

# Memories Group



A community based Diversional Therapy program for people living with dementia or short term memory issues.

# Memories Program

- Increased referrals for people living with dementia led to the instigation of the 'Memories program'. Referrals came from Aged Care Assessment Team, Dementia Australia Advisor, Community Home & Community Care, and Family / Carers.
- Provision was made for a specific dementia group within existing Diversional Therapy program at Hennessy Recreational Therapy Centre and clients were invited to join activities based on a diagnosis of dementia / short term memory loss. Memories Program was developed in line with Diversional Therapy Philosophy & Cognitive Therapy Practice, and is consistent with research findings into cognitive therapy and dementia.
- Cognitive stimulation is defined as 'Engagement in a range of activities and discussions aimed at general enhancement of cognitive and social functioning' (Clare, 2004). Woods et al (2012) describe the aim of cognitive stimulation 'to stimulate thinking and memory generally, including discussion of past and present events and topics of interest, word game, puzzles, music and practical activities such as baking or indoor gardening'.
- Memories Program activities include: **Reminiscence** – (sharing memories & skills) **Memory recall** – (word games, number games, puzzles) **Sensory stimulation** –(cooking, music, gardening) **Orientation** – (special events & celebrations, community events, community access) **Social interaction** – (social events & outings) **Physical activity** – (exercise program, seated Tai Chi, mini golf, bowls) **Creative activities** – ( colouring,
- Clients are invited to participate in monthly programming of activities and are encouraged to offer ideas and suggestions for activities and special events.
- Each client has an individual care plan which is reviewed on a six monthly basis.
- Feedback from clients, staff & carers reflect positive outcomes including increased socialisation and engagement, improved attention span, recall, motivation and self esteem.

# Future development & Improvements

- . Incorporate cognitive assessment (MMSE) & Quality Scale (QOL-AD) as part of evaluation process.
- . Source ongoing education / training for staff
- . Finalise development of information brochure for prospective clients and distribute to local Community and Health centres

Referrals for the Memories Program are generally for people with moderately advanced dementia.  
There is a gap in services for people with a recent diagnosis of dementia /early dementia,  
therefore;

- . Cognitive Stimulation Therapy training has been undertaken by staff.
- . Plans to introduce Cognitive Stimulation Therapy to accommodate a program for people with early dementia
- . Market Cognitive Stimulation Therapy to G.P's, Health Services staff & Dementia Australia Local Advisor to prompt referrals
- . Incorporate Memories Program as a general follow-up / maintenance group to Cognitive Stimulation Therapy.