

Winter Days, Steady Ways

Winter can change the rhythm of our days. The mornings are darker, the evenings arrive earlier, and colder weather can make it harder to get out and about.

For people living with dementia, these seasonal changes can sometimes feel unsettling. A familiar routine, a warm home, gentle activity and regular connection can all help make winter feel calmer, safer and more predictable.

Here are some great tips and advice for assisting people living with dementia to feel calm, safe and supported through the colder months.



Keep routines familiar

Consistent wake-up times, meals, rest breaks and bedtimes can provide comfort, reduce confusion and make the day easier to follow.



Let the light in

Open curtains early, keep rooms well-lit and make the most of natural daylight. A sunny window or short time outside can help.



Keep warm & comfortable

Use comfortable layers, keep blankets nearby and make sure rooms are warm but not too hot. Check heaters and electric blankets are used safely.



Make the home easy to move through

Good lighting, clear walkways and familiar furniture placement can reduce confusion and lower the risk of falls.



Encourage gentle movement

A short walk, seated exercises, stretching, gardening or simple household tasks can help keep the body moving and the mind engaged.



Choose meaningful activities

Music, photos, puzzles, craft, sorting familiar items or sharing a warm drink can create comfort, purpose and connection.



Watch for changes

Changes in sleep, appetite, mood or behaviour may be signs that extra support or a GP check-in is needed.



Support carers too

Carers need rest, connection and support. Taking a break or asking for help can make a real difference.

Dementia together can help...

CatholicCare's Dementia Together program supports people living with dementia, their carers and families through practical education, tailored respite and dementia-specific support. The program helps families better understand dementia, build confidence and find ways to support daily life with care, dignity and compassion.

Visit: www.dementiatgether.com.au



What's the difference? CHSP & Support at Home

In Australia, two of the government-funded aged care programs that can help older people remain living safely and independently at home are the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP), and Support at Home.

Both programs are designed to support older people still living at home, *but they are not the same.*

CHSP: a little help to stay independent

The Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) is often described as an entry-level program.

It is generally for older people who are managing reasonably well at home, but need some extra help with certain tasks.

This might include help with housework, meals, shopping, transport, personal care, social support or planned respite for carers.

For many people, CHSP is a good starting point. It can provide practical support before needs become more intense or complex.

Support at Home: for more intense needs

Support at Home is designed for older people who have higher care needs and require a more coordinated approach to their support.

This may suit people whose care needs are more regular, complex or ongoing.

People approved for Support at Home are assigned one of eight funding classifications and a set budget, based on their assessed care needs.

For people with more complex care needs, Support at Home gives more access to more care in the home.

All care needs & program allocations are assessed by



myagedcare

The simplest way to think about it...

CHSP is generally for people who need a smaller amount of support to keep doing things.

Support at Home is generally for people who need more regular or more coordinated care and support.

Each program is designed for different levels of assessed need.

CatholicCare can help...

Our team can help older people and their families understand the options, talk through what different supports may mean, and guide them through the next steps.

For more details call 1300 523 985 or visit: www.catholiccarecq.com/agedcare

Article informed by guidance from: myagedcare.gov.au



The CEO's Corner

Care and the right support often begins with understanding...

It may be understanding why a familiar routine brings comfort to someone living with dementia. It may be taking the time to listen when a family conversation feels difficult. It may be helping an older person make sense of aged care options, so they can choose support that feels right for them.

Whether someone needs practical help at home, support through a challenging conversation, or guidance during a time of change, our role is to offer care that is respectful, compassionate and centred on the person... all delivered with clarity and understanding.

Until next time,

Robert Sims

CatholicCare Chief Executive Officer

We know that care is not only about services. It is also about patience, dignity and trust. It is about meeting people where they are, walking alongside them, and helping them feel less alone when life becomes complex.

Hard Conversations Need Helpful Starts



Some conversations are hard because they matter. With patience, support and a willingness to listen, they can also become the beginning of better understanding.

Every family has conversations that feel difficult. It might be about care needs, living arrangements, finances, separation, parenting, ageing parents or worries about someone's wellbeing.

It can also help to focus on the issue, not the argument. Using gentle language, taking breaks when needed, and coming back to the conversation later can make it easier to move forward.

When emotions are high, even simple topics can become hard to talk about. People may avoid the conversation, talk over one another, or leave things unsaid because they do not want to cause hurt or conflict.

When family conversations feel stuck, support is available. CatholicCare offers services that can help people talk through difficult situations, understand different points of view and find a way forward with care and respect.

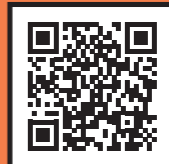
A helpful conversation does not need to solve everything at once. Sometimes the first step is simply choosing a calm time, listening without interrupting, and trying to understand what matters most to each person.

For more information on our wide range of family and relationship support services visit: www.catholiccarecq.com/families

Did you know...

2026 is Census Year

Learn more at: info.census.abs.gov.au





RECIPE

Pumpkin Curry

This cosy curry is here to squash your winter cravings and bring a little chilli thrill to the dinner table.

Ingredients...

- 1/4 pumpkin cubed
- 1 tbs desiccated coconut
- 1 tbs coriander chopped
- 2 tbs vegetable oil
- 4 green chilli
- 1 onion medium sliced
- 1/4 tsp fenugreek seeds
- 1 cup water
- 1 tbs sugar
- 1 tbs red chilli (to decorate)
- 1 pinch fresh coriander (to decorate)

Source: bestrecipes.com.au

Just six easy steps:

1. Grind chillies into a paste. Cut pumpkin into 5 cm cubes.
2. Add coconut, remaining spices and pumpkin to chillies and mix.
3. Heat oil in a pot. Sauté the onion and fenugreek seeds until onion is soft and transparent.
4. Add pumpkin and spices to the pot and allow to simmer slowly, stirring occasionally.
5. Add water and simmer until pumpkin is tender. Add sugar and allow curry to absorb the sugar, stirring to make sure sugar is distributed evenly.
6. Garnish with fried red chillies and fresh coriander sprigs.



WONDERWORD

Ocean Words

Something fishy is going on... can you solve this puzzle and find all the missing ocean animals?

- | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|------------|---------|
| STINGRAY | TURTLE | OCTOPUS | DOLPHIN |
| PORPOISE | OTTER | KRILL | SCALLOP |
| STARFISH | JELLYFISH | CLAM | SHARK |
| GROUPE | CONCH | PUFFERFISH | EEL |
| CRAB | ORCA | SEAHORSE | TUNA |
| CLOWNFISH | LOBSTER | SEAL | SQUID |



Need a hint or looking for the solution?

Scan the QR code or visit:
www.catholiccarecq.com/wonderword

Wonderword Source: thewordsearch.com

J	L	O	B	S	T	E	R	A	J	I	H	P	R
R	E	H	Y	S	E	A	H	O	R	S	E	U	F
I	R	L	L	A	U	H	C	O	N	C	H	F	R
P	G	E	L	T	R	U	T	D	R	H	O	F	O
P	A	T	I	Y	S	G	I	U	S	C	H	E	P
O	O	S	R	E	F	U	N	U	N	S	A	R	C
L	N	R	K	N	Q	I	P	I	I	A	G	F	L
L	S	F	P	S	I	O	S	F	T	O	R	I	O
A	E	K	S	O	T	H	R	H	O	S	O	S	W
C	R	A	B	C	I	A	P	T	S	B	U	H	N
S	M	O	O	K	T	S	T	L	E	C	P	A	F
S	L	A	R	S	P	E	E	A	O	T	E	S	I
A	E	N	L	L	R	E	P	E	L	D	R	R	S
I	E	O	P	C	N	O	P	S	H	A	R	K	H

CatholicCare Central Queensland

Compliments, Complaints & Suggestions

We hear you...

Visit: www.catholiccarecq.com/feedback

Email: admin@catholiccarecq.com

Call: 1300 523 985

Need to make a disclosure?

We have robust whistleblower protections in place.

Email: wbpo@catholiccarecq.com



You matter