



Federal parliamentary committee calls for a dementia friendly future

A federal parliamentary inquiry into the early diagnosis of dementia and intervention strategies has called for greater awareness of dementia and more action towards a dementia friendly future in its report released today.

Thinking ahead, by the House of Representatives Health and Ageing Committee, considered how early or timely diagnosis of dementia could help to improve the lives of people with dementia, as well as the lives of their family and carers.

Chair of the committee, Jill Hall MP, said that promoting greater awareness of dementia, and aspiring to create dementia friendly communities, were two means of promoting early diagnosis and intervention.

“A dementia friendly community involves taking a holistic approach to dementia care, treatment and support. It is about educating all sectors of the community to value people with dementia and their carers,” Ms Hall said.

Ms Hall said the stigma associated with dementia remained a significant barrier to achieving better rates of early diagnosis.

“Many people still believe that dementia is a natural part of ageing, and that nothing can be done to delay the onset or slow progression,” she said.

“The committee has called for a national awareness campaign to help dispel the myths about dementia and encourage people experiencing relevant symptoms to seek a full assessment.”

Other issues discussed in the report include the barriers to achieving a timely diagnosis of dementia; the complex pathways that exist for people seeking treatment and support; and the need to promote preventative steps towards better brain health.

Copies of the committee’s report may be obtained from the Committee’s website www.aph.gov.au/dementia.

For media comment: please contact the Office of Jill Hall MP on (02) 4947 9711.

For all other enquiries: please contact the Committee Secretariat by phone on (02) 6277 4145 or visit the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/haa.