

ALZHEIMER'S AUSTRALIA INC POLICY

Access and Equity

No. G1

Approved by National Board 7 February 2013.

Purpose

To ensure policies, services and programs delivered by Alzheimer's Australia are accessible and equitable for all individuals and communities.

Policy Position

Alzheimer's Australia is committed to the principles of Access and Equity, Human Rights, Social Justice and Social Inclusion and these principles are taken into consideration in the development and implementation of policies, services and programs as well as within the advocacy work of the organisation.

Equity to appropriate services and the highest attainable standard of care is the right of every individual regardless of age, culture, race, language, gender, sexual orientation, geographical location, socio-economic status or housing insecurity.

Access to services may be determined and influenced by diverse social and cultural factors. These factors can impact on an individual's and a community's capacity to enter the service system and their ability to engage that system to provide them with the best quality services to meet their needs.

Alzheimer's Australia recognises the many and varied social and cultural diversities within the Australia population which are created by an individual's unique background and life experiences and may be inclusive of, but not limited to:

- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- People with disabilities
- Sexuality and gender diversity
- People with younger onset dementia
- Geographic location (regional, rural and remote)
- Variations in socio-economic status
- People who are homeless
- People who are incarcerated

Individuals and communities who fall in more than one of the above categories may face multiple disadvantages and barriers to accessing services.

Alzheimer's Australia's Policy, Services and Programs

To meet the needs of people with dementia, their families and carers and to ensure that policy, services and programs are accessible and equitable for **all**; Alzheimer's Australia will deliver services which are innovative and flexible and be designed to be diversity friendly.

Alzheimer's Australia will seek ongoing feedback and advice from consumers to ensure that the services provided by the organisation are responding to the needs of consumers regardless of their social or cultural background.

National advisory groups including the National Consumer Advisory Committee, the National Cross Cultural Dementia Network and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Group will provide advice on the policies, services and programs of Alzheimer's Australia.

Alzheimer's Australia's Advocacy

Alzheimer's Australia believes the following strategies are critical to improving equity of access to health and aged care services for all people with dementia. These include:

- Establishing an evidence base to document the needs of people with dementia from diverse backgrounds and the difficulties they face in accessing appropriate services.
- Empowering all consumers to be partners in care planning and service delivery to ensure that services are appropriately tailored to the needs and goals of individuals. Implementation of Consumer Directed Care will be key to achieving this goal.
- Expanding access to care provided in the community to enable individuals to receive care where it is required
- Ensuring that all consumers have access to appropriate healthcare including timely diagnosis of dementia and appropriate hospital care.
- Developing new and more flexible models of respite services to support individuals who are caring for a person with dementia and to provide opportunities for meaningful social engagement which best suits the needs of the person with dementia.

Alzheimer's Australia will continue to advocate to Government and service providers that these strategies be adopted as core business of service delivery and that issues around equitable access for people with dementia be monitored, evaluated and continuously improved.

Responsibility

- All staff members have a responsibility to work individually and collectively to ensure the principles of Access and Equity, Human Rights, Social Justice and Social Inclusion are taken into consideration development and implementation of policies, services and programs as well as within the advocacy work of the organisation.

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File Copies referenced in Board minutes	Forms
Retain 5 years	Other relevant policy/procedures