

Friday 26 June 2015

Media Release

New tool to help GP's navigate eastern suburbs dementia services

The Eastern Sydney Dementia Pathway Working Group has developed a new tool to make it easier for GPs in Sydney's eastern suburbs to make referrals for the assessment of patients with memory problems or possible dementia.

Professor Brian Draper, Chair of the South East Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) Northern Sector Dementia Plan Implementation Committee, described the tool as an important new resource for GPs and other health providers to access appropriate specialist dementia services in eastern Sydney.

"This tool is invaluable in assisting GPs to access and navigate the health system for dementia services and referrals," Professor Draper said.

"Additionally, consumers and carers are able to see what types of local dementia services are available and where they might access them."

Eastern Sydney Medicare Local Program Officer-Integrated Care Dr Laila Tabassum said the services pathway breaks down the usual practice of patients waiting to be seen by different providers at different times, resulting in less fragmented care.

"The framework could be adapted and used to create a service map, to easily locate appropriate services, in any area," Dr Tabassum said.

"We are hoping that using this pathway will streamline the process for patients to access services for a dementia diagnosis, treatment and will reduce waitlists and moving from service to service.

"This is also aimed at giving consumers a bird's eye view of what might happen in their memory journey and giving them advice on what they need to look out for."

Alzheimer's Australia NSW CEO, The Hon. John Watkins AM said the resource highlighted the benefits of a collaborative approach to dementia services to improve outcomes for people living with dementia.

"A timely diagnosis and links to appropriate specialist dementia services can make all the difference and improve outcomes for a person living with dementia, their carers and family," Mr Watkins said.

"The development of this resource shows just some of the ways that good networking can aid GP's and a person with dementia to find and navigate appropriate services in a timely manner.

"This is a fantastic tool that we hope other local groups can use to develop their own services pathways for their local area."

The Eastern Sydney Dementia Pathway Working Group is made up of local GPs, SESLHD healthcare professionals and representatives from the community, residential aged care providers and Alzheimer's Australia NSW.

A copy of the Eastern Sydney Dementia Assessment Services Pathway for GPs is available [here](#) and the Dementia Pathway for consumers and carers is available [here](#).

National Dementia Helpline: 1800 100 500

An interpreter service is available

(The National Dementia Helpline is an Australian Government Initiative)

Dementia is a National Health Priority Area

www.fightdementia.org.au

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Alzheimer's Australia NSW is the charity for people with dementia and their families and carers. As the peak body, it provides advocacy, support services, education and information. More than 342,000 people have dementia in Australia. This number is projected to reach more than half a million by 2030.