



A toolkit to advocate for the Dementia Mate Wareware Action Plan implementation

All of us 'do' advocacy. Every time we stand up for people living with dementia, we are advocating. Advocacy could mean taking action to create change.

Our advocacy work is important to influence dementia policy at the local and national levels. We need to work together to make decision-makers understand the importance of addressing the dementia challenges, what and why it needs to be done, and its benefits for so many people.

What do we want to achieve?

We want to get the New Zealand Government's commitment to fully fund and implement the Dementia Mate Wareware Action Plan (Action Plan). We want to secure high-quality support for people living with dementia.

The Dementia Mate Wareware Action Plan is a comprehensive plan for Government to address the dementia challenge. The challenge is not in the future, it is already happening now.

Due to the ageing population, the number of people living with dementia is increasing rapidly. In New Zealand, around 70,000 people lived with dementia in 2020 and this number is set to jump by 240 per cent in the next 30 years.

But, the growing number of people living with dementia is not followed by the accessibility of services to help them having a good quality of life.

Life is getting tougher for people living with dementia because it is harder to:

- get a diagnosis
- get personal and home care to live independently at home
- get community support from local dementia organisations
- navigate through the myriad layers of care in the health system
- access residential care when it is needed.

Local dementia organisations are also under pressured and underfunded. They can only support 16 per cent of people living with dementia who need help. Around 48,000 people living with dementia cannot get support they need.

Fully funding and implementing the Action Plan is a solution to improve the life of Kiwis living with dementia. Because there will be better support for people living with dementia through local dementia organisations, better integrated care, and stronger leadership.

Implementing the Action Plan will also reduce the risks of people having dementia in the future, reduce the impact of dementia on families and health systems and potentially reduce the national health costs.

Our top three tips for advocating



As a health professional or member of the community, you're in an influential position to steer system change, improve support and allow stories to be heard.

Advocating for the Action Plan implementation is one of the best things we can do to support people and their families living with dementia. If we can connect with politicians, policy makers and influencers, we can have a big impact!

How to use this toolkit

This toolkit has been developed to support our advocacy activities.

You can use the messages and information in this toolkit to get tips on how to advocate for better dementia care through the Action Plan implementation.

You can also use information to share with decision makers and influencers or use any part of it to talk about the importance of implementing the Action Plan. There are steps to help you begin advocating and to start the conversation in your community.

Who this toolkit is for

Alzheimers NZ has put this toolkit together for Alzheimers NZ members and staff, other advocates, influencers, decision makers and the community.

Why should we care?

Share information about dementia with others and making the case.

The facts

1.2 million

or 1 in 5 New Zealanders will be aged 65 years and over in 2030

Dementia cases will

increase by 240 percent

in 30 years

170,000 people

will live with dementia in 2050

By 2050, dementia will cost the country almost

\$6 billion

48,000

people living with dementia cannot access services

Dementia impacts

more women than men

at around 30% higher

Four out of five

Kiwis know someone living with dementia

Key messages

You can use these key messages to help with your advocacy.

Demographic

- Age is a significant factor, but dementia is not a normal part of ageing.
- Dementia is increasing at a faster rate among Māori, Pacific, and Asian communities.

Health care and support

- People living with dementia often have other health conditions. They need an integrated care approach to maintain their health.
- Dementia is often undiagnosed, so may not be included in the health system database or being treated.

Dementia community-based organisations

- Most people living with dementia want to stay at home and get support from families and the community. But accessing local Alzheimers and dementia organisations is getting harder.
- These dementia community-based organisations are underfunded and can only support around 16 per cent of those who need help.
- Funding from Government for local Alzheimers and dementia organisations is not enough to cover the operational cost. This situation creates service gaps and inequities across the system.

Government actions to date

- New Zealand has an obligation to meet targets of the WHO's Global action plan on the public health response to dementia 2017 – 2025.
- The [coalition agreement](#) between National and NZ First focus on the aged care sector to improve the lives of our seniors.
- Funding of \$12 million over four years in the Budget 2022 for seven pilot projects and the Dementia Mate Wareware Leadership and Advisory Group.

What we need to better support people living with dementia

- Alzheimers NZ's recommendations to Government are outlined in the [Briefing to the incoming Minister](#) we co-authored with Dementia NZ.
- We ask the Government to:
 1. Fully implement and fund the Dementia Mate Wareware Action Plan.
 - The Action Plan is the best tool for governments to improve dementia care and make the changes.
 - The previous Cabinet endorsed the Action Plan.
 2. Provide funding of \$127.3 million over three years to Alzheimers and Dementia organisations.

Funding for these local dementia organisations will allow them to continue supporting people living with dementia in the community and keep them out of hospital, reduce hospital admissions, and can be cost saving for Government and health care system.
 3. Develop a health strategy and plan for an integrated continuum of care for older people.

People living with dementia need a holistic care, addressing physical and mental health, and social needs.

We should share the same key messages in our communications to make our voice heard.

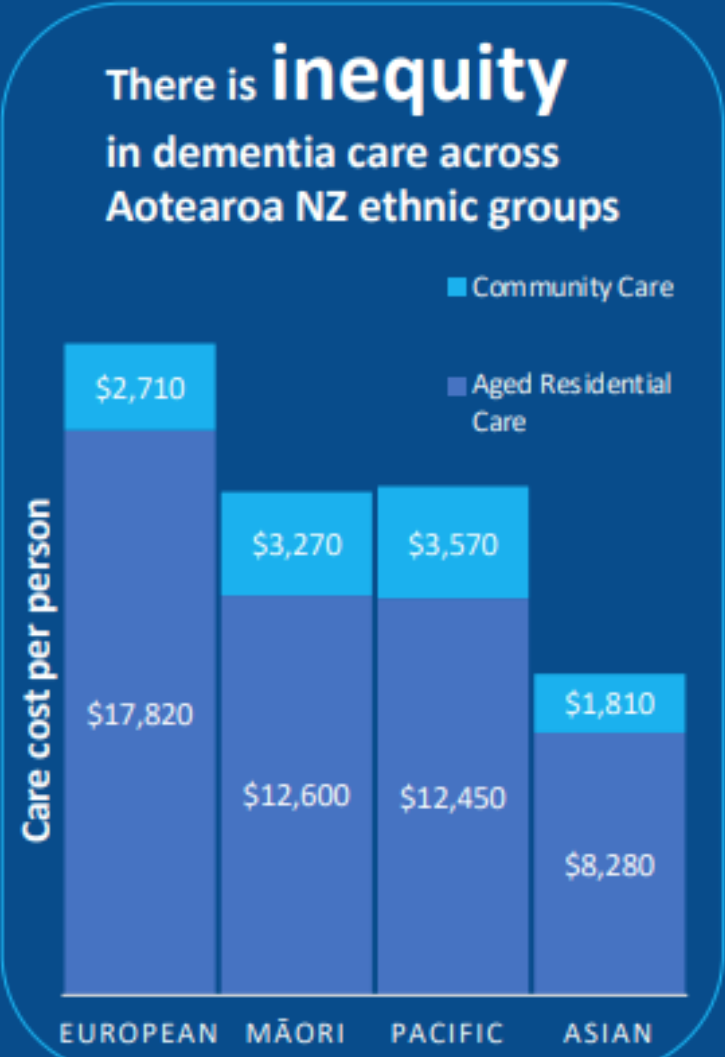
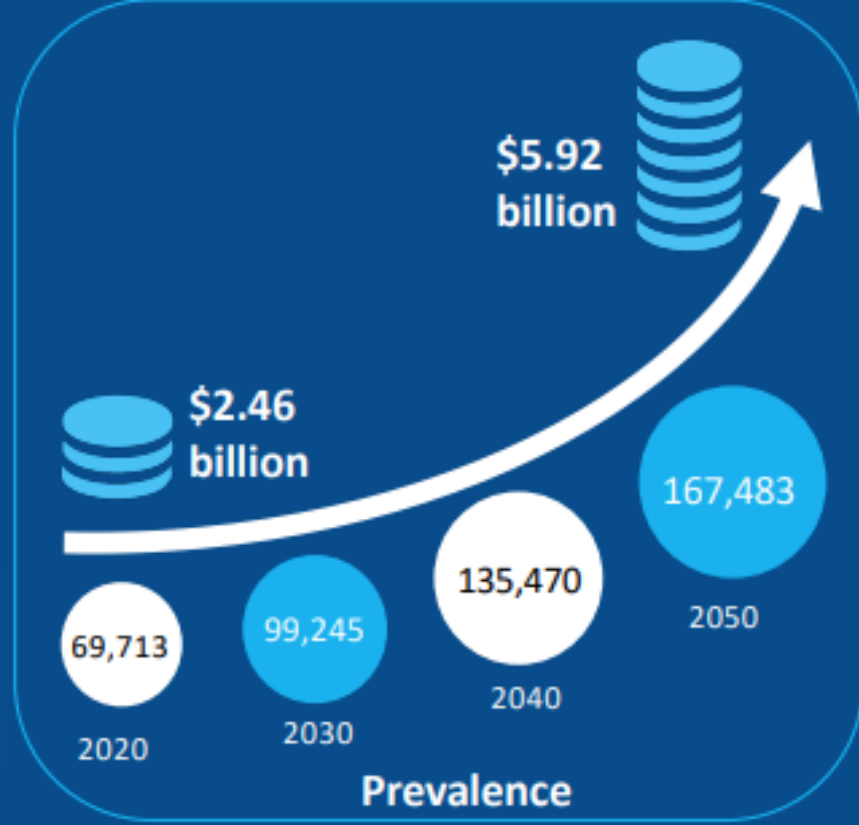
You can print out the following infographics and leave them with the people you meet with as a reminder.

Some other useful information to help:

- [Dementia Mate Wareware Action Plan](#)
- [Dementia Declaration](#)
- [Dementia Economic Impact Report 2020](#)
- [Data for Aotearoa New Zealand](#)
- [Booklets and factsheets about dementia](#)

Dementia: a rapidly growing problem for Aotearoa NZ

September 2021



One in four people will die with dementia

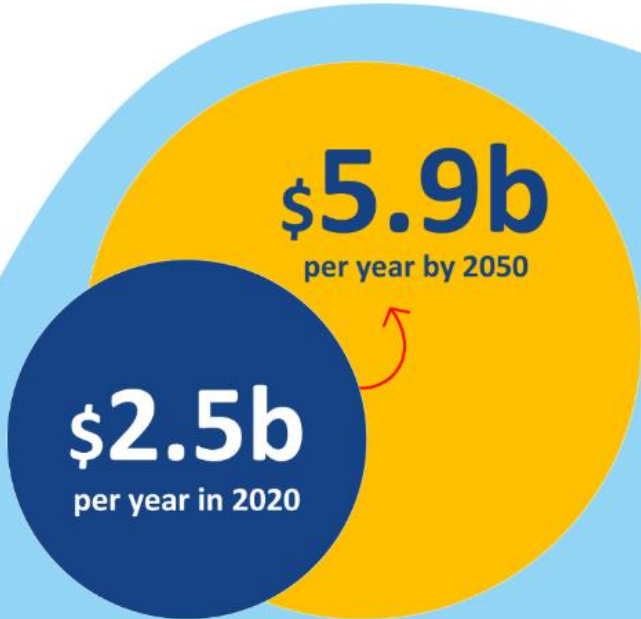
Dementia is increasing **faster** in Māori, Pacific, and Asian peoples

- ## Priority Areas
- Research on the true rates of dementia in Aotearoa NZ
 - Culturally appropriate care that maximises quality of life
 - A National Dementia Plan for Aotearoa NZ

Urgent funding is needed for

Dementia services

A new service model will provide early and ongoing support to people living with dementia and their whānau, and reduce the impact of dementia on the health system and the economy.



Annual cost estimates: Dementia costs the economy \$2.5b annually. This is estimated to grow to \$5.9b by 2050.

Funding required over the next 3 years:

\$127.28m



Funding will:

- Keep up with the growing number of people living with dementia, and extend the reach of support through a new service model
- Provide nationally consistent services for effective, evidence-informed, and evolving community-based support services
- Support a sustainable sector that provides a cost-effective alternative costly residential care and hospital services

and ultimately support:

37,400
 Families

Community-based support services help people live their best possible lives...



It reduces costs by delaying entry to care



It improves wellbeing of people living with dementia and their care partners



It supports inclusive communities

How you can advocate for the Dementia Mate Wareware Action Plan implementation

Share the information about the dementia challenge – you're not alone!

Implementing the Action Plan to improve care and support for people living with this health condition is important, and there are lots of people who can support you.

Meet with your local MP, influencers, and community leaders

Building a relationship and have conversations with your local MP and community leaders such as your local mayor, influencers and your counterparts in other community organisations can help advocate for improved dementia care.

An MP is your representative in Parliament. Your local MP may have busy schedules, so you should call or email their office to request a meeting.

Your local MP may be a newly-elected. So, your MP may be unfamiliar with dementia and have some questions about the dementia challenge. You can use the messages in this toolkit to help preparing your case before meeting your local MP or with other community leaders.

When you get the opportunity to meet your MP:

- **Keep it brief and simple**

You can explain the work your organisation is doing and share stories to inspire actions. You could invite them to visit the service to help understand what you are trying to do.

- **Get to the point quickly but use the time constructively**

Show that you know their time is valuable.

- **Explain the reasons you wanted to meet with them**

Use the meeting to outline the benefits of what you are asking for, and the risks of inaction on addressing the dementia challenge. They can use their position and support us by making the case.

- **Use available data, facts, case studies**

If possible, invite a person with dementia to go to the meeting with you.

- **Tell them what you want them to do**

Encourage them to take action to support dementia related advocacy.

After the meeting, remember to send a thank you note to the person you met. Include some of the key points you covered in the meeting and gently reinforce the call to action. Follow up your visit with a phone call or subsequent letters if your requests are not met.

More tips on [going to meetings](#), [write to your MP](#) and [talking with your MP](#) are on our website.

Who is your local MP?

The list of electorates according to local Alzheimers organisations.

Alzheimers organisation	Electorate	Name	Electorate Phone number	Email
North Island				
Eastern Bay of Plenty	East Coast	Dana Kirkpatrick	N/A	Dana.Kirkpatrick@parliament.govt.nz
Gisborne/Tairāwhiti	East Coast	Dana Kirkpatrick	N/A	Dana.Kirkpatrick@parliament.govt.nz
Manawatu	Palmerston North	Tangi Utikere	06 356 5958	Tangi.Utikere@parliament.govt.nz
Northland	Whangārei	Dr Shane Reti	09 438 9992	Shane.Reti@parliament.govt.nz
Taranaki	New Plymouth	David MacLeod	06 758 2919	David.MacLeod@parliament.govt.nz
Tauranga/WBOP	Tauranga	Sam Uffindell	07 577 0923	Sam.Uffindell@parliament.govt.nz
Wairarapa	Wairarapa	Mike Butterick	027 357 7945	Mike.Butterick@parliament.govt.nz
Whanganui	Whanganui	Carl Bates	N/A	Carl.Bates@parliament.govt.nz
South Island				
Marlborough	Kaikōura	Stuart Smith	03 579 3204	Stuart.Smith@parliament.govt.nz
Nelson/Tasman	Nelson	Rachel Boyack	03 539 0480	rachel.boyack@parliament.govt.nz
Otago	Dunedin	Rachel Brooking	04 817 8807	rachel.brooking@parliament.govt.nz
South Canterbury	Rangitata	James Meager	0274 275 197	James.Meager@parliament.govt.nz
Southland	Invercargill	Penny Simmonds	03 218 5060	Penny.Simmonds@parliament.govt.nz

The complete list of New Zealand MPs

[Click here](#) to see the list of the current MPs.

More information on contact details for MPs and how to address people in Parliament when you correspond with them is available on [NZ Parliament website](#).

Local media

Writing a letter to your local newspaper is another good way to bring attention to dementia. Local newspapers may have a submission form on their website that steps you through the process.

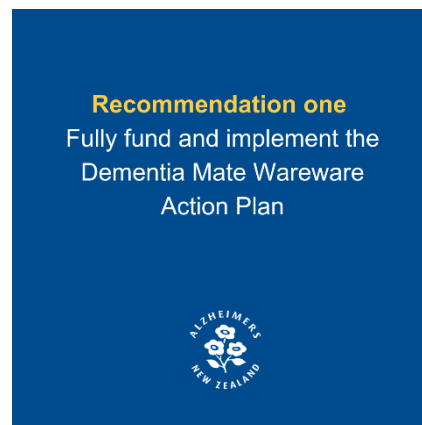
If you know someone living with dementia or somebody in their family and whānau is willing to share their story publicly, this will increase your chance of getting media coverage. Tips on [write a letter to the Editor](#) are on our website.

Social media

Use your social media channels to help raise awareness of what is needed for people living with dementia in your community.

You could tag your local MP or other leaders/influencers with whom you have a connection, or even – with appropriate permissions - share stories from some of the whānau you've supported about the benefits of your service – photos of people are great to share impact!

Use these social media tiles and the above key messages to help share your story.



Recommendation two

Properly fund community Alzheimers and Dementia organisations to ensure Kiwis can get the help they urgently need



Recommendation three

Create a better plan to improve health care services for older Kiwis



For example:

🗣️ We provide vital support services to whānau in our community who are living with dementia – but we need more support from Government to keep doing this.

We urge Government to fully fund and implement the Dementia Mate Wareware Action Plan, to fund Alzheimers and dementia organisations, and develop of a health strategy for a better care for older people.

Do not forget to add hashtags on the appropriate channels. Try [#AlzheimersNZ](#) or [#Dementia](#) or start a new one specific to your community. You can also tag your local MP and your other influential connections.

Or, keep an eye out on the Alzheimers NZ social media pages and share (or retweet) these posts and add your own commentary.

You can download ore tips on [using social media](#) on our website.

For more support reach out to:

Policy Advisor

policy@alzheimers.org.nz

Comms Advisor

comms@alzheimers.org.nz