

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY GUIDELINES



DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY GUIDELINES

The Nelson Marlborough region, like the rest of New Zealand, has an increasingly ageing population. This means that there will be more people in our area with dementia. The majority of people with dementia are still living in their homes in our community. This means that it is likely that many services including health and a full range of social, recreational and commercial services are likely to be offered to people with dementia.

These guidelines have been developed with this in mind. Some aspects are specifically for health service providers but most are relevant to anyone who provides a service – from medical to plumbers to retailers etc. They have been developed as a guide to ensuring that the approach and environment is conducive to appropriate service delivery.

ETHNICITY AND CULTURAL

It is important to remember that cultural diversity exists. Do not make assumptions. Give consideration and respect and act with humility. Ask the person with dementia or their family/whanau if there are cultural needs and “how we can assist.”

WHO SHOULD USE THESE GUIDELINES

HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS

- » Hospitals
- » Residential Care facilities
- » Outpatient services
- » Community services
- » Primary care services

BUSINESSES THAT OFFER SERVICES

- » In your facility
- » In a persons home

APPLY WHAT IS RELEVANT TO YOUR SERVICE/BUSINESS

Please note: health service specific comments will be shaded.

- » Alzheimers Society
- » Support
- » Advocacy
- » Day respite
- » Education
- » Information

HOW TO USE THE GUIDELINES

These considerations are important in showing respect to people of any age and are especially important for people with dementia.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF BY ASKING

- » What can this service/business learn from these suggestions?
- » What can staff learn?
- » What changes can be made to improve?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

- » Consider your manner and language
- » Consider business cards, signs, pamphlets, mail (font and language)
- » Consider your processes – your initial contact, waiting time and environment etc.
- » Use them when developing your staff orientation programme.
- » Use them to develop a customer service focus and continued staff development.
- » **Avoid criticizing, correcting and arguing as this can be traumatic for the person with dementia.**

LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS	ACTIONS & BEHAVIOURS	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
INTRODUCTION	Introduce yourself and explain your role face to face (so that you can make eye contact).			
	Use short phrases and check that the person understands you.			
	Check that the person can hear and see you.			
	Be prepared to repeat yourself.			
	Relaxed and friendly manner. Be aware of body language.			
ID BADGE	Should be worn where it can be easily seen.			
	The print needs to be as large as possible.			
VULNERABILITY & SECURITY (HOME VISITING)	Phone/send letter before your visit.			
	Suggest a family member/whanau/ friend/neighbour is present at the time of your visit.			
	After your visit, leave a contact card.			

LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS	ACTIONS & BEHAVIOURS	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
USE A PERSONS CORRECT NAME	Ask the person how they want to be addressed. Do not presume to use their given Christian/given name.			
	Use Mr or Mrs and surname unless advised otherwise by the person. Correct pronunciation is important. Only use familiar terms like 'love' or 'dear' when the person is well known to you or they agree that they prefer this.			
DIGNITY	Do not hurry. Take time to communicate. Do not talk down to the person or show impatience.			
SPEAK TO THE PERSON WITH DEMENTIA	Look at the person you are speaking to.			
	Do not use jargon or slang they may not understand.			
BEWARE OF INFORMATION OVERLOAD	Be concise, but no acronyms or jargon. For example, say broken hip not fractured NOF.			
	Use plain language e.g. say "will phone" (or write) not "will contact."			
	Reinforce main points with brief, written information.			
ENCOURAGE CLARIFICATION AND UNDERSTANDING	Ask if there are any questions. Check they have understood (open question).			

LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS	ACTIONS & BEHAVIOURS	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
SHORT TERM MEMORY LOSS/ AWARENESS	Be prepared to go over previously given information and re-introduce yourself. The information you have given may not be retained.			
VISION IMPAIRMENT	Use large print, e.g. font size 14			
	Good contrast- dark print on light background.			
	Ensure appropriate glasses are worn and clean.			
HEARING IMPAIRMENT	Minimise background noise e.g. turn off radio, use a quiet room.			
	Face the person as you speak to them, standing or sitting about one metre apart.			
	Clear normal speech at medium pace. No need to shout or talk too slowly.			

LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS	ACTIONS & BEHAVIOURS	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
TELEPHONES	Consider the provision of enhanced amplification telephone for use by those with hearing impairment.			
	Check the equipment is of good quality.			
	Speak clearly and a little slower when leaving a message and repeat the telephone number twice.			
	Check your own pre-recorded message (preferably while wearing ear-plugs) to see if it is clear enough.			
	People with dementia may not recall messages for themselves or convey messages for others.			
SCORE TOTAL				

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS	ACTIONS & BEHAVIOURS	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
GETTING THE PACE RIGHT	Avoid rushing.			
	Treat the person's body gently. They may have arthritis, fragile skin, etc...			
	Check if the person is ok with being touched before doing so.			
BODY LANGUAGE	An open, gentle, non-confrontational approach.			
INFORMATION	Give frequent explanations of what is being done.			
	Be concise.			
	No jargon or abbreviations. For example, say broken hip, not fractured NOF.			
	Reinforce main points with brief, written information.			
	Encourage questions.			
	Ensure privacy for the person with dementia when giving information, for example, when carrying out treatment.			
	Have frequently asked questions typed out to hand to the person with dementia.			

PROCESS

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS	ACTIONS & BEHAVIOURS	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
GLASSES, HEARING AID, DENTURES, WALKING AID	It is important that dentures are in, glasses are clean and are worn, hearing aid is worn, turned on and functioning, and they have a walking aid. All of these items travel with the person wherever they go.			
MEMORY AIDS	It is important to note that people with dementia rely on memory aids such as whiteboards, diaries, calendars etc... Try to use these where appropriate.			
SCORE TOTAL				

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS	ACTIONS & BEHAVIOURS	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
PARKING	Avoid rushing.			
	Width of park – wide enough to open doors fully and access walking frame/wheelchair.			
ENTRIES	Clear appropriate signage.			
	Adequate lighting at night.			
	No heavy doors. Automatic doors not too swift/forceful.			
	Seats for rest stops.			
LIGHTING	Sufficient lighting.			
	Well lit access areas.			
	Even lighting (minimise changes from shade/dark to light).			
DISTANCES WITHIN BUILDINGS	Rest stops available – stable chairs strategically placed. Chairs with arms, that are not too low.			
SIGNAGE	At eye level, dark print on light background (not white writing).			

ENVIRONMENT

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS	ACTIONS & BEHAVIOURS	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
TOILET ACCESS	Good signage, placed appropriately on door.			
	Easy access (no heavy door/steps, have wide access etc).			
	Sufficient space to turn around with a walking aid.			
	Height of toilet (too low is hard to get up from).			
	Rails to be sited in appropriate position.			
	Easy use locks and door handles.			
	Make it clear how to get help if needed.			
COMFORT	Ensure that the person with dementia is warm, comfortable and able to change position frequently.			
FOOD & DRINK (IF NO FLUID RESTRICTION)	Ensure the person with dementia has drinks offered as they may not feel thirsty (even when de-hydrated).			
	People with dementia may have difficulty recognizing objects and may need extra prompts and assistance.			
	Must be able to reach/see/chew/swallow their meal/drink.			

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS	ACTIONS & BEHAVIOURS	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
FLOOR SURFACES	Ramps should have rails			
	Floor surface should be even. Few changes of surface, colour and texture.			
	Non slippery.			
WHEELCHAIRS FOR GENERAL USERS	Well maintained, no punctures, oiled, brakes work and no parts missing.			
	Where bicycle type tyres are fitted a bicycle pump attached would be a helpful accessory.			
	Easily accessed.			
HEIGHT OF FURNITURE AND FITTINGS	Low beds/trolleys for access on/off independently.			
	Stable chairs, a variety of heights – must not be too low.			
	Chairs with padded arms, level seat, upright padded backs.			
TIDY ENVIRONMENT	No clutter/obstacles/loose mats.			
	Leave the person's environment as you found it. Change can cause anxiety.			
SCORE TOTAL				

SELF-AUDIT SCORE

YOUR SCORE

SECTION	NEVER	SOMTIMES	ALWAYS
LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION			
PROCESS			
ENVIRONMENT			
TOTAL			

NEVER	Will cause frustration - unlikely to meet service user's needs.
SOMETIMES	You get by - but will the service user?
FAIR	You are doing well - not much to change to be great.
MODEL PROVIDER	Well done. You have a responsive service likely to meet a service user's needs.

Review the number of times that you have recorded each category. Consider how you might improve on your service delivery to provide a dementia friendly environment.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT DEMENTIA

Seek information from your local Alzheimers service. Other directory information is available on Eldernet.

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WWW.NMDHB.GOVT.NZ



Nelson Marlborough
District Health Board