

MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

NEW CARE MODEL FOR DEMENTIA - REPORT

A major report by Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS) has been released, detailing a new model of care for people living with dementia.

The report, titled 'Out of the Shadows', completes a three year research project aimed at developing a best-practice healthcare program for RDNS clients living with dementia.

RDNS is the largest provider of home nursing and healthcare in Australia, providing care to over 30,000 people each year.

The report was conducted by the RDNS Helen Macpherson Smith Institute of Community Health.

The report was undertaken due to the perception of RDNS' aged care nurses that many older RDNS clients were living with a cognitive impairment that had not been formally recognised, thus making the provision of the most appropriate care difficult.

The 'Out of the Shadows' project began in 2006 and its major outcomes and findings include:

- Around one-third of older RDNS clients have memory problems and one-fifth have a confirmed diagnosis of dementia
- A best-practice model of care for clients with dementia was developed
- The model of care was evaluated across three RDNS sites
- The model was found to be effective in addressing gaps in care provision that undiagnosed dementia/cognitive impairment had previously caused
- The new model of care better supports the needs of clients, their families and carers.

The project was funded by the J.O. & J.R. Wicking Trust which is managed by ANZ Trustees.

Dementia is the leading single cause of disability in Australians over 65 and its prevalence is expected to increase four-fold by 2050.

International guest speaker Professor John Keady from the United Kingdom gave a keynote speech at the launch, exploring the role of biography in working with people with dementia, both in terms of research and clinical care.

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