



# Alzheimers *News*

The magazine for the New Zealand dementia community | Issue 101 | AUTUMN 2016

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## From the Chair

### Susan Hitchiner

Alzheimers News has gone purple again. World Alzheimers Month is not until September, but as Alzheimers NZ is having its 30th anniversary this year, we are changing our colour to celebrate.

Since 1986, Alzheimers NZ has been representing the many people living with and affected by dementia in our country, most of whom live amongst us in our communities, at a national level. We rely on our communities becoming dementia-friendly – by opening up and actively including people living with dementia – if we are to empower the growing numbers of people with dementia to live well.

Last year, we changed our mission to reflect this goal: A dementia-friendly New Zealand, and in the last issue of Alzheimers News I wrote about the plans we have for 2016. A few months into 2016 we are seeing tangible results from our work. Perhaps you have already seen our short and sharp television advertisements? Understanding dementia is the first step towards building dementia-friendly communities in which people with dementia can live well. Read more about dementia-friendly communities on page 4.

In the last few months, we have also seen a number of people in the community initiate and organise interesting events in support of Alzheimers NZ. While the original thought is usually linked to fundraising, these events always present an opportunity for encouraging Kiwis to think about dementia, and increase our personal and collective understanding.

Of course we are not alone in thinking about how we would like our communities to be in the future. The Office for Seniors, which is part of the Ministry for Social Development, has a programme for cities that are working towards being age friendly, and we have been working with the team in the Office to support them in incorporating dementia-friendly criteria into their age friendly cities programme.

Dementia-friendly communities will benefit all of us. One of the particularly appealing things about making changes to be dementia-friendly is that those changes will also make things easier and better for other people, creating even greater gain for people, businesses and communities as a whole.



Susan Hitchiner  
Alzheimers NZ Chair

# Let's get our heads around dementia

Have you seen our TV and online advertisements yet? We are encouraging New Zealanders to “get their heads around dementia” in a new chapter of our **About Dementia** awareness campaign.

This time we are also featuring videos of five New Zealanders whose lives have been affected by dementia, including by two of our Champions for Dementia Kerry Prendergast and Colin Mathura-Jeffree. While symptoms of dementia commonly include changes in memory, thinking, behaviour, personality and emotions, it's different for everyone, and it's different for every family. We are really amazed by the kind and heartfelt comments our videos attract on Facebook.



Sign up for  
conference updates  
[eepurl.com/bZwPHL](http://eepurl.com/bZwPHL)

Memories of forgetfulness

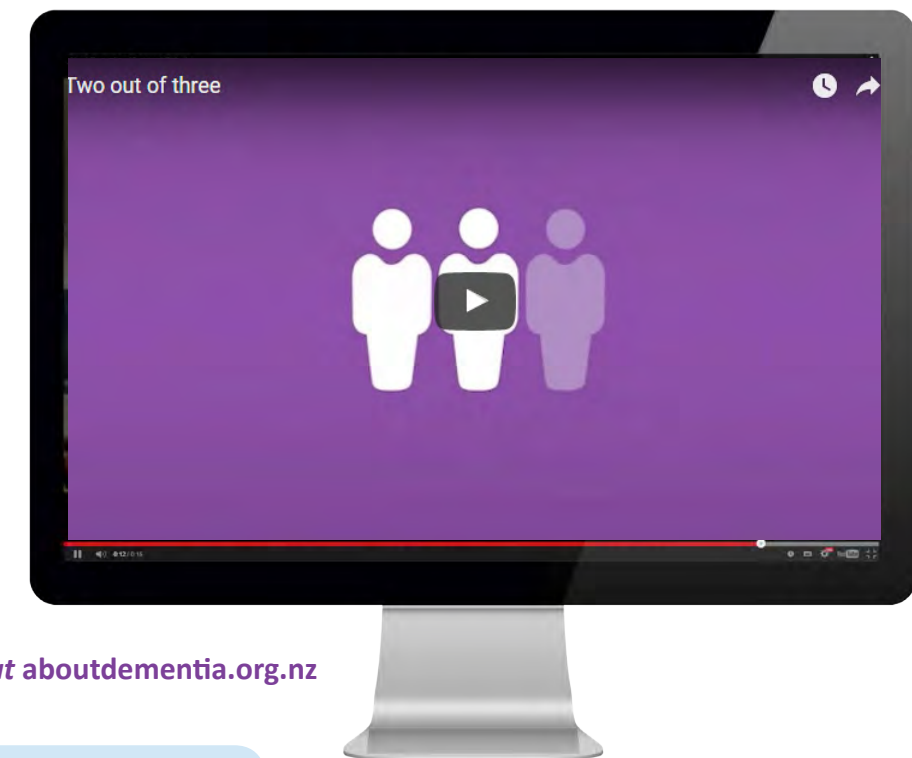
Growing up with dementia

My dad and dementia

The penny drops

Yep, my dad has dementia

➔ Watch these stories and our TV ads at [aboutdementia.org.nz](http://aboutdementia.org.nz)



### Alzheimers NZ Biennial Conference and 19th Asia Pacific Regional Conference of Alzheimer's Disease International



Book your tickets now to our conference  
*Dementia Today: Diverse Communities, Collective Action* on 3-5 November 2016 in Wellington.

We're proud to announce that Kate Swaffer and Dementia Alliance International will be hosting a workshop for people with dementia, care partners, health care professionals and service providers.

Abstracts are open now and close on 30 June.  
Earlybird registrations open now until 15 September 2016.  
Visit [www.alzheimersconference.nz](http://www.alzheimersconference.nz)

### Alzheimers NZ Annual General Meeting

25 and 26 June 2016

West Plaza Hotel,  
110-116 Wakefield St,  
Wellington

Please RSVP to  
[admin@alzheimers.org.nz](mailto:admin@alzheimers.org.nz) or  
phone 04 387 8264 if you wish to attend.



# A dementia-friendly New Zealand

Wouldn't it be great to know that our parents, or indeed we, as we age, can live in a New Zealand where we are valued, where we have the opportunity to contribute and participate, and where we feel safe – whatever our disabilities or frailties?

Alzheimers NZ wants to achieve just that – a dementia-friendly New Zealand. Most people with dementia live in the community. They shop, work, eat out, catch the bus, go to the library and do everything else we all enjoy doing.

Dementia is already one of our most significant healthcare and social service challenges, and with an ageing population the numbers of people with dementia are expected to rise dramatically. It makes sense to talk about how we can turn our

communities into inclusive places, where people with dementia can live well for as long as possible.

The initiative for dementia-friendly communities began in Japan. It then spread around the world and is now a well-established concept. Alzheimers NZ has made a dementia-friendly New Zealand the focus of its mission, and we are excited because this year we've started working on our plan for inclusive and supportive communities.



## The dementia-friendly recognition programme

Businesses and organisations are an important part of our communities and we can't achieve a dementia-friendly New Zealand without them.

A dementia-friendly business or organisation means that staff and owners learn about dementia and are committed to making tangible changes to create a positive and inclusive environment for people with dementia.

Any business or organisation in the community can become dementia-friendly, be it cafés, libraries, banks or shops. Businesses that meet the criteria and have been assessed by Alzheimers NZ will be endorsed either as working towards being dementia-friendly or as dementia-friendly.

A pilot with a handful of businesses will start later in 2016.

## Dementia Friends

This programme is still under development. It is based on the successful programmes operating overseas, for example in Japan and the UK. Becoming a *Dementia Friend* involves individuals undertaking some basic education about dementia and then committing to take some action to help raise awareness and minimise stigma within their local community. The support can be as big or small as the individual wants, the important thing is turning their understanding of dementia into action.

## The About Dementia campaign

Our *About Dementia* campaign with TV and online advertising is our first step towards a dementia-friendly New Zealand. We want to encourage Kiwis to educate themselves about dementia, because understanding dementia is crucial for a dementia-friendly New Zealand (more on page 2).

### A dementia-friendly New Zealand is one in which:

- People with dementia have a strong voice and feel confident contributing and participating in their community
- People with dementia and their family/whānau are living well and safely, and are receiving the information and support they need
- Communities accept and include, and understand, people with dementia
- Every person is recognised and respected with their unique backgrounds and beliefs
- Health and social services are strong and sustainable, with adequate resources to respond effectively to people with dementia
- We work collaboratively to achieve an optimal balance between service providers and support from within the community, and between the perspectives of those living with dementia and those who provide the support and care.



## Nationwide rally for Alzheimers NZ



*Bangers to Bluff teams in our purple memory walk t-shirts with Alzheimers NZ Chief Executive Catherine Hall*

The challenge sounded simple: buy a 4-door car for under \$1000 and drive it from Auckland to Bluff in 11 days. Nine teams took on the challenge and made their way South via roads less travelled in support of Alzheimers NZ. Cars included an old Fiat, a Jaguar, and a little Mitsubishi Lancer with questionable suspension.

"Banger Points" were awarded throughout the trip for various challenges and also for the type and purchase price of the banger cars.

All cars made it to Bluff after travelling 2650km from Auckland. Having proven their resilience, the cars were sold via auction at the end of the trip.

Thank you to Stewart Maclaren and the Half Moon Bay Rotary Club for organising and promoting this rally. We're amazed that all cars made it past the finish line. What a fun way to see the country and get the word out about dementia along the way!

*Catherine Hall, Alzheimers NZ Chief Executive, speaking to the audience*



## What will the future bring?

**We partnered with the Office for Senior Citizens to host an afternoon of discussions on 25 February 2016 about our aspirations for an age and dementia-friendly New Zealand.**

Speakers on the day included Alzheimers NZ Chief Executive Catherine Hall, Sarah Scott, who cares for her mother with dementia, Blair McCarthy, Senior Advisor at the Office for Seniors, and Professor Graham Stokes, Global Director of Dementia Care at BUPA.

Catherine Hall took the opportunity to speak about the challenge dementia presents, now and in the future, and what Alzheimers NZ's plans are for 2016 and beyond. She also introduced the audience to our planned programme to formally recognise organisations as dementia-friendly (see more on page 4).

We all need to play our part in creating an age and dementia-friendly future, and we're calling the government to take the lead and develop a New Zealand Dementia Plan.

"We believe the Plan needs to focus on care now for people living with dementia today, and a cure for the future – and it needs to have an age and dementia-friendly New Zealand at its heart

– where people are included and valued, can contribute and participate, and feel safe", said Catherine Hall in her speech to the forum.

We also took along a birthday cake to mark the start of our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary year.

We would like to thank everyone who participated, the Office for Seniors, BUPA and the Ministry for Social Development, who let us use their meeting facilities for this event.



*Wendy Fleming, honorary vice president of Alzheimer's Disease International and honorary life member of Alzheimers NZ, cutting our birthday cake*

## Haircuts for a cause

**World champion track cyclist Eddie Dawkins brought together barbers, tattoo artists and athletes for an afternoon to raise awareness of dementia.**

Eddie, who is a World Champion and Commonwealth Games medalist, has two grandparents with dementia. Last year he made headlines with a motorcycle rally for dementia, together with his coach Anthony Peden.

This time around Eddie teamed up with David Woodcock from Nimbus Media in Hamilton, who organised and hosted the event. Visitors could get coffee, undercuts, even tattoos, and of course learn about dementia.

Eddie will be going to Rio de Janeiro to compete at the Olympic Games later this year, and of course we'll watch and wish him good luck.



## Conquering Rangitoto



*Roche NZ with Champion for Dementia Reuben Thorne and Alzheimers NZ Clinical Advisor Anne Schumacher*

Champion for Dementia Reuben Thorne and Alzheimers NZ Clinical Advisor Anne Schumacher joined a team of keen trampers from

Roche New Zealand walking up Mount Rangitoto. Nearly every track on the island was explored including some off piste terrain. The weather was glorious so the team finished the day with a dip in the Waitemata Harbour to cool off.

"It was a great team effort. We were delighted that Reuben Thorne and Anne Schumacher were able to join us for this wonderful event", says Dr Lance Baldo, GM of Roche NZ.

Roche NZ selected Alzheimers NZ as the charity organisation to support for 2015/2016.





## Our About Dementia booklet is getting company

*About Dementia* is the first in a series of six booklets for people living with dementia and their family/whānau or friends. We're currently preparing for a reprint

of *About Dementia* and a first print run for two more booklets. Once finalised, you will be able to download all booklets from the Alzheimers NZ website.

This will be the complete suite:

- *About dementia: An information resource for people with dementia and their family/whānau*
- *Living well with dementia: a guide for people diagnosed with dementia*
- *Supporting a person with dementia: a guide for family/whānau and friends*
- *Meeting the challenges of dementia*
- *Transitioning into residential care*
- *The later stages of dementia and end of life care.*



**Follow us on Facebook!**

Like our Alzheimers NZ page for the latest news and links.



Join our group **NZers Affected by Dementia** for sharing and talking to others in the same situation



**Sign up online!**

Would you like to receive *Alzheimers News* by email four times a year?

Are you curious about *Thinking Dementia*, our new email newsletter featuring publications focusing on the social context of dementia?

Sign up at [www.alzheimers.org.nz/newsletters](http://www.alzheimers.org.nz/newsletters)

## THANKS TO OUR SPONSOR



## AND OUR FUNDERS



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0800 004 001

Alzheimers NZ is a member of Alzheimer's Disease International, the umbrella group for 84 Alzheimer's disease organisations worldwide.

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