



MAKE DEMENTIA  
TOP OF MIND



Dementia  
Friendly  
Recognition  
Programme

NGĀ POU WHIRINAKI MATE WAREWARE



Toolkit

**Ehara taku toa, he takitahi, he toa takitini**

**My success should not be bestowed onto me alone, as it was not individual success but success of a collective.**

**“One of the biggest challenges of being diagnosed with dementia is other people’s reactions.”**

## Introduction

Thank you for your interest in our Dementia Friendly Recognition Programme, which aims to help people living with dementia to live well by remaining active and supported within their communities. Alzheimers NZ is working to build a Dementia Friendly Aotearoa New Zealand and we invite you to come on board with this work.

## Our Dementia Friendly programmes

**Dementia Friendly Communities** are places where people living with dementia can live, play, shop and work. Places that are kind, supportive, inclusive and understanding. Places that are easy to navigate and are designed with the needs of people with dementia in mind.

Our **Dementia Friendly Recognition Programme** is an accreditation and recognition framework for businesses and organisations like yours to become dementia friendly and to explore how you can help build a kinder and more supportive New Zealand.

Our **Dementia Friends** programme is a short online awareness module that anyone can do to start learning about dementia and ways to help. Become a Dementia Friend at [alzheimers.org.nz](https://alzheimers.org.nz)





**“It would be helpful if people took the time to explain things more fully and then make sure I have understood, rather than assuming I have.”**

## **Award or recognition**

We offer two options for businesses or organisations to be recognised for their commitment to becoming dementia friendly.

- **Dementia Friendly Award and accreditation**

Alzheimers NZ accredits and awards the organisation as having met all seven Dementia Friendly Recognition Programme standards.

- **Working to be Dementia Friendly recognition**

Alzheimers NZ recognises the organisation has met fundamental criteria across five of the standards and is making tangible progress towards achieving dementia friendly status. This option does not convey formal accreditation by Alzheimers NZ.

### **Accreditation**

#### **Dementia Friendly Award**



### **Recognition**

#### **Working to be Dementia Friendly**



## Value of becoming dementia friendly

Achieving award status carries significant value. It:

- Shows you are a safe, friendly, accepting and supportive place for people living with dementia as your customers and your employees (which is also good for everyone).
- Enhances your ability to respond helpfully to customer diversity through training, support, and tangible changes that make a real difference.
- Provides your business with either formal accreditation and the **Dementia Friendly Award**, or with recognition as **Working to be Dementia Friendly**.
- Raises employee pride in their work, as awareness and education benefit their communication and interactions with customers and communities.
- Offers reassurance to customers and employees that as a dementia friendly organisation you will be aware of, responsive to, and respectful of the diversity of their needs.
- Is a point of difference. On achievement of award or recognition, we give you relevant collateral for use in signage, marketing, communication material and media channels.

**“It’s more than just a memory issue.  
It affects all sorts of abilities in your life and  
your way of being.”**

## **Dementia Friendly Standards**

The following seven standards form the criteria of the Dementia Friendly Recognition Programme:

### **1. Person-centred**

We understand the needs of people living with dementia as they relate to our business or organisation from their perspective.

### **2. Leadership**

We have the right structures in place to maintain a sustainable dementia friendly business or organisation.

### **3. Workforce**

Staff and volunteers have an awareness and understanding of dementia.

### **4. Physical environments**

We have a continuous improvement plan to make our physical environment(s) accessible to people with dementia.

### **5. Workplace**

We respect and support employees affected by dementia (people living with dementia or people caring for someone with dementia).

### **6. Collateral and websites**

Websites, communications and published information are accessible for people with dementia.

### **7. Review**

Regular formal reviews of dementia friendly progress are planned for into the future.

**“When I go shopping. I don’t like to ask for help. It’s hard to decide. Even if it is on my list, often I go home without buying it. It would be helpful if someone offered to help.”**

## Champion the Dementia Friendly cause

People living with dementia are our customers and employees too. People with dementia face unique and diverse challenges when engaging with businesses and organisations.

There is a lot you can do to make their lives easier and more supported. Across New Zealand we must all be more responsive to the needs of people living with dementia.

Our population is ageing. People with dementia are living longer in their communities and will do so with increasing independence. Right now, 70,000 Kiwis are living with dementia and this is expected to grow to around 170,000 by 2050. That is a lot of us!

More and more of your customers, employees and others who engage with your business or organisation will experience dementia personally. This may be through developing dementia, caring for someone with dementia, or in some other significant way.

Nearly all of us know someone with dementia.

People with dementia need our support, engagement and willingness to work for change as we champion social responsibility and build towards a kinder, more understanding and inclusive dementia friendly New Zealand.

## How to achieve the award or recognition

You've decided you want to become dementia friendly – that's great! There are two options for you to consider. Both are available to any business or organisation. You choose the one that is right for you.

### Option 1 - Dementia Friendly Award and accreditation

You work at your pace to meet the specified standards and criteria. We provide support and advice through the process as needed.

When you are ready, we review your work and audit your organisation. There is a fee to cover audit costs. The fee depends on the number of audits. Please contact us to discuss this.

Alzheimers NZ formally accredits and awards your organisation when all seven Dementia Friendly Recognition Programme standards are met.

### Option 2 - Working to be Dementia Friendly recognition

Enrolment in this option is free. You enrol and work at your pace to meet the specified standards and criteria.

When you are ready, we review your work. Alzheimers NZ recognises your organisation's work when five of the Dementia Friendly Recognition Programme standards are met. Audit is not required. This option does not convey formal award and accreditation by Alzheimers NZ.

Please get in touch with us to discuss these options, enrolment, or any other questions you have at:

[dementiafriendlynz@alzheimers.org.nz](mailto:dementiafriendlynz@alzheimers.org.nz)

or phone us on 04 387-8264

## Overview – what do you have to do?

First you decide which option works for your business or organisation and enrol in the programme. You then identify gaps and work needed to meet the standards and criteria. You create an action plan and work at your speed to complete the work.

When you are ready you send us your self assessment and supporting evidence of how you meet the

standards and criteria. We evaluate your work and for the Dementia Friendly Award option, on site audits are completed.

Our Accreditation Committee then decides if you meet the requirements for your option. Either:

- accreditation with the **Dementia Friendly Award** or
- recognition as **Working to be Dementia Friendly**.

We review your dementia friendly status two yearly. You can change options at anytime. Fees already paid will not be refunded.

**“Since we started helping our people become more aware of what dementia is and how it affects people, we’ve experienced a host of benefits. All of this is improving customer satisfaction and reducing waste as well as being the right thing to do. There is no downside to being a dementia friendly business.”**

Company Manager

## Dementia friendly resources and approaches

There is a wealth of freely available information, resources and links on our website [www.alzheimers.org.nz](http://www.alzheimers.org.nz).

Other suggestions as you work on your dementia friendly action plan include:

### Person-centred

If you have not already established meaningful consultation and representation of people living with dementia for your business or organisation, contact us for ideas and suggestions.

### Workforce

- Identify a key employee to lead your dementia friendly work and action plan and to liaise with us as required.
- Gain senior leadership commitment to champion becoming a dementia friendly business or organisation and to lead through the changes required.
- Establish relevant timelines to develop policy, raise staff awareness, deliver education and make changes to materials and physical environments.

## Education

If you don't already have established relevant dementia friendly education for your staff contact us for ideas and suggestions. If you require significant help developing education this will be on an agreed fee for service basis.

A good place to start is by getting all your staff to do our online [Dementia Friends](#) module. This provides a baseline level of awareness on which you can then identify and deliver additional dementia friendly education relevant to your business or organisation, customers and staff.

Dementia Friends is available free online at [alzheimers.org.nz](http://alzheimers.org.nz). Dementia Friends receive a certificate and a badge or wristband.

### Timeframe

You work at your own pace. How long it takes depends on factors such as the size and scale of your business or organisation and the time and resources you can commit to your dementia friendly workplan. This could be several months or longer depending on your action plan and business needs.

**“Give me time to absorb who you are before you start telling me what your call is about.”**



**“We live our best possible lives when...  
we live in knowledgeable communities  
that include, accept and understand us.”**

## **How dementia friendly are you?**

The Dementia Friendly Recognition Programme standards and criteria (Appendix One) may initiate some ideas. There are a variety of ways you can assess how dementia friendly your organisation already is, including:

### **Ask people with dementia what it is like to interact with your organisation.**

People with dementia can often tell you directly which aspects of your business and services they find easy to use, and which create barriers.

Asking people you know with dementia is a good place to start.

Your local Alzheimers or Dementia organisation may also be able to arrange for people living with dementia to visit and give you feedback.

### **Look around your buildings and facilities – are they dementia friendly?**

There are often simple changes you can make to improve the physical environment for people with dementia.

## **Is the information you provide about your organisation dementia friendly?**

Think about using plain English and creating documents with minimum size 14 point font.

Our website [www.alzheimers.org.nz](http://www.alzheimers.org.nz) is an example of a dementia friendly digital format.

### **Learn more about dementia.**

People with dementia repeatedly tell us that it is the attitudes of others which has the biggest impact on their lives.

An understanding of the impact of dementia and how to support people living with it can make a significant positive difference to their experience.

It can also make a positive difference to the experience of your employees and other customers and stakeholders.

Working to become dementia friendly will start and build momentum in this process as you educate staff and access resources.

**Recognise that people with dementia all differ and are unique in the way they experience dementia.**

Dementia is different for everyone – what a person experiences and how it impacts their life is unique to them. The symptoms each person experiences depends on the parts of the brain that are affected.

The most common dementia symptoms include changes in memory, thinking, behaviour, personality and emotions. People with dementia may experience a range of challenges that can impact on their interaction with others.

Challenges may include:

- remembering what they are doing.
- communicating clearly.
- handling money.
- navigating complex or confusing environments.



**“You need to focus on the ability and contribution that we can make not on what we can no longer do.”**

## Appendix 1: Alzheimers NZ Dementia Friendly Recognition Programme standards and criteria

\*Option 2: Organisations **Working to be Dementia Friendly** can work to meet not required criteria if they wish.

Standard	Criteria/ evidence sources	Working to be Dementia Friendly	Dementia Friendly Award
<b>1. Person-centred</b> We understand the needs of people living with dementia as they relate to our business or organisation from their perspective.	1.1 Engagement with local Alzheimers or Dementia organisation.	✓	✓
	1.2 Consultation with people living with dementia and/ or their carers to identify what is important to them.	✓	✓
	1.3 Where possible, people living with dementia are represented on boards/ committees/ advisory groups.	Not required	✓
<b>2. Leadership</b> We have the right structures in place to maintain a sustainable dementia friendly business or organisation.	2.1 Formal commitment from owner/ senior leadership team/ governing body.	✓	✓
	2.2 A nominated leader within the business or organisation to champion the cause.	✓	✓
	2.3 Established working relationship local Alzheimers or Dementia organisation.	✓	✓
	2.4 Networking and/ or being involved in a collective community group that campaigns for dementia friendly change.	✓	✓

Standard	Criteria/ evidence sources	Working to be Dementia Friendly	Dementia Friendly Award
<b>Leadership (continued)</b>	2.5 Dementia friendly outcomes identified in the business or organisation's annual plans/ goals.	Not required	✓
<b>3. Workforce</b> Staff and volunteers have an awareness and understanding of people with dementia.	3.1 A dementia education plan is developed and implemented.	✓	✓
	3.2 All staff have received awareness education on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognising dementia</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Positive interactions.</li> </ul>	✓	✓
<b>4. Physical environments</b> We have a continuous improvement plan to make our physical environment(s) accessible to people with dementia.	4.1 Internal:	Not required	Required
	4.1.1 Flooring is well maintained, plain, smooth, level, non-slip, and non-reflective.	Not required	✓
	4.1.2 No areas of deep shadow or glaring light.	Not required	✓
	4.1.3 Simple layout with short, direct routes.	Not required	✓
	4.1.4 Distinctive way-finding cues/landmarks positioned to ease navigation if visual access is not clear e.g. potted plants, paintings, ornaments.	Not required	✓
	4.1.5 Furniture and furnishings are contrasted against walls for ease of visibility.	Not required	✓



Standard	Criteria/ evidence sources	Working to be Dementia Friendly	Dementia Friendly Award
Physical environments (continued)	4.1.6 No highly-patterned fabrics or abstract furniture designs.	Not required	✓
	4.1.7 Quiet, rest places are readily available.	Not required	✓
	4.1.8 Clutter and background noise are kept to a minimum.	Not required	✓
	4.1.9 Products/service counters are easy to see.	Not required	✓
	4.1.10 Staff are easily identifiable.	Not required	✓
	4.2 External environment:	Not required	Required
	4.2.1 Entrances are clearly visible and obvious.	Not required	✓
	4.2.2 Steps have a handrail and a painted visual contrast on the edge.	Not required	✓
	4.2.3 Temporary signs (sandwich type boards) do not obstruct entrance ways.	Not required	✓

Standard	Criteria/ evidence sources	Working to be Dementia Friendly	Dementia Friendly Award
<b>5. Workplace</b> We respect and support employees affected by dementia (either people living with dementia or caring for someone living with dementia).	5.1 Human resources staff are aware of their role in minimising stigma and supporting employees affected by dementia, resulting in safe and supportive human resources practices.	✓	✓
	5.2 The employer actively promotes awareness of flexible working arrangement rights and obligations.	✓	✓
	5.3 Staff have an awareness of their role in supporting colleagues affected by dementia.	✓	✓
	5.4 Staff can demonstrate where to get guidance if concerned for a co-worker.	✓	✓
	5.5 There is evidence of reasonable adjustments made to any affected employee's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• working environment</li> <li>• working roles/patterns</li> <li>• training</li> <li>• supervision and support provided</li> <li>• respectful transition from employment if required.</li> </ul>	Not required	✓

Standard	Criteria/ evidence sources	Working to be Dementia Friendly	Dementia Friendly Award
<b>6. Collateral and websites</b>  Websites, communications and published information is accessible for people with dementia.	6.1 Written material:	Not required	Required
	6.1.1 Plain English is used; complex sentences are avoided with one subject/topic per paragraph	Not required	✓
	6.1.2 Information is presented logically and concisely	Not required	✓
	6.1.3 Jargon is avoided	Not required	✓
	6.1.4 Text does not overlay pictures or photographs	Not required	✓
	6.1.5 Minimum size 14 uncluttered font is used	Not required	✓
	6.1.6 Italics are avoided	Not required	✓
	6.1.7 Sentences finish on the same page they start on	Not required	✓
	6.1.8 Quotations and examples are used where possible	Not required	✓
	6.1.9 Diagrams and pictures are placed alongside text if they are relevant and provide clarity to the information being discussed	Not required	✓
	6.1.10 White space is well used with no superfluous cartoons or diagrams to clutter the page	Not required	✓

Standard	Criteria/ evidence sources	Working to be Dementia Friendly	Dementia Friendly Award
<b>Collateral and websites (continued)</b>	6.2 Websites:	Not required	Required
	6.2.1 Clear and direct language is used	Not required	✓
	6.2.2 Language that is too technical or scientific is avoided	Not required	✓
	6.2.3 Abbreviations are not used	Not required	✓
	6.2.4 Specific and clear terms for headings and links are used	Not required	✓
	6.2.5 Large text size is used	Not required	✓
	6.2.6 Plain background is used	Not required	✓
	6.2.7 Fancy fonts and designs are avoided	Not required	✓
	6.2.8 Short pieces of text are used	Not required	✓
	6.2.9 Navigation is intuitive, it is clear how to get back to the beginning of the website	Not required	✓
<b>7. Review</b>  Planned reviews of dementia friendly progress are planned for into the future.	7.1 A plan is completed	✓	✓
	7.2 Regular check ins are scheduled in the plan	Not required	✓



**He waka eke noa  
A canoe which we are all in with no exception**

**“Don’t be afraid to approach me and  
ask if you can help.”**

### **Contact us:**

Alzheimers NZ

04 387 8264

[www.alzheimers.org.nz](http://www.alzheimers.org.nz)

[dementiafriendlynz@alzheimers.org.nz](mailto:dementiafriendlynz@alzheimers.org.nz)

All quotes except where otherwise stated are from people living with dementia and from **The Dementia Declaration: Our Lives Matter. He Whakapuaki mō te mate Wareware: He Mea Nui Tō Mātou Noho i Te Ao.**

<https://www.alzheimers.org.nz/our-voice/dementia-declaration>

This document is produced in a Dementia Friendly style. It uses fonts and spacings that makes it as easy as possible for people with dementia



**Dementia  
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**NGĀ POU WHIRINAKI MATE WAREWARE**

**“I am still me.”**

**Join us to build a Dementia Friendly New Zealand**



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