as soon as possible.
 - We can book you an appointment in your local branch, in a quiet, private space and you can bring your trusted support person along with you.
- **Request an extra care note on your profile.** With your consent, we can add a note to your profile, so you don't need to repeat your story each time you contact us.
 - We can also add the details of your trusted support person to the note, which will allow us to contact them if we are concerned in any way.
- **Request additional support from our Extra Care team.** If you have any concerns, you can ask us to escalate your query or request to our Extra Care team.
 - Our Extra Care team can refer you to other support agencies such as Dementia NZ, Age Concern or SeniorNet.
- **Try our digital banking.** We can help set you up with our digital banking and walk you through using biometric security built into your device, such as facial or fingerprint identification, removing the need to remember passwords.

- **Set up automatic payments.** Setting up automatic payments or direct debits for regular payments is a good way to ensure your bills are paid on time as you don't need to remember due dates.
- **Consider account monitoring.** Our Westpac CashNav app can help you monitor your accounts and alert your trusted support person, if any unusual transactions occur.
 - Set up text or email alerts for when an account balance drops below a certain amount, or an unexpected payment is made.
 - Set your trusted support person up as an account signatory with their own Westpac profile, to allow them to make enquiries over the phone on your behalf.
- **Simplify your accounts.** Reduce your account options and lower your transaction limits to prevent large, unintended withdrawals.
 - Consolidate your bank accounts to keep things simple.
 - Request a debit card that allows contactless payments, meaning you don't have to remember your pin number or turn off contactless payments.
 - Turn off ATM cash withdrawals.
 - Reduce the number of cards you have.
- You might also want to set up an EFTPOS card linked to an account with limited funds, separate from any savings or investments. This limited fund account can then be accessed by card or visiting one of our branches.
 - Cancel your credit cards or reduce your credit limits.
 - Reduce the available limits on any loans.



For more information and resources, visit westpac.co.nz/dementia

EXPLORE THE HOMES of DEVONPORT

Gather your friends for this fun and fabulous event – a rare opportunity to visit a curated collection of Devonport homes – from classic villas to architectural gems, award-winning spaces and eclectic explorations.

Explore behind the keyhole, be inspired by our Christmas displays and shop for homemade goodies.

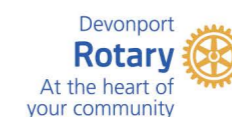
TICKETS \$85
(+booking fee)

FRIDAY 01.11.24 10am-4pm

Get your tickets at eventfinda.co.nz

SPONSORED BY

PROCEEDS TO



Special care for a special person



Caring for a loved one with dementia often comes with a lot of work and worry.

Stewart had been caring for wife Margaret at home for several years with the help of daughter Delwyn, who moved back in, and support from their son Glenn. But, when Margaret's dementia progressed and she needed specialist care 24/7, her family started looking at the residential care options in their community. Driving by Summerset's Memory Care Centre at Rototuna prompted them to call in and have a look. After that first visit, they knew they had found a very special place, one that was right for Margaret and them.

"What really stood out for us was the caring nature of the people. When we visited, everyone was just so lovely, and the centre had such a warm and welcoming feel," Stewart says "The gardens were beautiful, just like ours. We saw a room looking out onto the garden, and it was beautiful too. I thought Margaret would love this".

Summerset's industry-leading memory care centres enable people living with dementia to lead active lives in a safe and homely environment. They combine apartment-style living with outdoor courtyards and

gardens to connect residents to the natural environment, sensory spaces, and trained dementia care staff. Summerset is proud to have dementia-friendly accreditation from Alzheimer's New Zealand.

Homely and familiar

"Making the transition and settling in was surprisingly easy for Mum and us. The staff were just so helpful," says Delwyn. "Before Mum moved in, we set up her room and filled it with the things she was familiar with and loved, including her own furniture, special ornaments and our family scrapbooks she made. The finishing touch was her wedding photo above the bed, just like it was in her bedroom at home. Being able to personalise her room made it feel comfortable, homely and familiar."

"Mum's happy, safe and well cared for. That means so much to us."

"Mum's room and the centre are now like an extension of our family home. We can visit anytime, stay as long as we like and even take Dad's Labrador Oscar along, who Mum adores," says Glenn. "The staff treat Mum and us like family. It's a really special place."

"Although it was hard coming to the realisation that Mum would be

better off being cared for outside of home, and quite emotional and overwhelming, especially for Dad, we knew it was the right decision. Mum is a very special lady. We wanted her to have the best because she deserved the best." says Delwyn.

For Margaret and her family, moving to Summerset's Memory Care Centre has positively impacted all of their lives. "We've found a place where Mum is treated with the care and dignity she deserves. So, we've been able to step back, worry less and take a break that we desperately needed. Knowing Mum is happy and being taken care of has meant Dad can go back to being her husband, not the caregiver. That's wonderful for both of them."

Summerset's memory care centres are currently located in nine villages across the country, with several new memory care centres being planned.

Love the life you choose.

summerset.co.nz/memorycare

Summerset
RETIREMENT VILLAGES