NSW GOVERNMENT Northern Sydney Local Health District

phn NORTHERN SYDNEY An Australian Government Initiative

Sydney North Health Network

# Dementia Identification and Support in Primary Care Project

## *Expressions of interest to participate in The Northern Sydney Dementia Identification and Support in Primary Care Project*

**Background**

Finding out about dementia early is important. People diagnosed earlier can plan better for the future and better outcomes and experience if treatment is commenced earlier. Connecting patients and their families to the right information and supports is key after their dementia diagnosis to help them enjoy their lives as much as possible.

Nationally in 2021, the prevalence of dementia was estimated between 8.5% and 10.5% among people aged 65 years and over (ABS 2021b; AIHW 2021b; Dementia Australia 2018). Dementia Australia estimates higher proportions of dementia prevalence in Hornsby (13.2%) and Hunters Hill (12.5%) LGAs compared to the NSPHN region (11.3%) for people aged 65 years and over in 2021 (ABS 2021; Dementia Australia 2018).

**The National Dementia Action Plan**

The National Dementia Action Plan is a ten-year plan to improve the life and care of people living with dementia in Australia. It is made up of eight actions, each able to make real and long-lasting improvements to the quality of life for Australians living with dementia.

**Dementia plan actions aim to:**

1. Promote equity and human rights.
2. Tackle stigma, improve awareness and promote inclusivity.
3. Empower individuals and communities to minimise risk where they can, and delay onset and progression.
4. **Improve dementia diagnosis and post-diagnostic care and support**
5. **Improve treatment, coordination and support for people living with dementia**
6. Support carers of people living with dementia.
7. Build capability of the workforce to care for and support people living with dementia.
8. Improve dementia data, maximise the impact of dementia research and promote innovation.

**The Dementia Identification and Support Project**

SNHN, in collaboration with NSLHD, is seeking expressions of interest from GP Practices in the Northern Sydney region to participate in six-month dementia screening and support project from March until August 2026. This project will focus on **action 4 and 5**; listed above within the National Dementia Action Plan.

## Outcomes intended for GP Practices participating in the Dementia Project include:



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- Improved knowledge of the early signs and symptoms of dementia
- Confidence in identifying cognitive, functional, and behavioural changes
- Appropriate differentiation between dementia, delirium, depression, and other reversible conditions
- Understand and utilise local referral pathways, supports and services for patients and carers
- Identify and engage appropriate clinicians (e.g. geriatricians, neurologists, memory clinics)
- Provide clear, accessible, and culturally appropriate information about dementia

## Benefits of participating in the Dementia Project for your Practice:

- More specialised patient care
- Access to GP peer mentoring for practice staff, including GPs and practice nurses, to support design, implementation and monitoring of project
- Access to targeted education events to enhance staff knowledge in identifying and improving the lives of people with Dementia
- Establish relationships with other practices interested in Dementia and quality improvement
- Build in quality improvement activities (such as PDSA cycles), that contribute to accreditation requirements (general practice “standards”)
- Access to meaningful practice data utilising Primary Sense and Quarterly Practice Benchmarking report
- Create revenue generation opportunities through better utilisation of MBS item numbers
- CPD points available for education/orientation sessions

## Eligibility Criteria for the Dementia Project:

Your Practice has:

- Practice nurse(s) and GP(s) interested in collaborative and team-based care delivery
- eHealth enabled systems (two-way secure messaging, uploading shared health summaries, able to register patient for My Health Record
- Commitment to engage in all training and clinical practice improvement opportunities, and to support practice staff with these activities for duration of 6-month project

## Requirements of Dementia Project?



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- Enthusiasm and a willingness to learn
- Commitment to participate in scheduled training as listed below:

| Project activity | Date | Objective | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dementia screening education workshops | • 10 March<br>• TBC | Geriatrician and GP led dementia screening and management education | • Participants will be reimbursed for attendance |
| GP mentor visits to practice | • 2 sessions (initial and follow up) | Support design and implementation of dementia screening PDSA project tailored for practice | |
| Submission of dementia PDSA project | • End of April | Application of acquired skills and knowledge in practice quality improvement project | • Reimbursement on submission of PSDA project |
| Clinical audit review of patients | • 25 June | Screening and identification of patients with Dementia attending practice | • CPD points<br>• Renumeration for completion of audit |
| Project end workshops | • 27 October | Present PSDA project outcomes | • Participants will be reimbursed for time |

## For further information

Please contact ageingwell@snhn.org.au

## To register

**Expression of Interest: Dementia Identification and Support in Primary Care Project – Fill out form**



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