



Media Release

Embargoed until 12:01 am 7 September 2010

AUSTRALIANS AFFECTED BY DEMENTIA TO DRIVE PRIORITIES IN DEMENTIA SERVICES AND RESEARCH

National Dementia initiative launches at Bupa Mosman, Tuesday Sept 7, 11am

Australians affected by dementia will be able to shape and influence dementia services and research with a first-of-its kind project, bringing together industry, researchers and those affected by dementia, officially launched in Sydney today (Sept 7).

The *Consumer Dementia Research Network* is part of a \$3 million initiative, led by Alzheimer's Australia, aged care provider Bupa Care Services, the J O & J R Wicking Trust, (managed by ANZ Trustees), and the Federal Government, through the Dementia Collaborative Research Centres.

The network will push for existing dementia research to be translated into action, faster and more effectively, creating world-leading dementia care services for the 250,000 Australians with the disease.

Individuals with dementia and their carers will also have the opportunity to set priorities for future research.

Alzheimer's advocate Sue Pieters-Hawke today launched the new initiative at Bupa Care Mosman, where she spoke of the significant gaps in how long it takes for research evidence to translate to the frontline of aged care services.

"The Consumer Dementia Research Network puts those affected by dementia in the driver's seat," she said.

"From giving them a say in what research is commissioned, to ensuring this knowledge is then used to improve frontline dementia care.

"Having been touched by my mother's Alzheimer's, I now understand that there are some great dementia care services in Australia. But there are also significant gaps between what is known and what is actually done."

By 2050 there will be around a million people living with dementia; around 1 in 30 Australians. Research can take up to 17 years to reach clinical practice.¹

More than 20 'consumers', including those in the early stages of dementia and family carers will have a role in the group, with the first projects expected to commence in early 2011.

Areas of focus are likely to include early diagnosis, improved diagnosis and management in general practice, respite care, support for carers, pain management for dementia patients, end-of-life care and the over-prescribing of antipsychotic drugs to treat the behavioural and psychological complications of the disease.

Glenn Rees, CEO of Alzheimer's Australia, said the first of its kind project was a vital step in bringing together all key groups within dementia care.

“By 2030 dementia will become the third greatest source of health and residential aged care spending. People with dementia have complex needs and we must adapt and tailor our services. This initiative brings together researchers, those affected by dementia and the companies that provide aged care services to work together to address areas in dementia care where there is a gap between what we know and what we do.”

Bupa Care Services Director of Service and Quality Leanne Morton, said Bupa was excited to support such a vital project.

“Bupa Care is committed to delivering specialist dementia services. This initiative is a vital way for us to directly tailor and adapt our aged care services to what people affected by dementia are telling us.”

Head of Philanthropy at ANZ Trustees, Teresa Zolnierkiewicz said the J O & J R Wicking Trust is committed to funding innovation in ageing services and making significant investments in improving the future care of those with dementia.

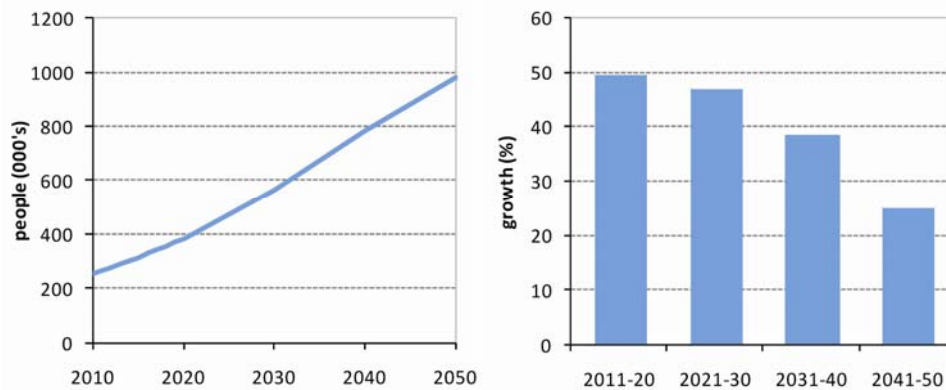
“This initiative bridges the gap between what our smartest minds have *discovered and learned* about dementia care and *how* we actually care for people with dementia.”

For interviews with Glenn Rees, or Sue Pieters-Hawke please contact Tegan McGrath on 0407 232 212 Or Rory O'Connor at Hill & Knowlton 02 9286 1283 or 0419 628 905.

1. Balas, E. A. & Boren, S. A. (2000). Managing clinical knowledge for health care improvement. *Yearbook of Medical Informatics*. National Library of Medicine, Bethesda, MD.

Dementia Data

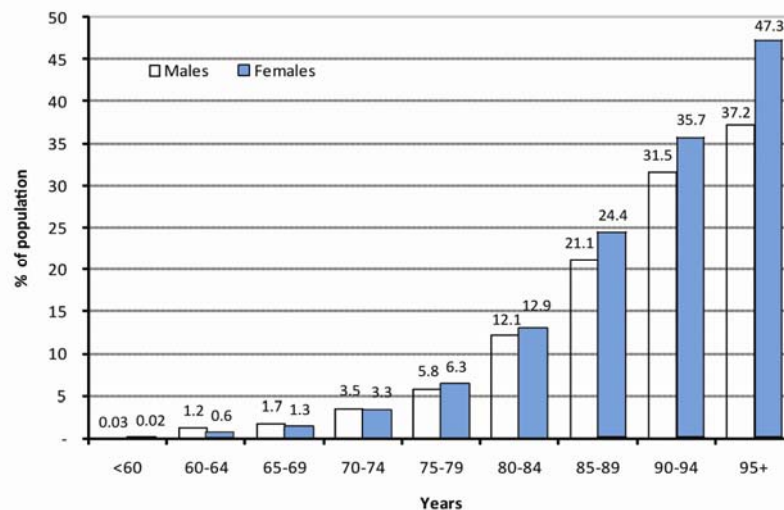
Growth in number of Australians with dementia



Source: Access Economics, *Caring places: planning for aged care and dementia 2010-2050*, Volume 1.

- There are currently around 250,000 people with dementia in Australia.
- By 2050 this will increase to around 1,000,000.
- There are around one million family carers of people with dementia.
- It is estimated that there will be more than 75,000 new cases of dementia this year.
- By 2050 this will increase to around 380,000.
- By 2060 spending on dementia is set to outstrip any other health condition.

Risk of dementia by age



Source: Access Economics, *Caring places: planning for aged care and dementia 2010-2050*, Volume 1.

- Dementia is the leading cause of disability in Australians over 65 years.
- Dementia is the third largest underlying cause of death.
- In 2008, about one in eight or 20,000 people died with dementia.
- **By 2020 there will be around 75,000 baby boomers with dementia.**