

# Support for cognitive impairment symbol

Alzheimer's Australia has thrown its support behind the Cognitive Impairment Identifier (CII) (pictured) being adopted as a national symbol to improve care for people with cognitive impairment in hospital.



Alzheimer's Australia would like to see the CII bedside alert and accompanying education program rolled-out to all hospitals in Australia. "The symbol and the education that comes with it is

working to create a culture shift in hospitals, where this program has been trialled and is making a positive difference to the delivery of care for people with a cognitive impairment," Alzheimer's Australia National CEO Carol Bennett said.

The program involves a

targeted training program for hospital staff, linked to the CII. The education helps staff respond more appropriately when a CII is displayed beside the bed of a patient with cognitive impairment, supporting more person-centred and responsive care.

The CII is part of The Dementia Care in Hospitals Program (DCHP) developed at Ballarat Health Services to improve awareness and communication with people with dementia and their families, to ensure they get the appropriate care in hospital.

The DCHP model has been implemented in 22 Victorian hospitals and with Government funding is now being introduced in other states in the following lead hospitals: Queen Elizabeth Hospital, SA; Canberra Hospital, ACT; Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, WA; and Royal Hobart Hospital in Tasmania.

## Campaign seeks to improve care

Cognitive impairment in hospital is also the focus of a new national campaign this year by The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

The Commission has launched the Caring for Cognitive Impairment campaign to improve the prevention, recognition and treatment of delirium, raise awareness of cognitive impairment as a quality and safety issue, improve care and assist hospitals prepare for the revised National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards in 2017, which will include Cognitive Impairment Standards, and against which hospitals will be assessed.

The Commission's Cognitive Impairment Advisory Group Chair Professor Sue Kurrle said the campaign would lead to safety and quality improvements in caring for hospital patients with cognitive impairment across the health system.

Those who 'commit' to the Caring For Cognitive Impairment campaign at [www.cognitivecare.gov.au](http://www.cognitivecare.gov.au) will receive tailored practical action lists, quarterly newsletters, access to webinars on key topics, campaign resources, tips and strategies from other health professionals on what worked for them, and opportunities to share success stories. The resources include the *A better way to care* series for health service managers, clinicians and consumers, which are available at <http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/cognitive-impairment/>

Nationally, 20% of hospital patients in Australia aged over 70 have dementia and 10% of patients in this age group have delirium on admission to hospital. Patients with dementia are two times more likely to experience falls, pressure injuries or infections in hospital.

# New study looks at impact of art on dementia

A groundbreaking Australian study will investigate the impact that creating and engaging with art can have on people with dementia.

The study, a collaboration between the Brain and Mind Centre at The University of Sydney, the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) in Sydney and Alzheimer's Australia NSW, began in March this year, with preliminary results expected by the end of March 2017.

Head of the centre's Healthy Brain

Ageing Program, Professor Sharon Naismith, said while art programs were usually designed to enhance creativity or appreciation of art, this program would study the impact that learning and engaging with art could have on the brain, particularly visuospatial cognitive skills and memory.

"Creating and viewing art has long been associated with improvement in mood, socialisation and reminiscence, and quality of life. However, there has been no

substantial research to date to evaluate art's impact on cognitive performance, and therefore if art can have a beneficial impact on people living with dementia," Prof Naismith said.

The Healthy Brain Ageing team will study 120 participants, aged under 75 and living with dementia, as they participate in a 10-week combined MCA facilitated and at-home art program. Participants will have the opportunity to create, view, 'imagine' and discuss art.

# Streamlined dementia education, support on the way

The Australian Government expects to open applications in April for funding for a single provider to deliver a streamlined national dementia education program and another to run the national Dementia Behaviour Management Advisory Service (DBMAS) from 1 October this year.

Aged Care Minister Sussan

Ley said the government wanted a nationally streamlined approach to the design, development and outcomes from dementia programs and services to improve access and make the system easier for consumers to navigate.

Having a single national provider delivering dementia

education programs will consolidate the programs currently provided by the Dementia Training Study Centres and Dementia Care Essentials. The single national provider appointed to deliver the DBMAS will replace the existing eight separate state/territory-based providers.

The restructure follows the findings of last year's government-commissioned *Analysis of dementia programs* report by KPMG, which highlighted the need for a national framework to guide program and service funding, and the November 2015 Ministerial Dementia Forum.