

People living with dementia boosted by new guide to care

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Credit: Flinders University

People with dementia and their carers can ask for the care they deserve with confidence after the launch of a new guide to their care rights.

The Consumer Companion Guide, entitled 'Diagnosis, treatment and care for people with dementia' is the first guide of its type in Australia to lay out the level of care that people with dementia and their carers and families should expect.

Flinders University's Dr Kate Laver, who coordinated the guide's development in partnerships with people living with [dementia](#), carers, researchers and clinicians from the National Health and Medical Research Council's Cognitive Decline Partnership Centre (CDPD), was in Canberra for the launch.

"The objective of this project was to develop a companion guide for members of the public to complement the Clinical Practice Guidelines to ensure that the information in the Guidelines is more accessible to those who need it most, regardless of their varied levels of health literacy," she said.

Dr Laver, an NHMRC-ARC Dementia Research Development Fellow at the Department of Rehabilitation, Aged and Extended Care Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences at Flinders University, was also involved in the development of the [Clinical Practice Guidelines and Principles of Care for People with Dementia, 2016](#).

Those guidelines were launched in March this year by the Health Minister, Sussan Ley, at the Alzheimer's Australia National Consumer Summit.

The guide includes information about the ten Principles of Dignity of Care, including:

- Zero tolerance of all forms of abuse
- Support people with the same respect you would want for yourself or a member of your family

- Treat each person as an individual by offering a personalised service
- Listen and support people to express their needs
- Respect people's privacy
- Ensure people feel able to complain without fear of retribution
- Engage with family members and carers as care partners
- Assist people to maintain confidence and positive self-esteem
- Act to alleviate [people's](#) loneliness and isolation

Alzheimer's Australia National President Professor Graeme Samuel AC said consumers played a key role in the development of the Consumer Companion Guide.

"These [guidelines](#) are an example of the significant impact that can be achieved when consumers partner with clinicians and researchers," he said.

The new guide was co-launched by Alzheimer's Australia and the Parliamentary Friends of Dementia.

Provided by Flinders University

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