

Dementia and elder abuse

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Dementia Australia

- Exists to support and empower the estimated half a million Australians living with dementia and almost 1.6 million people involved in their care.
- We are here to support people impacted by dementia, and to enable them to live as well as possible.
- www.dementia.org.au

What is dementia?

Dementia is an umbrella term to describe a **set of symptoms caused by brain disease.**

Typical signs of dementia are **gradual changes in thinking that get in the way of a person doing everyday things.**

No two people are affected in exactly the same way.

It is not a normal part of ageing.

Dementia and elder abuse

- Based on international indicators, it is likely that between two per cent and 14 per cent of older Australians experience elder abuse in any given year.
- People living with dementia are already at an increased risk of elder abuse due to their cognitive impairment and dependency on others.
- It is critical that effective safeguards are in place, across all states and territories, to protect people living with dementia from elder abuse.

Key barriers to receiving fair treatment

- Unconscious bias
- A lack of experience with people with a disability, which leads to misunderstanding, inaccurate assumptions and a failure to recognise their rights in one form or another
- Ignorance
- Poor education
- Low profile of disability in the community
- Low diversity literacy.

Becoming dementia-friendly

- Creating a dementia-friendly community.
- Including people who live with dementia.
- Become a Dementia Friend.
- www.dementiafriendly.org.au





Dementia Action Week survey

- 94% of family members, friends or carers who responded say people haven't kept in touch with a relative who lives with dementia as they used to.
- 71% of family members, friends and carers who responded say they haven't been included in family activities.
- 80% of family members, friends or carers who responded say that people have gone out of their way to avoid their friend or relative who lives with dementia when they are out and about.

Reducing discrimination

- Often after a diagnosis of dementia, people experience social isolation and discrimination.
- Discrimination is often unintentional, such as:
 - “But you don't have the serious type of dementia”
 - “You don't seem like someone who has dementia”
 - "Should you still be looking after your grandchildren?"



**Dementia
Australia™**

National Dementia Helpline
1800 100 500



For language assistance
call **131 450**

Find us online
dementia.org.au

