

The right to rehabilitation for people with dementia

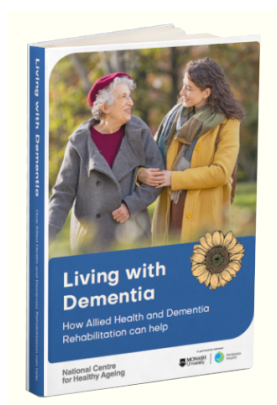
Research funded by the Medical Research Future Fund (2022-2025)

- S** Our research identified and addressed one of the main barriers to accessing dementia rehabilitation: Knowledge.
- U**
- M** Our resources help people with dementia and care partners to know how rehabilitation can help, and to start a conversation with their GP.
- A**
- R** Our training upskills healthcare workers in dementia rehabilitation so they can refer to, and deliver, rehabilitation with confidence.
- Y**

Why was this research needed?

Dementia is a leading cause of disability. Rehabilitation can help people living with dementia maximise independence and quality of life, and continue to do the things that are important to them. Many people with dementia miss out on access to high quality rehabilitation services offered by allied health professionals, such as occupational therapists, speech pathologists, psychologists and physiotherapists.

We made resources and training about dementia rehabilitation



Brochure for people with dementia and families

Real world examples of ways allied health professionals can help people with dementia.

Ways to find a dementia-informed allied health professional.

Questions to ask your GP to start the conversation about dementia rehabilitation.



General Practitioner Dementia Education and Resources

Training for health professionals in dementia care

Online, self-paced and available nationally.

Improves knowledge and confidence in providing, or referring people for, dementia rehabilitation.

We also worked with a national group to add allied health content into training for family doctors.



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What were the aims of the project?

We aimed to improve access to rehabilitation services for people with dementia living in the community. To do this, we:

1. Co-designed solutions to address barriers
2. Tried out these solutions to see whether they made a difference.

What we did

Over four workshops, we invited 26 people to share their experiences with accessing dementia rehabilitation services. People living with dementia, care partners, health care professionals and people from dementia organisations took part. Everyone shared their ideas to improve access.

KEY ISSUES AFFECTING ACCESS

Knowledge gaps

Health professionals lack knowledge or confidence in providing, or referring people for, dementia rehabilitation.

People with dementia and care partners may not know about dementia rehabilitation, or how to access services they need.

Stigma

Health professionals may believe that people with dementia cannot engage in therapy or do not benefit from interventions.

Lack of pathways

There is a lack of dementia-specific pathways to access rehabilitation services.

Knowledge gaps fed into the other issues, so our solutions focused on this.

Did our resources and training work?

Yes, the training increased dementia knowledge and confidence in providing rehabilitation amongst health professionals. Some people who took part were inspired to change service eligibility criteria, set up dementia rehabilitation services and better advertise their service to referrers. One of our partners set up a 12-week home-based dementia rehabilitation program. This created a clear pathway, which GPs told us made it easy for them to use.

What else is needed?

Our training could be tailored to new groups, such as aged care assessors, care workers and healthcare students. Resources could be translated into other languages. Better service directories, care navigators and more funding of dementia rehabilitation are all needed.