

Election priorities 2017: Improving the lives of people affected by dementia

Dementia is one of NZ's biggest healthcare challenges. It dramatically changes the lives of people who live with it, including people diagnosed with dementia, their families, and communities. Numbers of people with dementia in NZ are expected to almost triple to over 170,000 by 2050. We can't afford to do nothing – the blue

print for a model of care that would keep people healthier and living in the community for longer already exists in the government's own *NZ Framework for Dementia Care*.

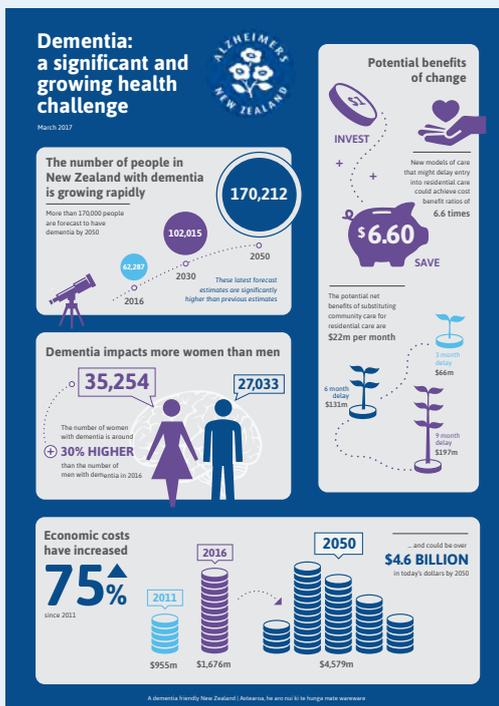
For the 2017 NZ general election, we are highlighting three strategies that will make a difference:

- 1 Fully fund Dementia Navigation as outlined in the Framework
- 2 Provide post-diagnostic support services for a minimum of 12 months
- 3 Provide high quality information resources

We reached out to NZ political parties to ask for their policies on how they will respond to the challenge of dementia. These are now available on our website.

We encourage voters to ask political candidates and parties what their policies are to address the growing challenge of dementia.

Read our election briefing in full, and the dementia-related policies from the political parties on the 'Our Advocacy' page of our website.



Political debate: Major political parties will put forward their policies for addressing the growing dementia challenge in NZ. Hosted by Alzheimers NZ at 5.30pm on Wednesday 2 August at James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor on The Terrace, Wellington. *Find out more on www.alzheimers.org.nz*

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Message from our Chief Executive

With the NZ Election coming up in September, now is the time for political parties to step up to the challenge of dementia. Our election briefing document outlines three key priority areas that need action including navigation, provision of post-diagnostic support and provision of high quality information for people affected by dementia. We're encouraging all voters to talk to their local political candidates about their party's policies to address dementia.

On a global scale, the urgency of responding to the dementia challenge has been recognised by the World Health Organisation. On 29th of May this year, the World Health Assembly adopted the Global Action Plan on Dementia which requires that member states (including NZ) to strengthen initiatives, policies and actions to help address the growing pressure on families, communities, and economies.

Alzheimers NZ has recently been announced as Ryman Healthcare's official charity partner for the coming year. We are delighted with this announcement and will put the funds towards supporting services provided by local Alzheimers organisations around NZ.

A big thank you also to those of you who supported Alzheimers NZ this month by purchasing lamingtons from Countdown.

You can read more about the election briefing, our recently released Alzheimers NZ Dementia Services and Standards, plus other stories of our work, in this edition. And, make sure you check out our 2016 Annual Report, available on our website now.



Catherine Hall, Alzheimers NZ Chief Executive

Lamingtons raise funds for Alzheimers NZ

From Monday 26 June until Sunday 23 July 2017, 20 cents from each six pack of lamingtons sold at Countdown was donated to Alzheimers NZ. To celebrate the first day of lamington sales, our Champion for Dementia, Colin Mathura-Jeffree, hosted an instore sampling of lamingtons at Countdown Ponsonby in Auckland. Thanks to those who have supported this appeal by adding a packet of lamingtons to their shopping list!

Our Champion for Dementia, Colin Mathura-Jeffree hands out lamingtons to lucky Countdown shoppers.



Watch out for our *Dementia Friends* programme – coming soon!

Support groups vital for families and care partners says Bev

Bev Beck had only been married to her first husband, Ken, for ten years when she first noticed that something was wrong. Ken seemed to have forgotten how to manage money correctly, which was strange because it had been part of his job.

It was listening to a radio programme about a book on dementia – ‘The 36 Hour Day’ that really shook Bev. The symptoms described sounded like Ken’s and Bev bought the book and read it. For the next 3 – 4 weeks Bev had nightmares as she thought about the impact of dementia on her and Ken.

A practical and down to earth person, Bev then went into action. She read all she could about dementia and focused on getting a proper diagnosis for Ken, which took many weeks. At only 60, Ken was considered young to have the condition. Finally, a diagnosis was confirmed and Bev was then persuaded to set up a local support group, holding monthly meetings, with the help of three professionals. They supported others in the community, with Bev taking evening phone calls from families struggling to come to terms with dementia. And all this while Bev was on her own transition from loving spouse to a loving carer to Ken.

As Ken’s condition progressed, he became aggressive and was ultimately safer in a secure dementia unit where he later died, aged only 62.

Some years later and now living in Tauranga, Bev joined her local Alzheimers organisation as a volunteer. Bev believes in the power of information to help people through the long experience of dementia. “If you have that, you can come to terms with things more quickly. It will help you accept the situation and cope with the path you will have to follow”. She urges carers to join their local support group as soon as possible, to get the help they need.

*If you need information or support for dementia, contact your local Alzheimers organisation on **0800 004 001** or visit **www.alzheimers.org.nz**.*

Alzheimers NZ and local Alzheimers organisations provide vital information and support to people living with dementia and their families. You can make a donation to our work by completing the form on this newsletter.



Ryman Healthcare select Alzheimers NZ as Official Charity Partner

Alzheimers NZ have been announced as Ryman Healthcare’s charity partner for the coming year.

Ryman Chief Executive Designate Gordon MacLeod said “We’re delighted to support Alzheimers NZ because many of us have seen first-hand what a great job the charity does. Dementia take a huge toll on our residents and their families, and we know it will be a popular cause with residents”.

Over the next year, Ryman village residents and staff around NZ will be raising funds which will then be matched by Ryman Healthcare. Our Chair, Ngaire Dixon says “We’re proud to have a partnership with Ryman Healthcare, and feel enthusiastic for what we can achieve together.”

How can I lower my risk of dementia?

Twenty years ago dementia prevention was not a 'thing'. Ten years ago health workers were clearer that "what is good for your heart is good for your brain" and there was a growing conviction that some of the common sense strategies that help to maintain our general health would be good for brains too. Dementia prevention is a 'thing'!



Follow a healthy diet: Several dietary approaches have been specifically linked to improved brain power with ageing. There

is no good evidence that all adults should take any particular supplements to prevent dementia (but that is not the same thing as proof that they are useless).



Be physically active: There is growing certainty about the power of regular exercise to protect our brains. The good

news is that it's never too late to start!



Limit alcohol consumption:

Avoid common known toxic factors such as alcohol in excess of safe drinking guidelines for

adults, and smoking. Also avoid hazardous use of street and prescribed drugs.



Enjoy social activity:

There is growing evidence for the benefits of keeping socially connected, keeping intellectually

active, staying as mentally healthy as possible and having any mental illness properly treated.

Other helpful tips: Do your best to avoid head injuries from dangerous sports, and seek GP advice on how to lower your risk of falls if this is a risk for you.

Also staying as physically well as possible including getting regular GP check-ups, and learning how to manage stress.

Many of us in New Zealand fall short of these lifestyle goals. Assuming a typical kiwi lifestyle, here are some simple changes distilled from the science that you might like to consider.

- Improve your diet by making these simple changes
 - add one meal of fish per week
 - reduce the amount of red meat you eat
 - reduce the amount of carbs you eat (such as bread, pasta, rice)
 - increase the amount of fruit and vegetables (not potatoes!)
 - cook your fruit and vegetables less (try steaming, try raw)
- Improve your exercise routine
- Reduce your alcohol intake
- Reduce your cigarette intake - aim to stop smoking this year. Ask your GP for help to or call Quitline on 0800 778 778.
- Pick one new thing to learn this year, perhaps in a group with other people.

Improving our lifestyles gives benefits for our mental health; our physical health including our risks of heart disease, stroke and cancer; as well as our risk of dementia as we age.

What can you do this week ?

Dr Matthew Croucher is a psychiatrist of old age based in Christchurch with a special interest in dementia.

He is also a member of the Alzheimers NZ Clinical and Scientific Advisory Committee.



Touching the lives of thousands of Kiwis

Two out of three Kiwis are affected by dementia or supporting someone who has the condition. NZ will experience extraordinary growth in the number of people living with the condition - it is expected that over 170,000 Kiwis will have dementia by 2050.

This is one of NZ's biggest healthcare challenges and it will have major personal, societal and fiscal impacts in the years ahead. Steps must be taken now to address this issue, to plan for the challenges that are coming.

This is why the work of Alzheimers NZ and our Member organisations is so important.

Alzheimers NZ is a long-standing name (30+ years) that has immense brand value. It is recognised nationwide by the dementia community and is respected by influencers and policymakers across the health sector.

Our reach is significant. We touch many thousands of Kiwis every day as our Members provide much-needed support services, but we also connect with many more through our well-visited website (over 120,000 hits a year). Our site provides information about dementia and contact information for Members and serves as a platform to share information about and promote local services. Our social media platform is one of the largest social media communities in the NGO sector and includes over 14,000 users. This is a valuable resource to keep the wider dementia community in touch and up to date.

And it's not just NZ in which we are known. Alzheimers NZ is a member of Alzheimers Disease International (ADI), which has a policy of restricting membership to just one organisation in any given country. Alzheimers NZ's Chief Executive has been honoured with the role of ADI Ambassador for the South Pacific

and our organisation has relationships with Alzheimers organisations around the world. Our global networks and contacts ensure we have a voice at the international level as well as domestically, and means Alzheimers NZ can maintain a world view which, in turn, benefits Kiwis affected by dementia.

Building the brand in NZ and globally has been a planned, managed and sustained process and our reputation now grants us access where we need it most and ensures our voice is listened to. This benefits the many thousands of Kiwis affected by dementia.

The forward-looking challenges that stem from the increasing prevalence of dementia will test us all. This means the large and ever-growing community of Kiwis who are in some way affected by dementia will continue to need a strong, assured and respected voice that speaks with their best interests at heart.



Minister of Health, Jonathan Coleman, our chair Ngaire Dixon, and chair of Freemasons Foundation, David Mace at our conference in 2016

Alzheimers NZ Dementia Services and Standards

People living with dementia have the right to be accepted, respected and valued, to live their everyday lives well, supported by high quality, culturally appropriate and responsive services. This right applies no matter where they live in NZ, or who provides services relating to dementia in their communities.

We have developed the Alzheimers NZ Dementia Services and Standards to honour this right. Our service model responds to concerns from people living with dementia about the significant variability in the level, type and quality of services available throughout their journey with the disease. We have built the model based on their feedback about what works now and for the future. We have drawn on their experiences, as well as research and emerging evidence. Our model also aligns with the NZ Framework for Dementia Care, the Healthy Ageing Strategy, and with the primary care cognitive pathways.

Our aim is that people living with dementia will have confidence that an accredited provider of Alzheimers NZ Dementia Service and Standards will be providing services that follow good practice, are evidence based, and are focused on continued quality improvement.

Alzheimers NZ Dementia Services are:

- 1 Awareness and risk reduction – proactive and protective
- 2 Walking alongside – getting and staying connected, living my everyday life, optimising health and wellbeing, skills and therapeutic, and supporting carers
- 3 Transition - moving well through my journey with dementia
- 4 Managing through a crisis – access to timely, knowledgeable, “real-time” response, help and support.

Overarching Standards are:

- 1 Dementia-friendly services
- 2 Services respond and deliver to the need
- 3 Effective organisational management.

To read the full Alzheimers NZ Dementia Services and Standards, visit the ‘Get Support’ page of www.alzheimers.org.nz.

Adoption of Global Action Plan on Dementia

On 29 May 2017, the World Health Assembly, the decision-making body of the World Health Organisation, adopted the ‘Global Action Plan on the public health response to dementia’.

The adoption of the plan recognises dementia as one of the most significant public health challenges of today and emphasises the lead role governments have in each country’s efforts to manage dementia. The plan calls on governments to meet targets for the advancement of dementia awareness, risk reduction, diagnosis, care and treatment, support for care partners and research.

Visit the ‘News’ section of www.alzheimers.org.nz to read the WHO Global Action Plan on the public health response to dementia.





World Alzheimers Month 2017

Mark your calendars for September – it's World Alzheimers Month! We're planning lots of events and activities to raise awareness of dementia in NZ, keep an eye on our website for the full programme. Our local Alzheimers organisations will be hosting Memory Walks all over NZ. Check out the dates below to find a walk near you, and get in touch with your local Alzheimers organisation for more information.

Location	Date	Time
Timaru	Saturday 16 September	11.00am
Whangarei	Sunday 17 September	12.00pm
Invercargill	Sunday 17 September	12.00pm
Levin	Friday 22 September	10.30am
Feilding	Friday 22 September	11.30am
Tauranga	Saturday 23 September	10.00am
Taupo	Saturday 23 September	10.30am
Whanganui	Saturday 23 September	10.30am
Palmerston North	Saturday 23 September	11.30am
Dargaville	Saturday 23 September	12.00pm
Kerikeri	Saturday 23 September	12.00pm
Kaitia	Saturday 23 September	12.00pm
Wellington	Saturday 23 September	10.30am
Dunedin	Saturday 23 September	2.00pm
Blenheim	Sunday 24 September	10.00am
New Plymouth	Sunday 24 September	10.00am
Gisborne	Sunday 24 September	11.00am
Nelson	Sunday 24 September	11.00am
Kapiti Coast	Sunday 24 September	1.30pm
Whakatane	Sunday 24 September	2.00pm

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Alzheimers NZ

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Charity registration number CC 21026

For dementia support call 0800 004 001

Alzheimers NZ is a member of Alzheimer's Disease International, the umbrella group for 85 Alzheimer's disease organisations.

ISSN 1173 4361

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Yes! I want to support those living with Dementia

Registered Charity # CC 21026

First name: Last name

Email address:

Street Address:

Suburb: City Post code

I'd like to donate (please tick) \$35 \$60 \$90 \$120 My choice \$

Donation method: (please tick preferred option)

Credit Card: Please debit my credit VISA MASTERCARD

Number: Expiry //

Name on Card

Signature

Cheque: Payable to Alzheimers New Zealand Online: www.alzheimers.org.nz

Internet banking: Bank account 02 1269 0015920 00

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