



Autumn 2012

# Dementia Dialogue – setting the direction for dementia care in NSW



## NSW Dementia Services Framework 2010 – 2015

### In this issue

#### Community Awareness

*Healthy Heart Healthy Mind: Reducing Dementia Risk*

#### Diagnosis & Assessment

*14 Essentials for Good GP Care*

#### Counselling, Information & Carer Education

#### Community Care

*Newcastle Younger Onset Dementia Service*

#### Hospital Care

*Leadership in Dementia Care – Award Finalists  
Peace of Mind Project*

#### Residential Care

*Positive Living in Aged Care*

#### Behavioural and Psychological

*Symptoms of Dementia*

#### Palliative Care

#### Enablers

*Launch Policy*

## Welcome



Welcome to the first issue of *Dementia Dialogue*. It highlights a selection of the excellent work underway to implement the *NSW Dementia Services Framework 2010 – 2015*.

With our rapidly ageing population, all parts of the health system need to be able to respond appropriately to the health care needs of people with dementia. We also need to utilise all opportunities available to improve the integration of primary care, hospitals, community services and residential aged care services that are essential for quality dementia care.

The Framework, developed with our partners, Ageing, Disability and Home Care, sets the direction for quality dementia care in NSW, outlining a comprehensive set of actions for improving community awareness, access to timely diagnosis, information and carer support, addressing quality and safety issues for people with dementia in hospitals, improving the interface with residential care services and improving end of life care.

As this newsletter demonstrates, implementation is happening at state, regional and local levels in collaboration with primary care and national aged care services. The consultation phase for the draft implementation plan has just ended and I look forward to reviewing your responses to the proposed strategies, priorities and ways to measure improvements.

This newsletter provides an exciting glimpse of the progress we are making. Many other initiatives are not yet mentioned, but we'll keep you regularly updated and highlight additional work under other stages of the Services Framework. In the meantime I trust you enjoy the first issue.

DR MARY FOLEY  
Director General NSW Health

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, FEEDBACK AND IDEAS, PLEASE CONTACT:

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## Launch



On 21 September 2011, the NSW Minister for Ageing and Disability, The Hon Andrew Constance MP, launched the *Draft NSW Dementia Services Framework Implementation Plan* for consultation at a Public Dementia Seminar, on 21 September World Alzheimer's Day, held prior to the Dementia

Collaborative Research Centre National Dementia Research Forum in Sydney.

The NSW Ministry of Health released the NSW Dementia Services Framework 2010 – 2015 in partnership with Ageing, Disability and Home Care

(ADHC) in September 2010 and issued it as a NSW Health Guideline (GL2011\_004) in March 2011.

The draft plan outlines strategies to be progressed by NSW Health and ADHC at both state and local levels and in partnership with key agencies.

Feedback was sought on the draft implementation plan as regards:

- How strategies can be implemented locally and in the context of national health reform;
- confirmation of priorities that can be progressed as funding opportunities arise;
- the importance and feasibility of measuring change against strategies.

The implementation plan will now be revised to incorporate feedback received and submitted for joint ministerial endorsement.

## Community Awareness

## Healthy Heart Healthy Mind: Reducing Dementia Risk

An innovative new social marketing campaign raising awareness about the link between high blood pressure and dementia has just concluded in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. Funded by NSW Ministry of Health and implemented by the Illawarra and Shoalhaven Local Health District and the Centre for Health Initiatives, University of Wollongong, the *Healthy Heart Healthy Mind campaign* was designed to increase awareness that high blood pressure is a risk factor for dementia; to educate about hypertension risk reduction strategies and to encourage people aged 45+ to have their blood pressure checked.

Campaign activities included free blood pressure checks, community & workplace educational presentations, health professional education sessions and a variety of media and marketing activity.

- Approximately 2,000 individuals had their blood pressure checked
- Over 30 free blood pressure checking services were provided
- Over 400 individuals attended an educational presentation



- Over 20,000 educational or promotional resources were distributed
- Over 35 appearances in print media
- 321 announcements on radio
- 15 casual staff were employed
- A campaign presence was achieved at over 20 other community events
- Newsletters distributed to in excess of 50,000 community members

## Diagnosis & Assessment

### 14 Essentials for Good GP Care

The *14 Essentials for Good Dementia Care in General Practice* was developed by the NSW Dementia Policy Team with Professor Henry Brodaty and endorsed by members of the Review of the 2003 Guidelines for the Care of Patients with Dementia in General Practice Advisory Committee as a stand-alone dementia care checklist. It provides key points to guide GPs in dementia diagnosis, assessment and clinical management in a short and easy to follow format.

It was released in May 2011 by the Dementia Collaborative Research Centre – Assessment and Better Care following endorsement by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, NSW Health and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

## Community Care

### Newcastle Younger Onset Dementia Service

Interagency collaboration in the Hunter has led to improved services for people with dementia, their carers and families in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie region. Through the efforts of Helga Merl, Clinical Nurse Consultant Dementia, and Angie Robinson, Executive Manager Service Development UnitingCare Ageing, with members of an interagency younger onset working group, a new social support service for people with cognitive impairment aged under 65 years funded by Ageing, Disability and Home Care will be operational by December 2011.

The service is designed to facilitate social participation, independence and quality of life through early intervention, monitoring of health and wellbeing, as well as an innovative day program model and functions that supports respite, community participation and social interaction.

Under the auspices of UnitingCare Ageing, the service will utilise a hub and spoke model. The café style hub environment for group services will be based at the Alzheimer's Australia NSW Hunter Memory and Resource Centre in Hamilton, complemented by a

small group activity/common interest based, outreach, day program support service. The service will focus on health and wellbeing with guest speakers, group activities, individual support, and family/carer support.

Speakers at the first Younger Onset Dementia Forum in Newcastle on 19 September 2011 included **Sally O'Loughlin**, Regional Manager, Alzheimer's Australia NSW; **Dr Peter Schofield**, Clinical Director of Neuropsychiatry Service, Hunter New England LHD and Conjoint Associate Professor at the University of Newcastle; **Helga Merl**, CNC Dementia Hunter New England LHD, **Angie Robinson**, the Executive Manager of Service Development, UnitingCare Ageing, Hunter, Central Coast and New England Region, **keynote speaker Professor John Hodges**, Federation Fellow and Professor of Cognitive Neurology at the University of NSW; and **Dr Tracy Brown**, Geriatrician with the Hunter New England LHD.

For more information on the Newcastle Younger Onset Dementia Service or the YOD Working Group contact **Helga Merl** (CNC Dementia Hunter New England Health District). [Helga.Merl@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Helga.Merl@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au)

## Hospital Care

# Leadership in Dementia Care – Award Finalists

### **Volunteers improving person centred dementia care in a rural hospital Southern NSW Local Health District – [www.hssevents.health.nsw.gov.au/awards-expo/nsw\\_health\\_awards/2011\\_finalists](http://www.hssevents.health.nsw.gov.au/awards-expo/nsw_health_awards/2011_finalists)**

A Bega hospital volunteer program led by Cath Bateman, Dementia/Delirium Clinical Nurse Consultant was a finalist in the *2011 NSW Health Awards*.

In partnership with Alzheimer's NSW Dementia Advisor, volunteers were recruited and trained for a structured person centred dementia-delirium hospital volunteer program. The volunteer intervention provided one-to-one emotional support and practical assistance aimed at reducing delirium risk to patients with cognitive impairment. The outcomes of 64 patients receiving the volunteer intervention at Bega Hospital over six months were compared to a control group of 53 patients at Moruya Hospital.

There was a trend towards reduced falls at the volunteer intervention facility. The program was highly accepted with 96% of staff and 100% of volunteers

perceiving the program as having a beneficial effect on patient outcomes and should continue. Staff reported that volunteers were supportive and assisted them in patient care. The program is continuing for two years post implementation.

### **Finalist in the 2011 Premiers Award Rewarding excellence in the public sector [www.publicsectorawards.nsw.gov.au/finalists](http://www.publicsectorawards.nsw.gov.au/finalists) – Excellence in Delivery**

### **Mid North Coast Local Health District – Peace of Mind Project**

Ward 1B at Port Macquarie Base Hospital where Gai McPherson is based is the site of this project to improve safety and care for patients with cognitive impairment. Through the implementation of best practice systems and clinical management strategies, the number of aggressive incidents on the ward was reduced, leading to better treatment of patients and improved working conditions for staff.

## Residential Care

# Positive Living in Aged Care



**Positive Living in Aged Care (PLAC)** is a NSW Health funded project, developed through the NSW Older People's Mental Health Working Group and managed by the aged care peak body organisations, Aged and Community Services Association of NSW & ACT and Aged Care Association Australia – NSW.

The aim of the PLAC project is to improve the quality of mental health and wellbeing of residents in residential aged care facilities, their friends, family, carers and staff. The objectives are to identify, showcase and promote innovative strategies which have measurable impacts.

Applications for the PLAC Award are judged by a panel of industry experts across three categories, where six finalists present their innovative projects at the Award day. Six awards are given across the three categories with a total of \$45,000 in prize money. The closing date for applications is **29 June 2012**.

Further information regarding the PLAC Project and the Award day can be obtained by calling the Project Officer on 0408885893, the peak body websites, or e-mailing to **[PLAC@agedservices.asn.au](mailto:PLAC@agedservices.asn.au)**

### **Recent National Policy Publications of Interest**

Dementia Services Pathways - An Essential Guide to Effective Service Planning

Outcome of the Review of the National Framework for Action on Dementia

A National Framework for Advance Care Directives