

DEMENTIA

Key facts and statistics



Australian statistics

- Dementia is the second leading cause of death of Australians contributing to 5.8% of all deaths in males and 11.3% of all deaths in females each year¹
- In 2016 dementia became the leading cause of death among Australian females, surpassing heart disease which has been the leading cause of death for both males and females since the early 20th century. In 2017, dementia remained the first leading cause of death in females, and the third leading cause of death in males. Overall, accounting for 13,729 deaths¹
- Females account for 64.5% of all dementia related deaths³
- In 2021, there are an estimated 472,000 Australians living with dementia²
- Without a medical breakthrough, the number of people with dementia is expected to increase to an estimated 590,000 by 2028 and 1,076,000 by 2058²
- Currently, an estimated 250 people are joining the population with dementia each day. The number of new cases of dementia is expected to increase to an estimated 318 people per day by 2025 and more than 650 people per day by 2056³
- Three in 10 people over the age of 85 and almost one in 10 people over 65 have dementia³
- In 2021, there are an estimated 27,800 people with younger onset dementia, expected to rise to 29,350 people by 2028 and 41,250 people by 2058²
- An average of 36 people died per day where dementia was the underlying cause of death in 2016. Of the 13,126 people that lost their lives, 8,447 were female¹
- In 2020, it is estimated that almost 1.6 million people in Australia are involved in the care of someone living with dementia⁴

The impact of dementia in Australia

- In 2020, dementia is estimated to cost Australia more than \$15 billion. By 2025, the total cost of dementia is predicted to increase to more than \$18.7 billion in today's dollars, and by 2056, to more than \$36.8 billion³
- Dementia is the single greatest cause of disability in older Australians (aged 65 years or older) and the third leading cause of disability burden overall⁴
- People with dementia account for 52% of all residents in residential aged care facilities³

Research funding

- In 2015, the Federal Government provided an additional \$200 million for dementia research over five years, significantly boosting funding for Australia's dementia research sector to more than \$60 million per annum
- The Federal Government established the National Health and Medical Research Council's National Institute of Dementia Research to ensure research in dementia is coordinated, funded and communicated
- One of the pressing issues is to build capacity in the dementia research sector by supporting students and early career dementia researchers. The Dementia Australia Research Foundation, supported by donations from the public, plays a major role in this effort and funds a number of new and early career researchers through scholarships and project grants

International statistics

- Dementia affects almost 50 million people worldwide, which is predicted to increase to 131.5 million people by 2050⁶
- Every three seconds someone in the world develops dementia⁶
- Two out of three people globally believe there is little or no understanding of dementia in their countries⁶
- The total estimated worldwide costs of dementia were US\$818 billion in 2015⁷
- If dementia were a country, it would be the world's 18th largest economy⁷

What is dementia?

Dementia is the term used to describe the symptoms of a large group of illnesses which cause a progressive decline in a person's functioning. It is a broad term used to describe a loss of memory, intellect, rationality, social skills and physical functioning. There are many types of dementia including Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, frontotemporal dementia and Lewy body disease. Dementia can happen to anybody, but it is more common after the age of 65.

Dementia Australia is the national peak body for people, of all ages, living with all forms of dementia, their families and carers. It provides advocacy, support services, education and information.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) Causes of Death, Australia, 2017 (cat. No. 3303.0)

² Dementia Australia (2018). Dementia Prevalence Data 2018-2058, commissioned research undertaken by NATSEM, University of Canberra.

³ The National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling NATSEM (2016) *Economic Cost of Dementia in Australia 2016-2056*

⁴ Based on Dementia Australia's analysis of the following publications: M.Kostas et al., 2016 National Aged Care Workforce Census and Survey – The Aged Care Workforce, 2016, Department of Health, 2017, p. xv, NATSEM, Dementia Prevalence in Australia, Dementia Australia, 2018, Alzheimer's Disease International and Jarolinska Institutet, Global estimates of informal care, Alzheimer's Disease International, 2018, p. 8., Access Economics (2010) *Caring Places*.

⁵ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2012) *Dementia in Australia*

⁶ Alzheimer's Disease International <https://www.alz.co.uk/about-dementia>

⁷ Alzheimer's Disease International (2015) World Alzheimer Report 2015: *The Global Impact of Dementia - an Analysis of Prevalence, Incidence, Cost and Trends*