

Dementia to rise by one third by 2020

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). Canberra, 27 September 2012

The number of people with dementia in Australia is projected to rise one third in less than 10 years to 2020, according to a report released today by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). The AIHW is a major national agency set up by the Australian Government to provide reliable, regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare.

The report, *Dementia in Australia*, was launched today by AIHW Director and CEO David Kalisch and President of Alzheimer's Australia Ita Buttrose at the National Dementia Research Forum in Canberra.

'While projection methods vary, the number of people with dementia is estimated to reach almost 400,000 by 2020, and there could be around 900,000 by 2050,' Mr Kalisch said.

An estimated 298,000 Australians had dementia in 2011, and 62% of these people were women. Most people (74%) were aged over 75. Dementia was the third leading single cause of death in 2010, accounting for 6% of all deaths.

'An average of 25 people died each day from dementia in 2010,' Mr Kalisch said. Twice as many women died from dementia compared with men (6,083 and 2,920 respectively), and the annual number of deaths from dementia is about 9,000.

'In 2011, dementia was the fourth leading cause of overall burden of disease, and the third leading cause of disability burden.

'For people aged 65 and over, dementia was the second leading cause of overall burden of disease and the leading cause of disability burden, accounting for a sixth of the total disability burden in older Australians.'

'As any person with relatives or friends who have dementia knows, it has a marked impact on quality of life not only for those with the condition, but their families and friends as well,' Mr Kalisch said.

Estimates suggest that in 2011 there were around 200,000 informal carers of people with dementia living in the community.

Total direct health and aged care system expenditure on people with dementia was at least \$4.9 billion in 2009-10, of which about \$2.0 billion was directly attributed to dementia. Of this latter amount, \$1.1 billion was spent on permanent residents in residential aged care facilities and \$408 million on community aged care services.

'Many people with dementia have other health conditions, adding to the range and complexity of care needs,' Mr Kalisch said.

In 2009, people with dementia aged 65 and over had a substantially higher average number of health conditions (5.4) than all people in that age group (2.9). In 2009-10, about 1 in 2 residents in residential aged care had dementia and 3 in 10 people aged 85 and over had dementia.

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