



verilyconnect An Australian Government Initiative

A Toolkit to develop a Virtual Dementia Friendly Community



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Year

February 2020

Recommended citation

Blackberry, I., Wilding, C., Morgan, D., Winbolt, M., Greenhill, J., Perkins, D., O'Connell, M., Bauer, M., Morley, C., Farmer, J., Royals, K., Rasekaba, T., Hamiduzzaman, M., Gottschall, K., Robinson, A., Zaplin, E., & Davis, H. 2020. Verily Connect Toolkit: how to develop a Virtual Dementia-Friendly Community. John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing Research, La Trobe University, Wodonga.

Disclaimer

The information set out in this toolkit is current at the date of this publication and is intended for use as a guide of a general nature only and may or may not be relevant to people living with dementia or their carers. Nor is this toolkit exhaustive of the subject matter. Persons implementing any advice contained in this toolkit must exercise their own skill, judgement and seek appropriate professional advice relevant to the matter.

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DOI: 10.26181/5e97c269003cf

ISBN: 978-0-6488338-0-2

Acknowledgements

Funding

Funded by an Australian Government Dementia and Aged Care Services Fund: Research and Innovation Grant

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We gratefully acknowledge and thank all the carers, volunteers, and health and community services staff who participated in the Verily Connect Project. Without their generous participation the project would not have been possible.

Production of this Toolkit

We acknowledge the Plural Agency for graphic design of this Toolkit, and for creating the illustrations in the Verily Connect app and the behind-the-scenes technical production of the Verily Connect app.

We acknowledge Dutch Media for production of the photos in this Toolkit and accompanying videos.

Volunteer training resources

We acknowledge and thank the Centre for Participation who allowed us to modify their volunteer training materials for adaptation to our project.

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Executive Summary

The Verily Connect Toolkit is a resource to assist and support Australian communities to join an online community that supports and connects carers of people living with dementia.

The virtual dementia-friendly community is an environment that provides education and opportunity for increased social connection and support for carers, community members, service providers, and people living with dementia.

The Toolkit is designed to be used with the Verily Connect website and mobile application (app) (verilyconnect.org.au), which provides brief guides, a services directory, a chat room, and a schedule of videoconference meetings. Findings from the Virtual Dementia Friendly Rural Communities (Verily) Connect Project, conducted 2017–2019, informed the development of this Verily Connect Toolkit.

Carers can benefit by being connected with other carers across Australia and receiving information and support in a place and at a time that is convenient to them. Being part of the Verily Connect network augments information available to community organisations and the general public. Being involved promotes connectivity between individuals and communities to strengthen social support for carers.

To join the Verily Connect network and be part of the virtual dementia-friendly community, a local community will need to:

1. establish a team of local champions who want to make their community dementia-friendly and join the online community



2. establish a Verily Connect Technology Learning Hub, which is a local centre where people in the community can meet, use resources, and link to the online community
3. collect information about local services and supports that can be inputted in to the Verily Connect app
4. build a local community of volunteers, who will receive training provided by the Verily Connect Project and then staff the Verily Connect Technology Learning Hub. The volunteers assist carers who need help using the Verily Connect app or the videoconferencing technology

5. promote the Verily Connect app and virtual dementia-friendly community to local people.

Resources to complete these tasks are located in this Toolkit. Questions can be asked by using the Verily Connect app (verilyconnect.org.au) or by emailing verilyconnect@latrobe.edu.au

Introduction

Dementia is a significant health issue across Australia and globally. In 2017, it was the second leading cause of death in Australia (AIHW, 2019).

Dementia Australia (2020) estimates that there are currently 459,000 people living with dementia in Australia, and approximately 1.6 million people providing care to a person living with dementia. The number of people living with dementia in Australia is predicted to increase to 1,076,000 by 2058 unless there is a significant medical discovery (Dementia Australia, 2020).

Dementia can be overwhelming, not only for the person living with the disease, but also for the carers, families and friends of people with dementia. In Australia, carers of people living with dementia have access to a range of supports and services including information, education and training, psychosocial therapies, case management approaches, social support groups, respite care, and multi-component programs (Dementia Australia, 2015). However, for carers and people living with dementia in rural areas, access to services and supports can be challenging because of isolation created by geographic separation from others and from services.

A dementia-friendly community is a local community that supports people living with dementia to have satisfying lives that have significance, direction and value (Dementia Australia, 2017). Using a whole-of-community approach (that is, involving employers, local businesses and organisations, community members, friends, family and neighbours), people living with dementia are supported to continue participating in community life and performing activities they enjoyed doing before their dementia diagnosis (Dementia Australia, 2017, Alzheimer's Disease International, 2016). Dementia-friendly communities are one way of increasing support for people living with dementia and their carers.



What is the Verily Connect Project?

The Virtual Dementia-Friendly Rural Communities (Verily) Connect Project was conducted over the period 2017–2019. The Verily Connect Project is the fourth research project in a program of research that began in 2015:

- 1. 2015–2016:** An exploratory study of the experiences and service and support needs of rural carers of people living with dementia, which identified that there was need for more community awareness and education about dementia and that carers of people living with dementia needed more support (Bauer, Fetherstonhaugh, Blackberry, Farmer & Wilding, 2019).
- 2. 2016–2017:** A pilot of a prototype mobile application (app) called Service Navigation and Networking for Dementia in Rural Communities (Sender).

The app was only available on Android smartphones and was tested in two rural communities in Victoria, Australia.

- 3. 2017–2018:** HelpDEM: A pilot program conducted in partnership with the Centre for Participation that provided volunteers with training in supporting carers of people living with dementia.
- 4. 2017–2019:** Verily Connect.

Verily Connect 2017–2019 explored ways of increasing support and connection for carers, families, and friends of people living with dementia in rural communities in Australia. The Verily Connect Project advanced the concept of dementia-friendly communities by considering how they could be fostered in a virtual space, in addition to physical geographic spaces.





What is a virtual dementia-friendly community?

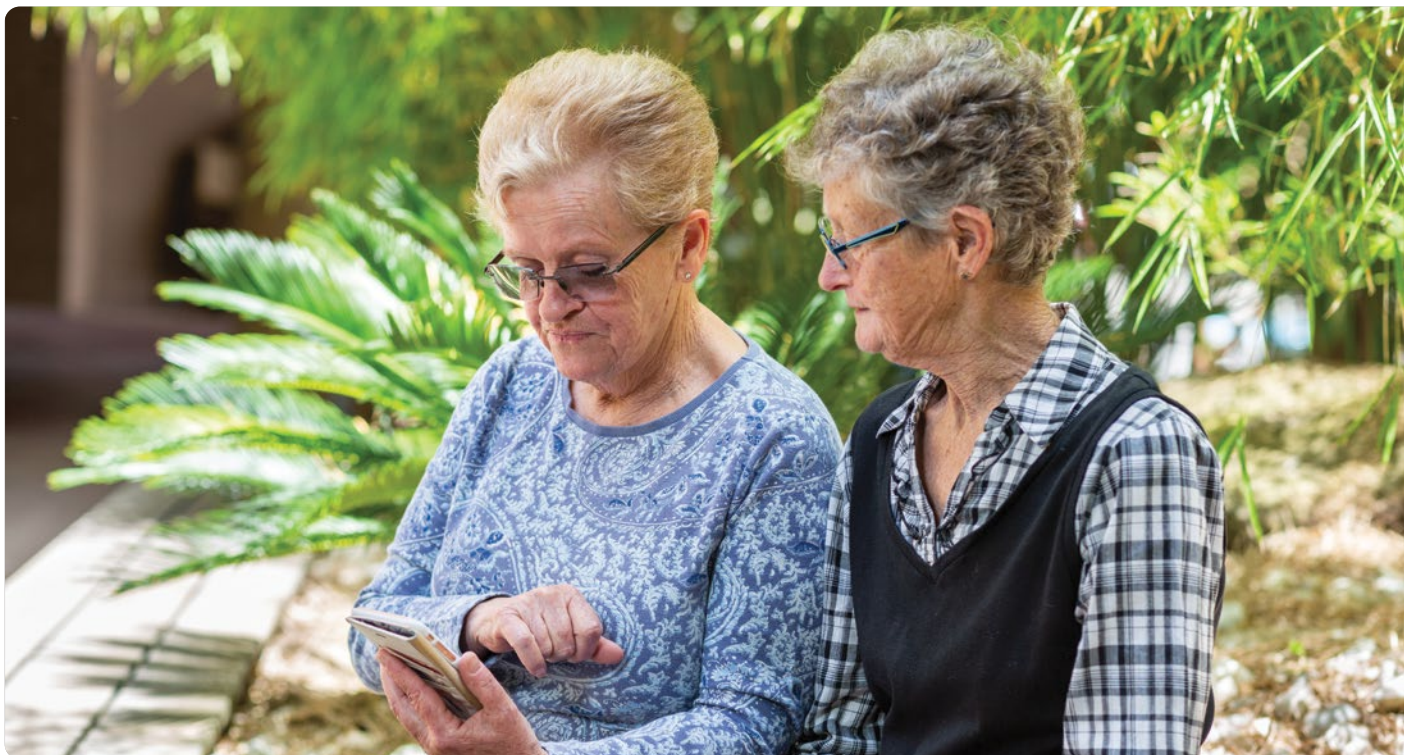
Virtual dementia-friendly communities exist in two spaces: a real geographic location and virtually. The virtual space is created by connecting through online technologies via the Internet.

Virtual dementia-friendly communities exist to promote the inclusion of people who care for people living with dementia and to facilitate peer support and social connection between carers. As with other forms of dementia-friendly communities, another purpose is to strive for greater community awareness about dementia and to reduce stigma associated with dementia.

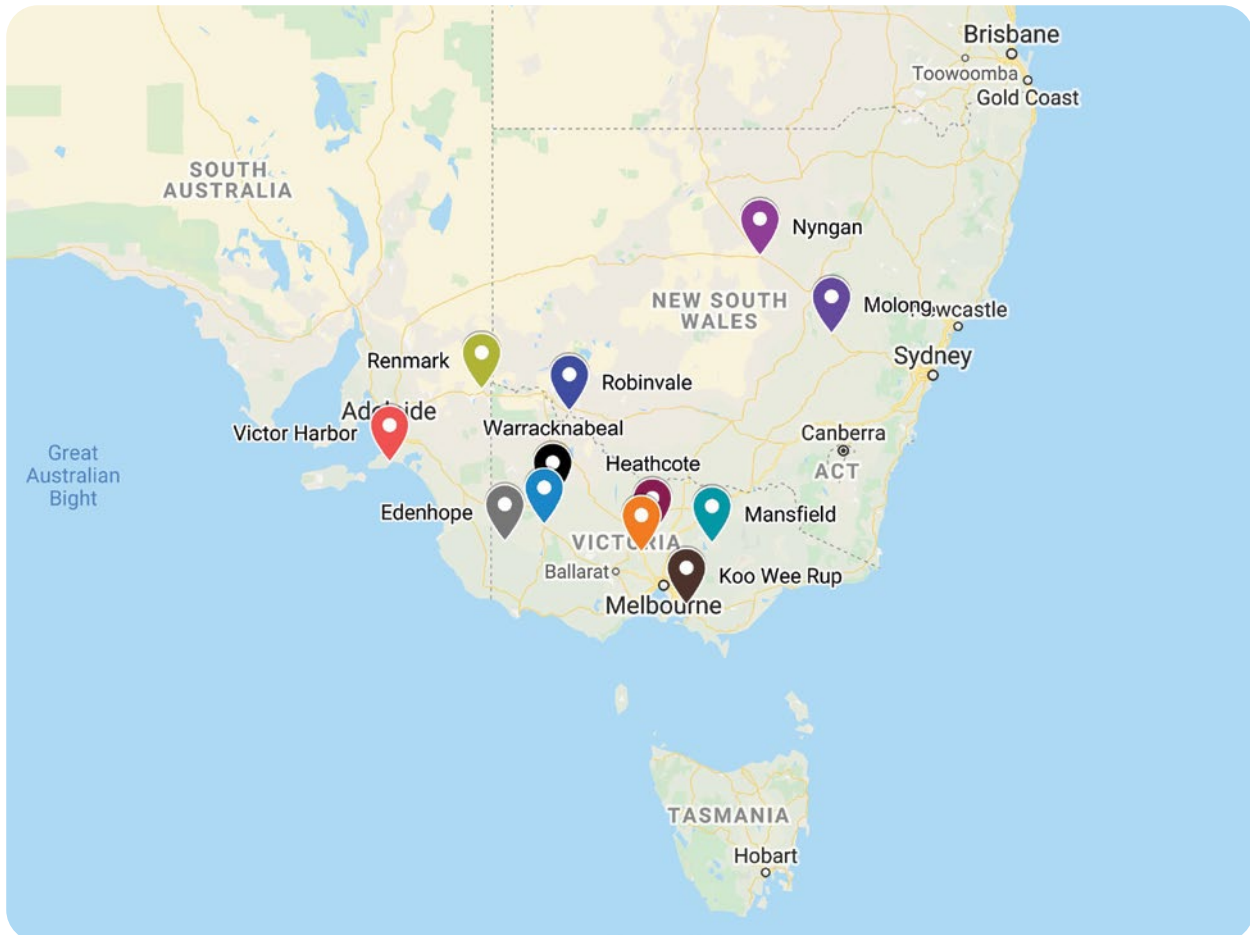
Through the Verily Connect Project, we utilised two types of technology to build our virtual dementia-friendly communities:

1. a Verily Connect website and mobile application (app)
2. videoconferencing using Zoom.

These technologies are described in more detail on pages 25 to 32.



During the Verily Connect Project, which was a trial for creating virtual dementia-friendly rural communities conducted during 2017–2019 (read more about the Verily Connect Project in the final report on verilyconnect.org.au), 12 virtual dementia-friendly communities were established across three states in Australia.



Victoria:

1. Koo Wee Rup
2. Heathcote
3. Mansfield
4. Warracknabeal
5. Horsham
6. Robinvale
7. Kyneton/Macedon Ranges
8. Edenhope

New South Wales:

1. Molong
2. Nyngan

South Australia:

1. Renmark/Riverland
2. Victor Harbor

We welcome more communities to become virtual dementia-friendly communities. You can use this Verily Connect Toolkit to find out how your community can join.

About this toolkit

Who is this toolkit for?

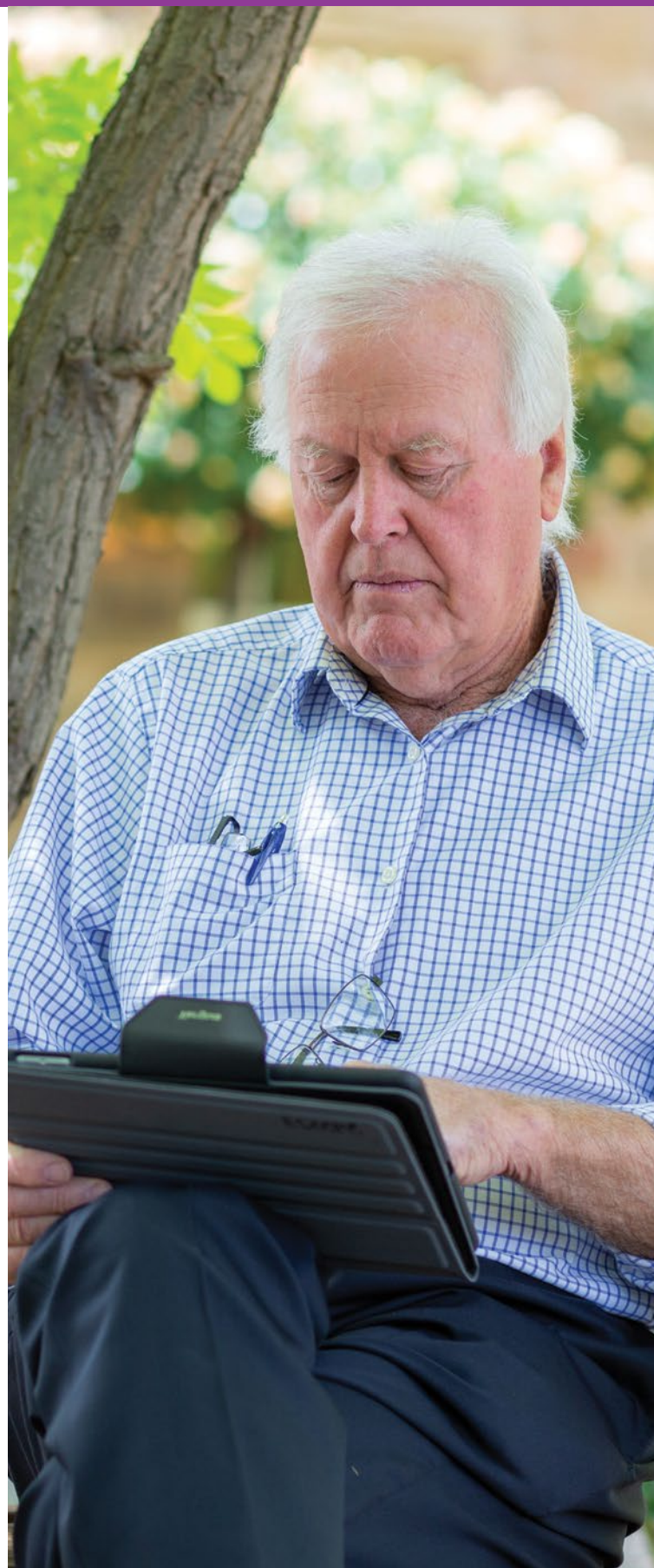
This toolkit is for

1. Community organisations or groups who want to help make their communities dementia-friendly, such as:
 - health services
 - shire councils
 - libraries
 - neighbourhood houses.
2. Community members who want to take collective action to make their communities dementia-friendly, including:
 - carers of people living with dementia
 - people living with dementia
 - volunteers and people who want to learn more about supporting people living with dementia.

Why get involved?

Community organisations may want to get involved to:

- enhance the availability of information for people in their community
- strengthen the availability of social support for carers in their community
- increase accessibility to support services through internet-enabled, website and mobile technology
- promote connectivity between individuals in their community and a network of dementia-friendly communities.



Community members/volunteers may want to get involved to:

- help people living with dementia and carers in their community
- learn more about dementia, the caring role, and available support services, including those in their local community
- meet like-minded people and give back to the community.

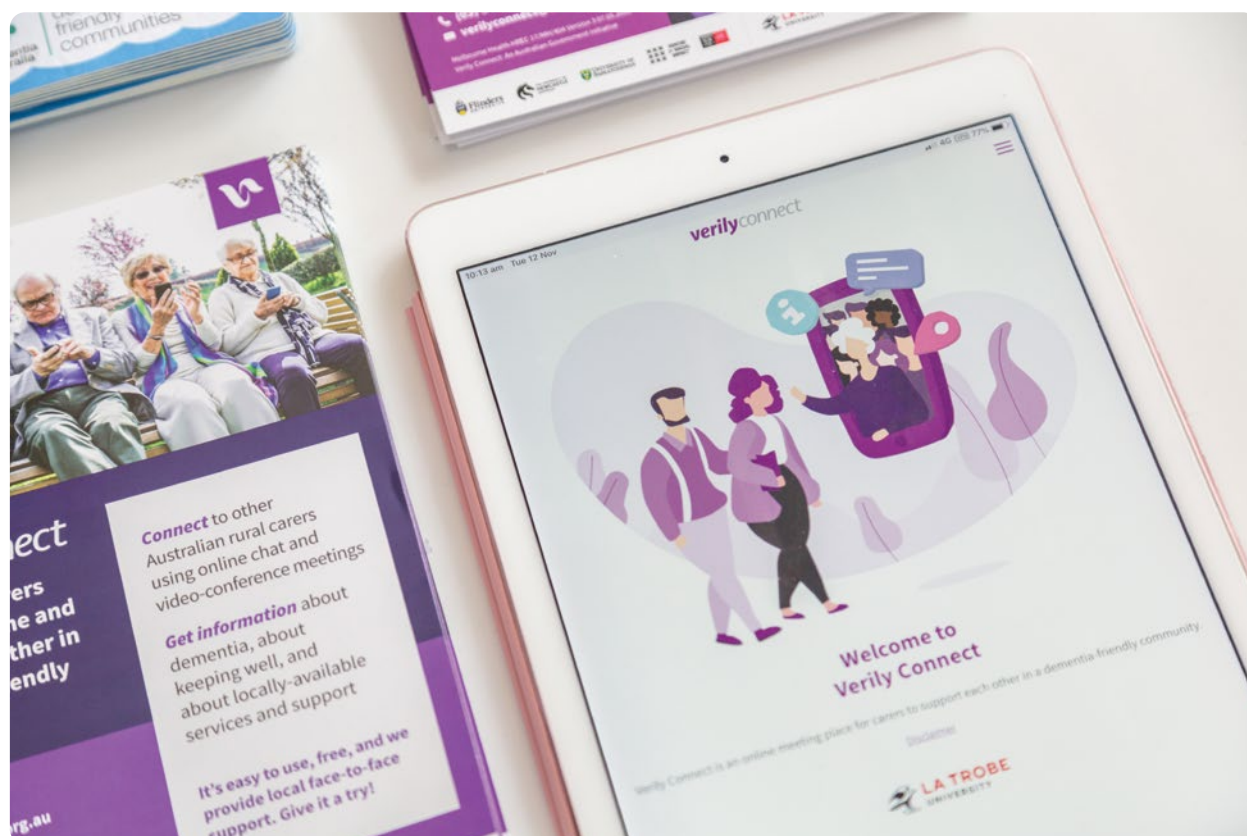
Carers may want to get involved to:

- be connected and networked with other carers locally, nationally and potentially globally
- receive support from other carers in a place they find comfortable and at a time that is convenient
- increase opportunities for making real and lasting connections with others who understand and relate to their situation.

What this toolkit includes

In this toolkit, there is:

- how your community can join the virtual dementia-friendly community on the Internet
- a description of the Verily Connect website and mobile application (Verily Connect app)
- a case example of a virtual dementia-friendly community
- answers to frequently asked questions
- further information and resources.



How can a community join the Verily Connect network?

Create a Verily Connect local champions team

Identify local champions in the community: that is, the people most interested in making the community dementia-friendly. The Verily Connect champions may be health service providers, carers, people living with dementia, or other interested community members.

Does the community already have a local dementia friends' group or a carer support group? – if yes, invite these people to be part of the champions team.

The role of the local champions team is to:

1. set up a locally based Verily Connect Technology Hub
2. collect and collate information about local services and supports
3. build and support a team of local volunteers, and
4. most importantly, promote Verily Connect to local people and invite them to participate.

Establish a Verily Connect Technology Learning Hub

A Verily Connect Technology Learning Hub is a physical space in a community where people can access the Verily Connect app and videoconferencing.

The Hub is a place where people can meet with Verily Connect volunteers, who help others to learn how to use the Verily Connect app and videoconferencing.

The Hub might also provide a place to store dementia-friendly resources such as books, equipment, or brochures. These items might be available for community members to borrow. Please see Appendix 1 for a list of resources and books that were purchased for the Hubs that were part of the Verily Connect Project 2017–2019.

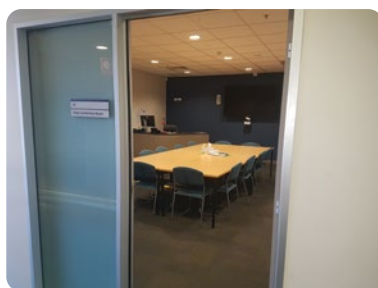
Examples of Technology Learning Hub venues:

- health service
- library
- neighbourhood house or community centre
- volunteer or training organisation
- community college or education centre.

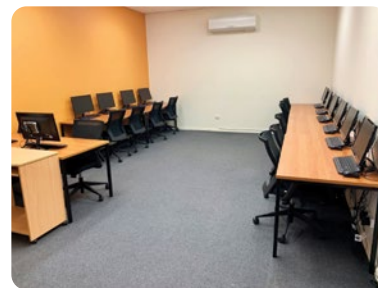
Technology hubs



Health service



University campus



Volunteer & training organisation



Resource centre



Library



Health Service

In the Verily Connect Project 2017–2019, most of the Technology Learning Hubs were in the health services that were partners in the project. This was advantageous because:

- Verily Connect volunteers were registered as volunteers with the local health service and they were governed by the health service policies
- health services have reliable and free wi-fi availability
- the role of health services is to support, assist, and treat people living with conditions such as dementia
- health services support and assist carers and families of their patients.

When choosing a location for a Technology Learning Hub, consider the following:

- Is there currently a place/organisation that people use to go online?
- What are the opening hours? Is there after-hours access?
- Is reliable wi-fi available? Is it free/affordable? Is a password needed?
- Is there a cost to use the space?
- Is there a room or lobby space?
- Is there opportunity for private conversation?
- Is the building and room accessible for all, including older people and people with disability?
- Is there nearby public transport?

Collect information about local services and supports

To have information about local services and supports in your community listed on the Verily Connect app, the information will need to be forwarded to the Verily Connect Project team (please send email to: verilyconnect@latrobe.edu.au).

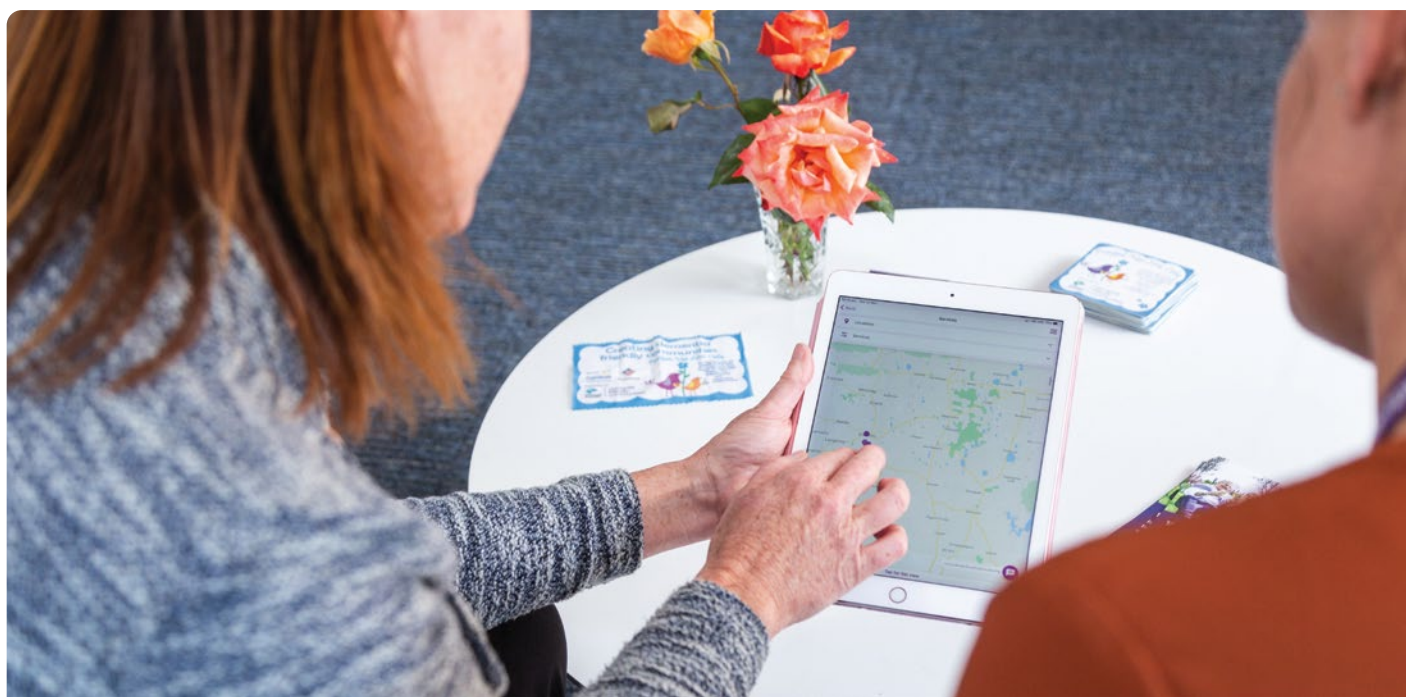
An Excel workbook template for collating this information is available on the verilyconnect.org.au website and for reference, this information is also listed in Appendix 2. Please use the template to collect and store information about a community's services and contact us if help is needed.

Information that needs to be collected about each service includes:

- service name
- brief service description
- is the service only available by referral through My Aged Care?
- service opening hours
- phone number
- email
- website
- Facebook details (if relevant)
- address
- postcode
- state
- name of town/area that receives the service
- latitude and longitude of service location.

In the template, each service needs to be categorised according to the kind of service/support that is offered. These are the service and support categories:

- health professionals
- counselling
- social support and activities
- transport
- home help
- personal care
- respite and accommodation
- carer services
- physical activity
- financial assistance
- information / Referral
- community group.

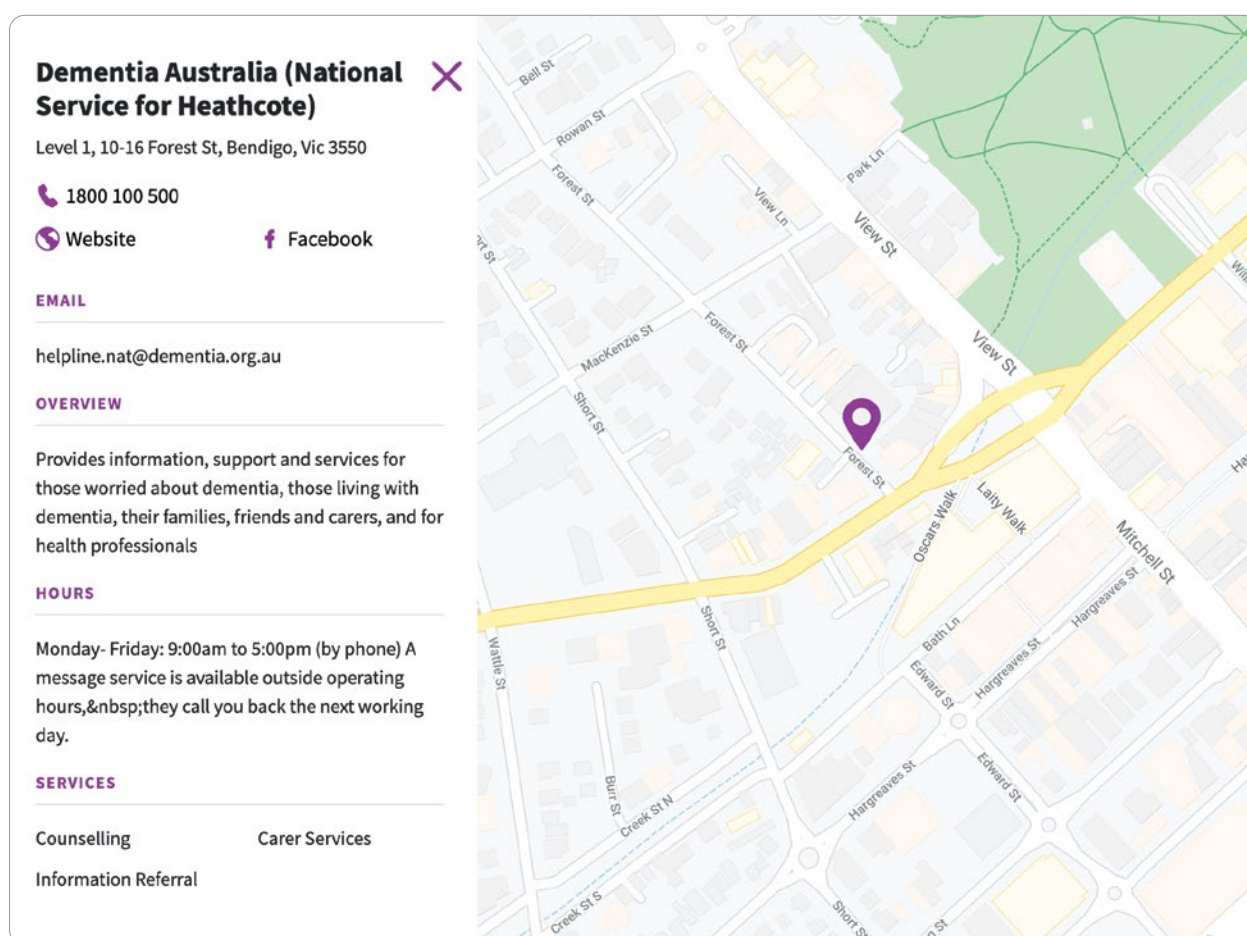


If an organisation offers services from several locations (such as branch offices), then each location ought to be listed separately. That is, a separate entry is needed for each location.

Some services and supports are national – although there might not be a local office for that service in a community, the service is still available to members of the local community through the Internet or via telephone or perhaps a staff member can visit a person’s home. Therefore, it is still useful to provide an entry for a national service in the local services directory, so that people in the community are aware that the national service is available to them.

For example, Dementia Australia is a national service that may not have an office in a local community, but it ought to be entered as an available service for each community – the service details including description, phone and email contacts, website, and opening hours should be entered as per the national service, whereas the postcode, state, and latitude and longitude ought to be for the local community.

Similarly, state-based services that might not have a local branch in a community also ought to be entered as a service for each community.



Dementia Australia (National Service for Heathcote) ✕

Level 1, 10-16 Forest St, Bendigo, Vic 3550

📞 1800 100 500

🌐 Website 📘 Facebook

EMAIL

helpline.nat@dementia.org.au

OVERVIEW

Provides information, support and services for those worried about dementia, those living with dementia, their families, friends and carers, and for health professionals

HOURS

Monday- Friday: 9:00am to 5:00pm (by phone) A message service is available outside operating hours, they call you back the next working day.

SERVICES

Counselling Carer Services
Information Referral

Example of national service listing



Build a community of volunteers

The role of volunteers

During the Verily Connect Project 2017–2019 the main role of the volunteers was to assist carers in using the Verily Connect app and Zoom technology. Local volunteers were available in each Verily Connect community to provide face-to-face support for people who had not used or lacked confidence in using mobile or online technologies. Volunteers undertook training to support them in their role and were mentored by the Verily Connect Project team and local health services.

Once a new community has joined the Verily Connect network, the community will be given access to training materials and a videorecorded training program. The training provides volunteers with information about dementia, the caring

role, how to use the Verily Connect app and Zoom technology, and how to look after themselves as volunteers.

For pragmatic reasons, volunteers are encouraged to schedule meetings with carers and other community members at the local Technology Learning Hub. Volunteers may make themselves available at the Hub at a regular time each week or attend the Hub on an as-needed basis. However, depending on volunteers' and carers' preferences and the local governance arrangements for volunteers – especially regarding insurance and health and safety policies – it may be possible to offer the flexibility of meeting at a carer's home or a café. If a meeting with a carer takes place in a carer's home, volunteers are advised to attend in pairs.

Although the essential role of the volunteers is to support carers and community members who would like assistance using technology, a local community may also decide to offer additional opportunities for volunteering such as:

- promoting Verily Connect to people and organisations in the local community (volunteers might consider being members of the local champions team)
- working with the local champions team to host local meetings as promotional events, such as a video-conference meeting or a live chat meeting.

Volunteer governance

Existing volunteer governance structures and networks in a community may be used for Verily Connect volunteers. For example, a local health service, library or neighbourhood centre might already have an established volunteer program, which provides volunteer registration, training, insurance, and supervision. Or, there may be a volunteer coordinating organisation in your community. Verily Connect volunteers need to be connected with a local volunteer program and receive orientation, insurance, and support through the local program to ensure sustainability and ongoing monitoring of implementation. In addition, volunteers are recommended to complete the Verily Connect volunteer training.

Tips for recruiting volunteers

- Invite local organisations who have an established volunteer program to add the Verily Connect network to their portfolio of activities for volunteers. For example, approach the local health service, library or neighbourhood centre, or University of the Third Age (U3A).
- There is already a range of programs that teach technology to people (for example at local libraries, the Be Connected program, Tech Savvy Seniors, and Social Seniors). Find out if there is a program already operating in the local community. Some of the volunteers involved in such a program may also be interested in becoming Verily Connect volunteers.
- Advertise for volunteers in the local paper, newsletters, notice boards or via social media – advertising materials that can be downloaded and used are available from the verilyconnect.org.au website (and may be viewed as Appendix 3 in this toolkit).
- Ask local service clubs, volunteering organisations, and other community groups to promote Verily Connect volunteering opportunities to their members.



Promote Verily Connect

We used a range of activities to promote the Verily Connect Project 2017–2019.

We suggest to:

- meet with key community members to inform them and ask them to spread the word to others. Key community members may be health service providers, staff at the local council, library or neighbourhood house, committee members of active service clubs, or office holders for community groups and programs, such as a community newsletter.
- advertise – For example: local newspaper, community newsletter, health service newsletter, local radio, social media, leaflet drop to letterboxes, community noticeboards. Advertising materials that can be downloaded and used are available from the verilyconnect.org.au website.
- host a community meeting or community event – It can be useful to run events during Dementia Awareness week or Carers week, particularly in partnership with other organisations

such as the local health service, Dementia Australia, or Carers Australia. We suggest aiming to host 2–3 meetings each year. It is useful to keep repeating the message because carers' readiness to hear and act on the information will change according to their personal circumstances and their stage in the dementia caring journey.

- attend and present about Verily Connect at meetings of service clubs, Senior Citizens' groups, carers' groups, other community groups.

In our experience, it took many months of meetings and advertising before carers started to register for our Verily Connect Project 2017–2019 – so there is no need to feel discouraged or give up if nothing seems to happen straight away. Allow a community plenty of time to hear about, process, and start participating. Keep repeating messages – a repeated message can act as a prompt and often people may not act on information until they have heard the message several times.



Checklist: Joining the Verily Connect network

Local champions team

- ☐ Identify the people who are most interested in making the local community dementia-friendly and joining an online network
- ☐ Invite people who are in the local dementia friends' group or carer support group
- ☐ Meet to discuss strategy and share tasks
 - Fundraising
 - Information collection (about services and supports)
 - Promotion activities
- ☐ Collect information about local services and supports using the Verily Connect services database template (see verilyconnect.org.au and Appendix 2, page 48)
- ☐ Submit collected information about services and supports to verilyconnect@latrobe.edu.au

Verily Connect Technology Learning Hub

- ☐ Identify a place for the Hub in the local community (e.g. at the local health service or library or neighbourhood house or volunteer organisation)
 - Does the space have reliable and low-cost/free wi-fi?
 - Is there a cost to use the space and who will pay the cost?
 - Is there an opportunity for private conversation?
 - Is the space accessible for all, including older people and people with disability?
 - Is there nearby public transport and/or accessible parking?
- ☐ Identify and obtain resources to stock the Hub
 - Internet-accessible devices – e.g. desktop computer, laptop computer, tablet, smartphone
 - Books, articles
 - Dementia resources for people to look at or borrow – e.g. day clock, orientation board, companion pet, puzzles/games, talking photo album

Build a community of volunteers

- ☐ Identify and gain commitment from a local organisation that provides volunteer governance (e.g. health service, library, volunteer organisation) to be the governing body for Verily Connect volunteers
- ☐ Advertise for and recruit volunteers
- ☐ Induct volunteers into volunteering role with local governance organisation
- ☐ Arrange for volunteers to complete Verily Connect online volunteer training
- ☐ Match volunteers with carers who need support

Promote Verily Connect in the local community

- ☐ Meet with key community members
 - Local council
 - Service providers (e.g. health staff, aged care staff)
 - Library
 - Neighbourhood house
 - Service club representatives
 - Other community groups
- ☐ Advertise
 - Local newspaper
 - Community newsletter
 - Radio
 - Social media
 - Letterbox drop
 - Community noticeboards
- ☐ Host a community meeting or community event
- ☐ Attend meetings of community groups
 - Senior Citizens' club
 - Carers' group
 - Service club meetings (e.g. RSL, Lions, Probus, Country Women's Association)
- ☐ Attend community events
 - Dementia Awareness Month
 - National Carers Week
 - National Volunteer Week

Online technologies that support virtual dementia-friendly communities

The Verily Connect website and mobile app

- The Verily Connect app refers to both the website and mobile app versions. The website and mobile app are integrated and have the same look and features.
- The Verily Connect app was custom-built to provide carers of people living with dementia with information and opportunities to connect. The Verily Connect app is free to download and use.
- Information is delivered through a series of 12 brief guides.
- A services directory outlines a range of support services and a pinpoint location via Google Maps is provided.
- Social connection is enabled through public and private chat rooms and videoconference meetings.
- The Verily Connect website address is verilyconnect.org.au and can be accessed through a web browser such as Google Chrome, Firefox, or Internet Explorer.
- The Verily Connect app is also designed for mobile devices (smartphones and tablets) and can be downloaded for free from the Google Play or Apple App Stores.
- When accessing the Verily Connect app for the first time, users will need to complete a registration. Further access is gained through login (which can be made automatic through saving the password on a device).


The Guides

The Verily Connect app guides were created by the Verily Connect Project team. There are 12 guides which contain “bite-size” pieces of information in three broad categories:

- about dementia
- keeping well
- services and supports.

At the end of each guide there are references to the sources of information. Links to original sources and additional information are also provided in a “Further Information” section.






What services are available?

Find out about the different kinds of services to support people living with dementia at home


4 GUIDES



Accessing services

Find out about accessing services.


3 GUIDES



Support for carers

Find out how to access support and services for carers.

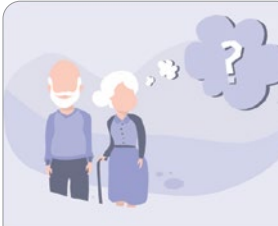
3 GUIDES



When care at home isn't possible

Home respite, residential care, and palliative care.

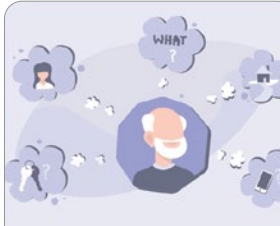
3 GUIDES



What is dementia?

Find out about dementia and the different types of dementia


3 GUIDES



Signs of dementia

Find out about changes caused by dementia

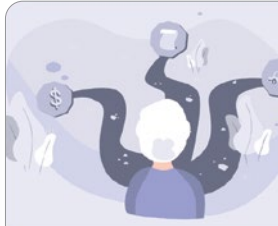
6 GUIDES



Is it dementia?

Find out about getting an assessment

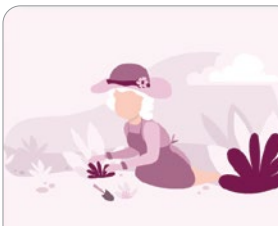
3 GUIDES



What's next after a diagnosis?

Information to help with managing financial and legal issues

4 GUIDES



Keeping yourself well

Looking after your mental and physical health


3 GUIDES



Connecting with family and friends

Information and tips for family and friends

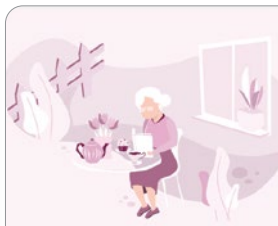
4 GUIDES



Community life

Information to help you and the person you care for remain active members of the community

3 GUIDES

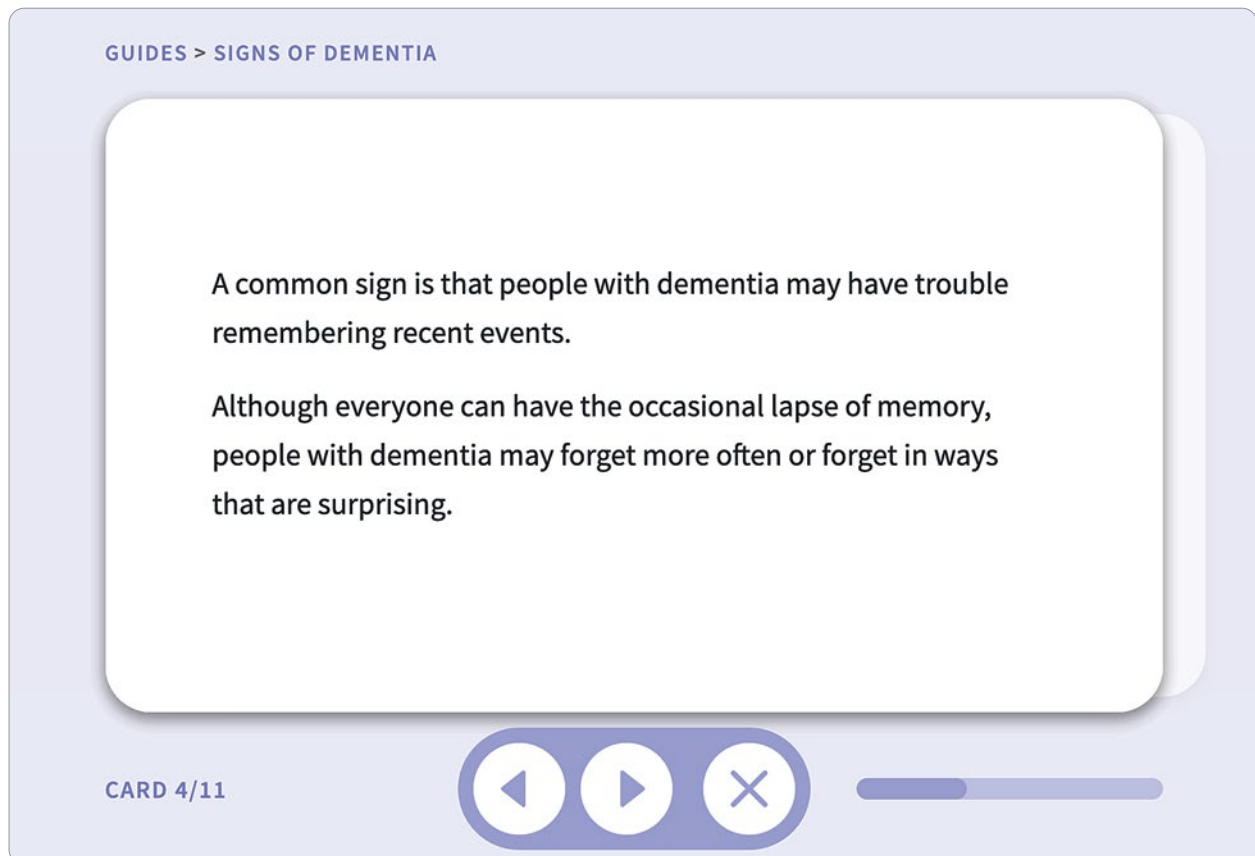


Taking a break

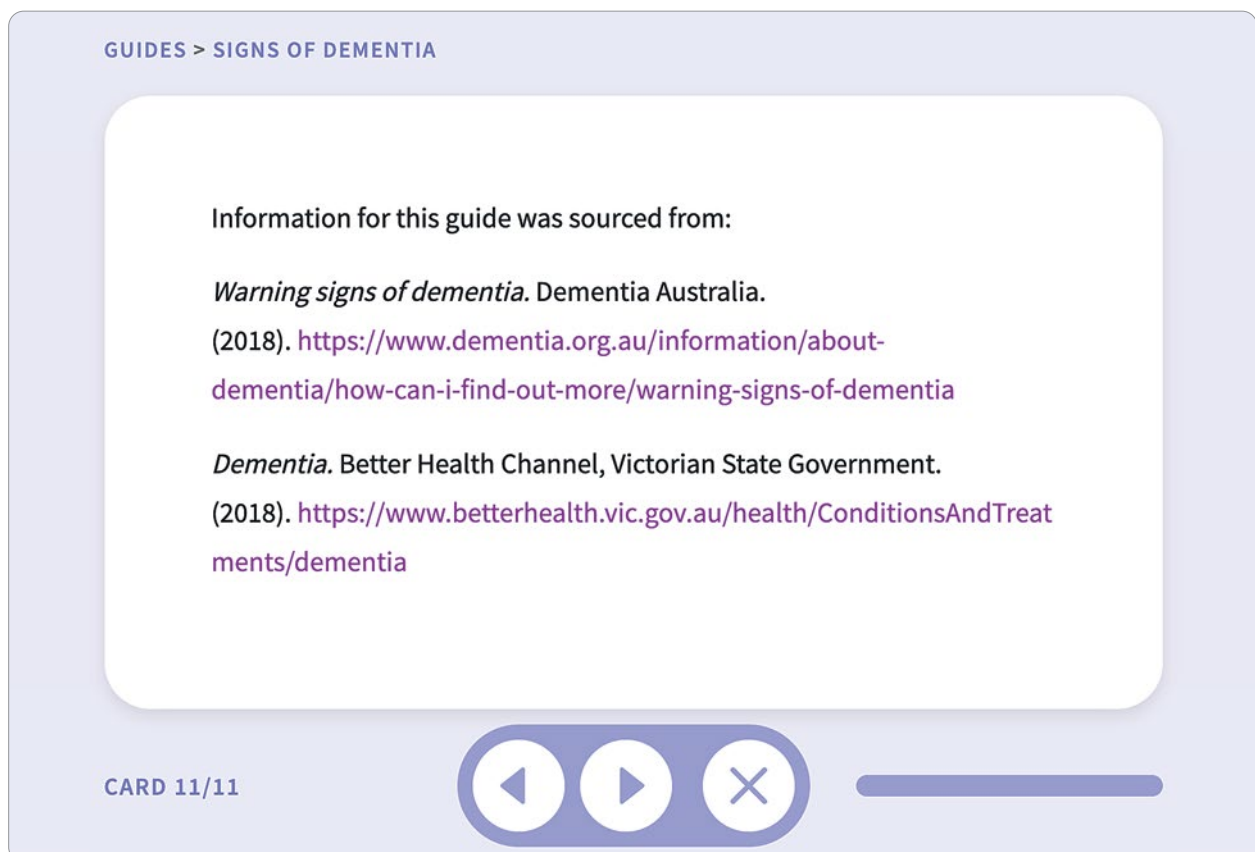
Information about taking a break from caring duties

3 GUIDES




The 12 guide topics




Example page from a guide





Example of end of guide source information



Information

 Search for a topic or keyword...

 Filter by categories 

Signs of dementia

Memory changes

Describes the differences between memory changes due to normal ageing and memory changes that occur in someone with dementia. It also provides tips on activities for keeping the memory in good shape as much as possible

DEMENTIA AUSTRALIA

[View](#)

16 Things You Didn't Know Happened in Dementia

Describes some less common signs that people with dementia might experience

TOM CHIVERS - BUZZFEED

[View](#)

Dementia early warning signs: 10 changes worth looking out for Cathy Johnson

Describes some warning signs that a person might have dementia

ABC NEWS

[View](#)

Warning signs of dementia

Describes some early non-obvious signs of dementia

DEMENTIA AUSTRALIA

[View](#)

Example of further information listing for a guide



The Services Directory

In the Verily Connect app, the services directory is a searchable database of locally available dementia-specific and dementia-related services.

A service directory and service location map are only currently available for the 12 communities that were part of the Verily Connect Project 2017–2019. Over time, information will be added to the services directory in the app for new communities that join the network.

The services directory can be searched by:

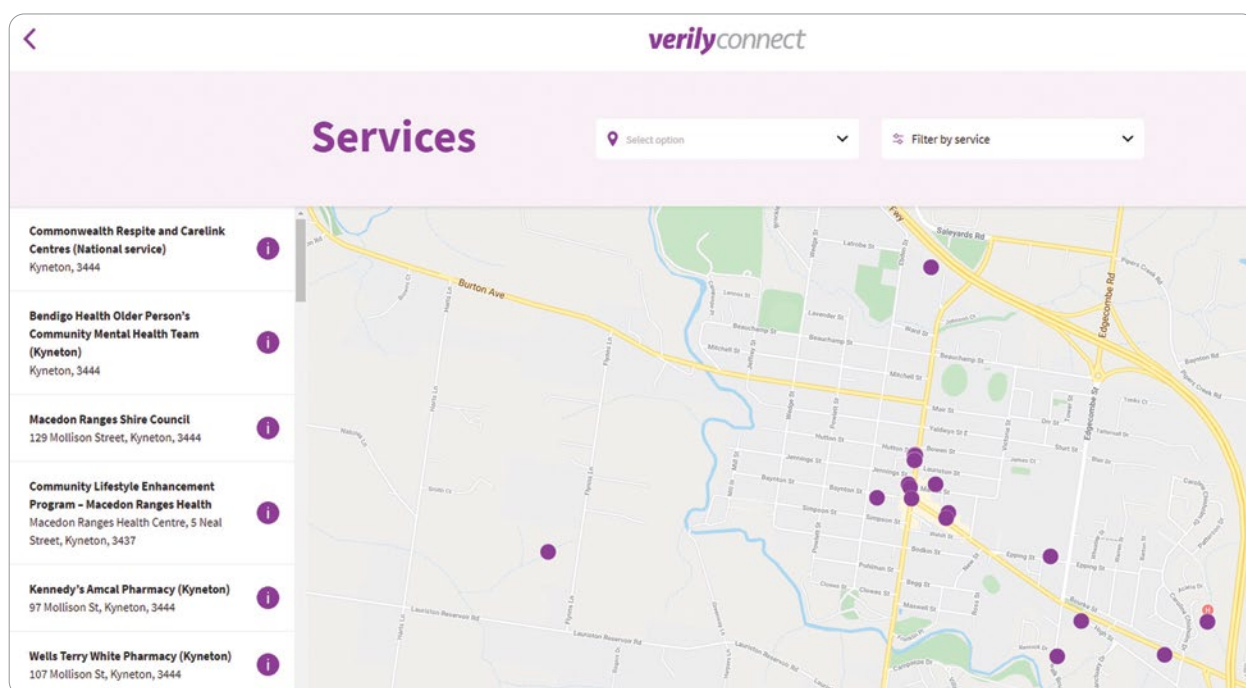
1. location
 - town name
2. service type
 - carer services
 - community group
 - counselling
 - financial assistance
 - health professionals
 - home help
 - information referral

- personal care
- physical activity
- respite and accommodation
- social support and activities
- transport.

The Verily Connect app links to Google Maps which shows the location of the service. This can assist the user to navigate from the user's location to where the service is located.

When using the Verily Connect app, click on a service name to find out more information about the service, including a brief description of the service, opening hours, email address, phone number, and website and Facebook details.

- If using the Verily Connect app on a phone, it is possible to call the service directly from the app.
- A service can be emailed directly from the Verily Connect app.
- Where available, a service's website and/or Facebook page can be clicked on and these will open as a new website page.



The Chat Room

The Verily Connect app provides the opportunity for users to connect and communicate with others through a real-time text-based messaging/chat service. Messages are automatically stored so that chat threads can be viewed at any time.

- There are two group chat forums:
 1. **General chat** – for any subjects that users want to chat about
 2. **Current events** – for notices and discussion about upcoming events.
- Group chat enables many users to communicate with each other. Group chat is public, therefore anyone registered to use the Verily Connect app can read and/or participate in the chats.
- Users can invite other users to chat privately. A private chat occurs between two people and the messages can only be viewed by the two people involved. A user may accept or reject an invitation to private chat.

verilyconnect

GROUP CHAT

Support for carers

FL Florence | Jan 8th, 2019 at 11:44am

I find that asking for help or talking to someone about how you are feeling is usually the first step. Sometimes it can be hard to ask 'i need help' or say 'I have a lot in my mind' but until you ask, you wont know who is there to support or listen to you.

CHAT PRIVATELY

CW Clare Wilding | Sep 3rd, 2018 at 8:21am 🗑️

Hello and Welcome to the chat about "support for carers". There is support available for carers, including from other carers in the Verily Connect chat and online meetings. What suggestions do you have for others, to help them get support?

Write a comment...

Submit

Example posts for general chat



Videoconference meetings

In the Verily Connect app, there is a schedule for video meetings, which are meetings that take place in real time via videoconference. There are video meetings that provide opportunity for carers to talk with other carers. There are also meetings that feature guest speakers, who present a dementia-related topic and then invite questions and further discussion.

Videoconference meetings provide a great opportunity to meet and connect with like-minded others and to learn more about dementia. They offer convenience to carers who live at a distance from others or who have limited opportunities to leave their home and the person they are caring for.

The videoconference meetings take place using a technology called “Zoom”. During a Zoom meeting, participants can talk to and see one another using their device’s audio and video capabilities. Zoom can be used on a computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone. Whichever device is used, the user will need to ensure it is connected to a reliable internet source, and has either an in-built camera or external webcam, and either an in-built microphone or external headset, so that the user can see and speak with others in the meeting.

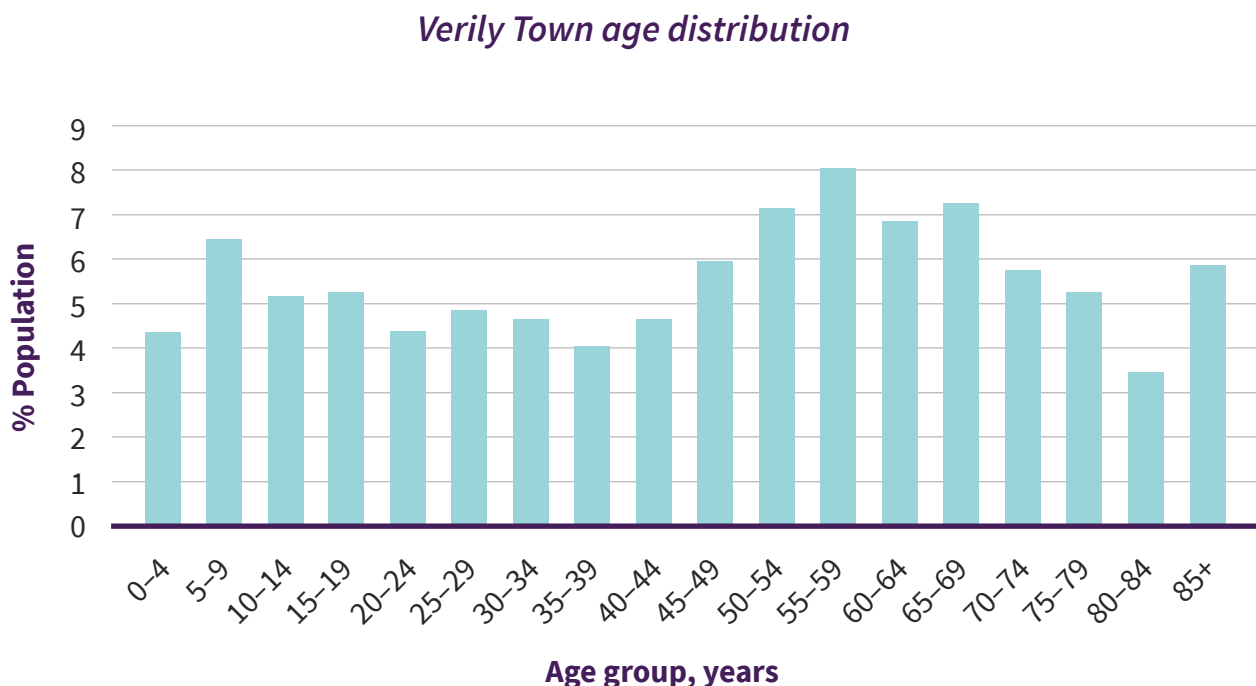
Zoom is a separate program outside of the Verily Connect app. Zoom can be used via a web browser or via the Zoom app, which is free to download and use. Zoom is simple and fun to use.

An illustration of Verily Connect in action

In this section, we provide an example of how a community can take action to implement Verily Connect. This example is based on our experience of working with the 12 Verily Connect communities during 2017–2019.

Verily Town community demographics

Verily Town is a small, farming community in the Australian state of Victoria. The nearest regional city is 55 kilometres away, which is a 1-hour drive. Verily Town has a population of approximately 2,500. The average age of Verily Town residents is 50 years. However, a quarter of residents are aged 65 and over.



Internet connectivity

In Verily Town, 7 out of 10 households have internet access. There is mobile connectivity in the township (4–5 bars), but reception becomes patchy and unreliable in the surrounding farmland outside of the town boundaries.

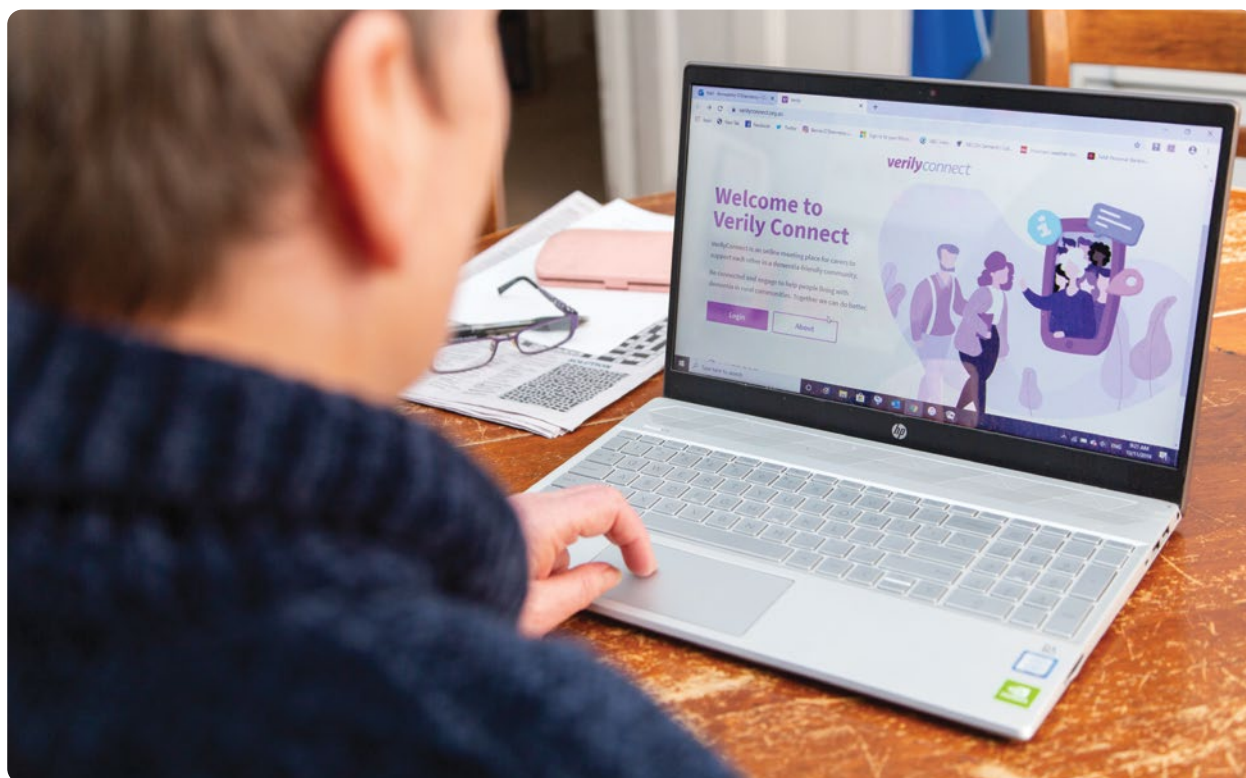


Carer support programs

A few years ago, a general carer support group, for carers of people with a variety of different conditions, used to meet locally, but this group is inactive at present. Carers usually seek support from the Verily Town Health service or the local GP clinic.

Health services

The local health service, Verily Town Health, has acute and urgent care departments, a residential aged care facility, and a co-located medical clinic. District nursing and a range of allied health services (including social work, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, diabetes clinic, podiatrist, dietitian) are also available. There are several community and wellbeing programs offered, such as physical activity groups, Men's Shed, community garden, and youth activities. There is a pharmacy in Verily Town. Home and Community Care Services (for example, home maintenance, respite, meals on wheels) are available through the local Shire Council.



Promoting Verily

Verily Connect was advertised in the local newspaper, *The Verily Town Gazette*. It was also promoted in the Verily Town Health newsletter, the Shire Council newsletter, and the community newsletter, *What's up in Verily Town*. Members of the local champions group also attended two interviews with the local radio channel.

The champions team distributed flyers across town including on shopfront windows, community noticeboards, and in the GP waiting room. They mailed some flyers and did a letterbox drop. Information was posted on community Facebook pages: *Verily Town Social*, *Welcome to Verily*, and *Verily Town Seniors*.

A community meeting was held to launch Verily Connect in partnership with Verily Town Health. At the launch the names and contact details of attendees were collected, and the local champions team followed up each attendee in the weeks after the meeting.

The local champions team met with:

- **health service staff** – District Nurses, GPs, residential aged care facility staff
- **the Shire Council** – Home and Community Care team members, library staff, and neighbourhood house staff
- **local community groups** – Verily Town Community Leadership group, the Positive Ageing Taskforce, Senior Citizens, University of the Third Age (U3A), and Rotary Club.

During the year, the local champions team promoted Verily Connect at other community events:

- **Seniors' week** – joined with Verily Town Health's stall in the main street
- **Carers' week** – attended and presented at a community talk
- **Dementia Awareness month** – joined with the local Dementia Australia consultant to present Verily Connect during her Dementia Information Session at the local library
- **Verily Town Health community fun day** – delivered a short interactive presentation about Verily Connect.

Technology Learning Hub

The Technology Learning Hub was created in the lobby area of the Verily Town Health Service. The hub was resourced with an iPad, smart phone, two trained volunteers, and a range of dementia resources, including books, a day clock, talking photo album, fiddle bag, companion dog, and activity cushion. The iPad, phone and dementia resources were available for carers to use at the Hub or take home on loan.

Verily Town Health provided the space free of charge, and the iPad and phone were provided by the Verily Connect Project 2017–2019.

Health & Lifestyle

DEMENTIA

Rachael Wonderlin

How to solve dementia related behaviour in six easy steps.

1. Recognize that the behaviour is probably due to an unmet need. Take a minute and think about if it could come from one of these things: boredom, overstimulation, hunger, fear, pain, need to use the toilet. Could it be one of these things? No? Keep going!

2. Could it be a medical issue, like a urinary tract infection? These cause ALL SORTS of issues like extra confusion, irritability, sudden Mood swings, poor judgement, pain, and, left untreated can even cause someone to go into physical shock. You've had their urine checked and you've made sure their meds are in order? Keep going!

3. Could it be that their routine has been changed? Maybe you're trying to get them to shower in the morning when they've been a nighttime bath person their whole life? Nothing New? Keep going!

4. Does this behaviour happen when they are?

- Around someone else (Could be this person is upsetting them?)
- At a certain time of the day (Could it be Sundowning, a perfectly normal part of dementia that just means they need something? (See step 1))
- Supposed to do something, like take a shower? (Could the water be too hot, or may they be uncomfortable being naked?)
- Finished taking medications or a meal? (Could it be a poor reaction to a medication or food?)

5. Listen to the individual. Even if they can't speak, they still use body language to indicate what is wrong. Hear them and solve the problem by Embracing Their Reality.

6. You got all the way here and still aren't sure? Email Rachel at rachel@dementiabyday.com to arrange a time to discuss your problem.

www.dementia-by-day.com



verilyconnect

is a place for carers
to connect online and
support each other in
a dementia-friendly
community

To get involved:

➤ verilyconnect.org.au

☎ VIC (03) 5444 7676

NSW (02) 6363 8438

SA (08) 8586 1001

✉ verilyconnect@latrobe.edu.au

Connect to other
Australian rural carers
using online chat and
video-conference meetings

Get information about
dementia, about
keeping well, and
about locally-available
services and support

It's easy to use, free, and we
provide local face-to-face
support. Give it a try!

Verily Connect: An Australian Government initiative

verilyconnect



42 Murray St, Wonthaggi
25 A'Beckett St, Inverloch
Bass Coast Health, Grabham Wing

**2/1524 Bass Highway
Grantville**

Grantville Medical Centre
2/1524 Bass Highway Grantville
Appointments 5678 8029



Opening Hours

Monday - Friday

9am - 4.30pm

Closed over lunch period

Bulk Billing all consultations for
Pensioners, health care card holders
And children under the age of 16



**AGPAL Accredited
General Practice**

(Procedures may be privately billed to recover associated medical supplies costs.)

Frequently Asked Questions

How can my community join the Verily Connect network?

The information provided in this toolkit will help you get started. There are more resources at the verilyconnect.org.au website. You may also contact the Verily Connect Team at email:

verilyconnect@latrobe.edu.au for further information. There is no cost to join the Verily Connect network.

How do I download the Verily Connect app?

The Verily Connect app can be accessed using an internet browser such as Google Chrome, Internet Explorer, or Mozilla Firefox, without the need for downloading. Simply enter verilyconnect.org.au into the browser address and follow the prompts to register (the first time you use the app) or login if you have previously registered.

For tablet and smartphone users, if you use an iPhone or iPad search for “Verily Connect” in the Apple Store, or if you use an Android tablet or smartphone use the Google Play Store. The Verily Connect app is free to download and use.



Is my data private?

To join the Verily Connect network you will be required to register with a valid email address (which will be your username) and to create your own password. Each time you use the Verily Connect app these details will be used to log you in to the app. This process helps to ensure that only you can access your Verily Connect account. Use of a strong password is recommended to help safeguard your account from unauthorised access by others.

The Verily Project respects the privacy of your personal information by adhering to privacy laws. In handling personal information collected from the Verily Connect app, the Verily Project commits to and complies with the Australian Privacy Principles ('APPs') as set out in the Privacy Act 1988; Victorian Privacy and Data Protection Act (2014); Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW).

What if I find computers, mobile phones and the internet difficult to use?

Contact your local Verily Connect volunteer for assistance. Verily Connect volunteers are trained with the skills to help people use the Verily Connect app and Zoom videoconferencing.

The Verily Connect app has been carefully designed to make it easy to use. Zoom is also designed to be user-friendly. It's likely that the more you use Verily Connect technologies, the more confident you will feel when using them.

We already have a dementia support group in our community – does the virtual dementia-friendly community replace this local group?

The Verily Connect network serves to add to rather than replace existing community support groups. It provides other options and flexibility for carers. The Verily Connect app is available to use 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. You can connect to Verily Connect videoconference meetings from your own

home or using a mobile device from wherever you happen to be – on an outing, taking a break from work, or even on holidays. Using Verily Connect means you can access information and support at a time that suits you, and without the need to travel or leave the person you are caring for unattended.

References

Alzheimer's Disease International. (2016). *Dementia Friendly Communities*. Retrieved from: alz.co.uk/adi/pdf/dfc-principles.pdf

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). (2019). *Dementia*. Retrieved from: aihw.gov.au/reports-data/health-conditions-disability-deaths/dementia/overview

Dementia Australia. (2015). *Paper Number 42. Caring for someone with dementia: the economic, social, and health impacts of caring and evidence based supports for carers*. Retrieved from: dementia.org.au/files/NATIONAL/documents/Alzheimers-Australia-Numbered-Publication-42.pdf

Dementia Australia. (2017). *Dementia Friendly Communities?* Retrieved from: dementia.org.au/dementia-news/issue-11/dementia-friendly-communities

Dementia Australia. (2020). *Dementia statistics*. Retrieved from: dementia.org.au/statistics





Appendices

Appendix 1: Example of resources for a Verily Connect Technology Learning Hub

Dementia resources

Practical resources	Supplier	Cost
Day clock dementiashop.com.au/?s=day+clock	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$135
Timed pill dispenser tabtimer.com.au/epages/tata4926.sf/en_AU/?ObjectPath=/Shops/tata4926/Categories/Products/PillBoxes	TabTimer tabtimer.com.au/epages/tata4926.sf/en_AU/?ObjectPath=Categories	\$34–\$59
Amplified phone with picture dialing oricom.com.au/product/care80-amplified-phone-picture-dialling	Oricom oricom.com.au	\$89.95
Date & weather/Orientation board dementiashop.com.au/product/orientation-boards	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$190– \$210

Sensory items	Supplier	Cost
Fiddle bag dementiashop.com.au/product/fiddle-bags-3	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$40
Activity cushion dementiashop.com.au/product/activity-cushions	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$105
Follow your nose dementiashop.com.au/product/follow-your-nose	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$65

Companion cat/dog dementiashop.com.au/product/companion-pets-215-235	Dementia Shop dementiashop.com.au	Cat \$215 Dog \$235
Perfect Petzz dementiashop.com.au/product/perfect-petzz	Dementia Shop dementiashop.com.au	\$58
Therapy doll zestdementiacare.com.au/shop/tiny-love	Zest Dementia Care zestdementiacare.com.au	\$145
dementiashop.com.au/product/therapy-dolls	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$210

Activities	Supplier	Cost
Jigsaw puzzles dementiashop.com.au/product-category/jigsaw-puzzles-reminiscence-therapy	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$40
Large playing cards dementiashop.com.au/product/large-cards	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$7
Memory bingo dementiashop.com.au/product/memory-cascades-beyond-bingo-70-00	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$75
Image snap dementiashop.com.au/product/image-snap-15-00	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$30
Montessori Toss it dementiashop.com.au/product/toss-it	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$80
Aquapaint dementiashop.com.au/?s=aqua+paint	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$45

Reminiscence	Supplier	Cost
Talking photo album dementiashop.com.au/?s=talking+album	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$70–\$85
My Story album dementiashop.com.au/product/story-30-00	Dementia Shop Australia dementiashop.com.au	\$45

Books

Title	Author	Year	Publisher	Supplier	Cost (RRP)
100 Days to a Younger Brain Maximize Your Memory, Boost Your Brain Health, and Defy Dementia (ISBN: 9780306846489)	Sabina Brennan	2020	Da Capo Lifelong Books	Booktopia	\$32.99
100 Questions & Answers About Alzheimer's Disease (ISBN: 9780763732547)	Marcin Sadowski, Thomas M. Wisniewski	2004	Jones and Bartlett Publishers, Inc	Booktopia	\$51.95
A Caregiver's Guide to Dementia Using Activities and Other Strategies to Prevent, Reduce and Manage Behavioral Symptoms (ISBN: 9781933822907)	Laura Na Gitlin, Catherine Verrier Piersol	2014	Camino Books	Booktopia	\$44.00
A Pocket Guide to Understanding Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias, Second Edition (ISBN: 9781785924583)	James Warner, Nori Graham	2018	Jessica Kingsley Publishers	Booktopia	\$24.99

Title	Author	Year	Publisher	Supplier	Cost (RRP)
Can't We Talk about Something More Pleasant? A Memoir (ISBN: 9781632861016)	Roz Chast	2016	Bloomsbury Publishing	Booktopia	\$29.95
Caring for a Loved One With Dementia: A Mindfulness-Based Guide for Reducing Stress and Making the Best of Your Journey Together (ISBN: 9781626251571)	Marguerite Manteau-Rao	2016	New Harbinger Publications	Booktopia	\$33.95
Contented Dementia 24-hour Wraparound Care for Lifelong Well-being (ISBN: 9780091901813)	Oliver James	2009	Ebury Publishing	Booktopia	\$32.99
Creating Moments of Joy Along the Alzheimer's Journey, Fifth Edition A Guide for Families and Caregivers (ISBN: 9781557537607)	Jolene Brackey	2016	Purdue University Press	Book Depository	\$39.60
Dementia – Support for Family and Friends, Second Edition (ISBN: 9781785924378)	Dave Pulsford, Rachel Thompson	2019	Jessica Kingsley Publishers	Booktopia	\$27.99
Dementia Essentials How to Guide a Loved One Through Alzheimer's or Dementia and Provide the Best Care (ISBN: 9780091948160)	Jan Hall, Huw Rowley	2013	Ebury Publishing	Booktopia	\$38.99

Title	Author	Year	Publisher	Supplier	Cost (RRP)
Dementia from the Inside A Doctor's Personal Journey of Hope (ISBN: 9780281080694)	Dr Jennifer Bute, Louise Morse	2018	SPCK Publishing	Booktopia	\$29.99
Dementia: What You Need to Know A Guide for People With Dementia, and Their Caregivers (ISBN: 9781775534822)	Chris Perkins	2013	Random House New Zealand Ltd	Booktopia	\$34.99
Dementia: What You Need to Know Practical advice for families, professionals, and people living with dementia and Alzheimer's Disease around the world (ISBN: 9781781256701)	June Andrews	2016	Profile Books Ltd	Booktopia	\$24.99
Finding Grace in the Face of Dementia "Experiencing Dementia – Honoring God" (ISBN: 9781433552090)	John Dunlop	2017	Crossway Books	Booktopia	\$34.99
Forgetfulness, Feelings and Farnarkling (ISBN: 9780995385900)	Anne Kelly	2016	Shifting Paradigms Pty Ltd	Dementia Shop Australia	\$25.00
Forgetiquette What to Do When Someone You Love Begins to Forget (ISBN: 9780857986597)	Joan Sauers	2015	Random House Australia	Booktopia	\$19.99
Green Vanilla Tea (ISBN: 9781921462993)	Marie Williams	2013	Finch Publishing	Booktopia	\$24.99

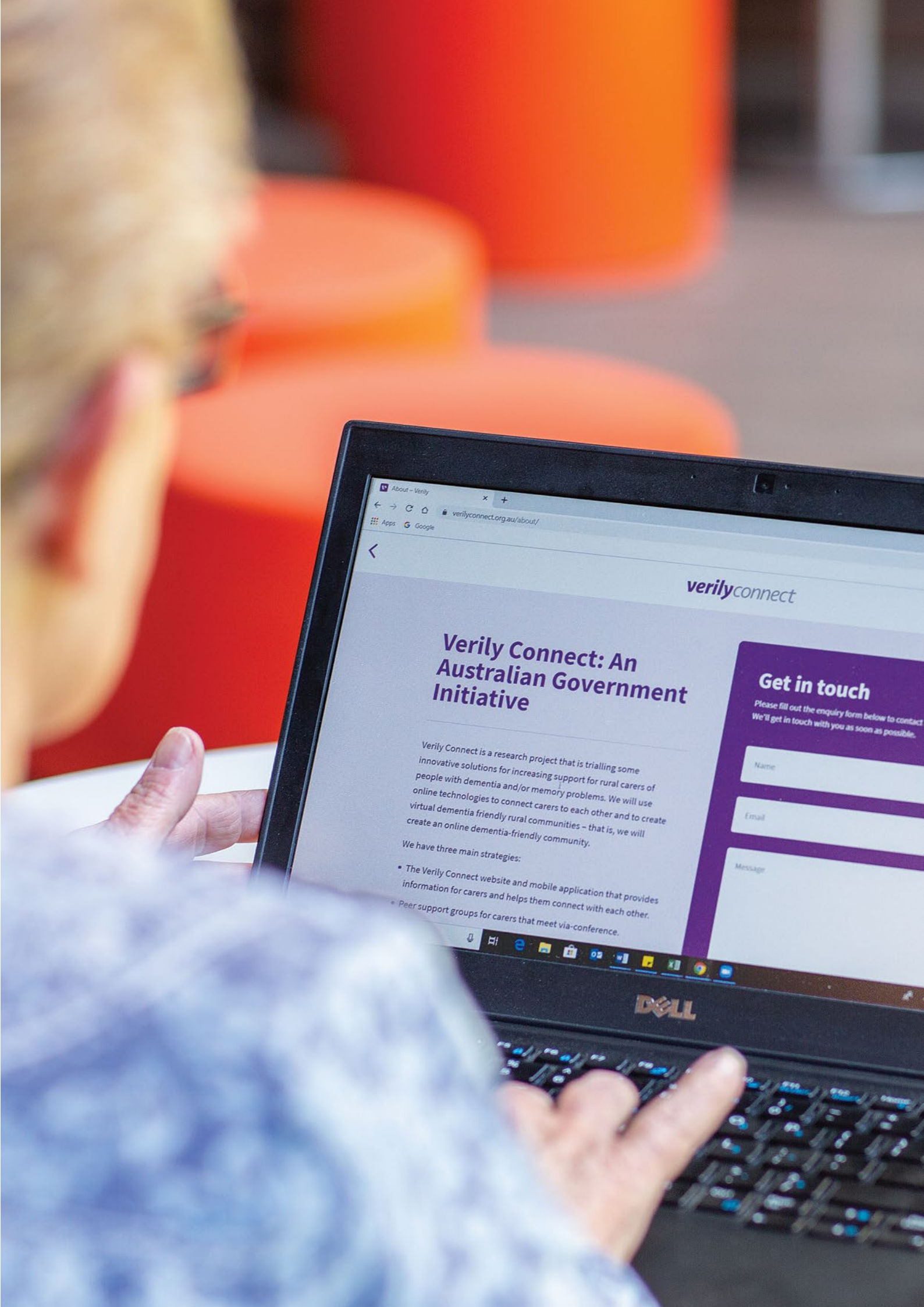
Title	Author	Year	Publisher	Supplier	Cost (RRP)
Hearing the Person with Dementia Person-Centred Approaches to Communication for Families and Caregivers (ISBN: 9781849051866)	Bernie McCarthy	2011	Jessica Kingsley Publishers	Booktopia	\$27.99
I Care A Handbook for Care Partners of People with Dementia (ISBN-10: 1452590737)	Jennifer Brush, Kerry Mills	2014	Author Solutions	Dementia Shop Australia	\$30.00
Keeping Love Alive as Memories Fade The 5 Love Languages and the Alzheimer's Journey (ISBN: 9780802414502)	Gary Chapman, Deborah Barr, Edward Shaw	2016	Northfield Publishing	Booktopia	\$27.75
Living With Dementia: A practical guide for families and their carers (ISBN: 9781742860442)	Esther Chang (Editor), Amanda Johnson (Editor)	2013	Australian Council Educational Research (ACER)	Book Depository	\$46.86
Loving Someone Who Has Dementia How to Find Hope While Coping with Stress and Grief (ISBN: 9781118002292)	Pauline Boss	2011	John Wiley & Sons Inc	Booktopia	\$29.95
My Book about Brains, Change and Dementia What is Dementia and What Does it Do? (ISBN: 9781785925115)	Lynda Moore, George Haddon (Illustrator)	2018	Jessica Kingsley Publishers	Booktopia	\$26.99

Title	Author	Year	Publisher	Supplier	Cost (RRP)
Somebody I Used to Know (ISBN: 9781408893333)	Wendy Wharton	2019	Bloomsbury Publishing	Booktopia	\$22.99
The Selfish Pig's Guide To Caring How to cope with the emotional and practical aspects of caring for someone (ISBN: 9780749929862)	Hugh Marriott	2009	Little, Brown Book Group	Booktopia	\$24.99
The Simplicity of Dementia A Guide for Family and Carers (ISBN: 9781843103219)	Huub Buijssen	2005	Jessica Kingsley Publishers	Booktopia	\$29.99
Understanding Behaviour in Dementia that Challenges, Second Edition A Guide to Assessment and Treatment (ISBN: 9781785922640)	Ian Andrew James, Louisa Jackman	2017	Jessica Kingsley Publishers	Booktopia	\$54.99
What Dementia Teaches Us About Love (ISBN: 9780141986432)	Nicci Gerrard	2020	Penguin Books Ltd	Booktopia	\$22.99

(Please note, availability through the listed suppliers and recommended retail price (RRP) were accurate at the time this document was published but may be subject to change over time.)

Appendix 2: Services database requirements

1. Service name
2. TRUE or FALSE: Does the service offer:
 - Health professionals
 - Counselling
 - Social support and activities
 - Transport
 - Home help
 - Personal care
 - Respite and accommodation
 - Carer services
 - Physical activity
 - Financial assistance
 - Information / Referral
 - Community Group?
3. Service details
4. TRUE or FALSE: To receive this service you may need to apply through My Aged Care
5. Opening hours
6. Phone
7. Email
8. Website
9. Facebook page
10. Street address
11. Town / Suburb
12. State
13. Postcode
14. Latitude (latlong.net/convert-address-to-lat-long.html)
15. Longitude



About - Verily
verilyconnect.org.au/about/

verilyconnect

Verily Connect: An Australian Government Initiative

Verily Connect is a research project that is trialling some innovative solutions for increasing support for rural carers of people with dementia and/or memory problems. We will use online technologies to connect carers to each other and to create virtual dementia friendly rural communities - that is, we will create an online dementia-friendly community.

We have three main strategies:

- The Verily Connect website and mobile application that provides information for carers and helps them connect with each other.
- Peer support groups for carers that meet via-conference.

Get in touch

Please fill out the enquiry form below to contact us. We'll get in touch with you as soon as possible.

Name

Email

Message

DELL

Appendix 3: Advertising Materials



**YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND A
COMMUNITY FORUM**

verilyconnect

**is a place for carers
to connect online and
support each other in
a dementia-friendly
community**

For more information

🖱 verilyconnect.org.au

☎ ()

✉ verilyconnect@latrobe.edu.au

Are you one of the following:

- **A carer or family member of
a person living with dementia
or memory issues?**
- **A volunteer?**
- **A service provider?**
- **An interested community member?**

We are holding a community forum where we will describe what Verily Connect is and how you can be involved. We want to hear from you about how carers can be supported within your community.

Verily Connect: An Australian Government initiative

verilyconnect



verilyconnect

**is a place for carers
to connect online and
support each other in
a dementia-friendly
community**

To get involved:

🖱 verilyconnect.org.au

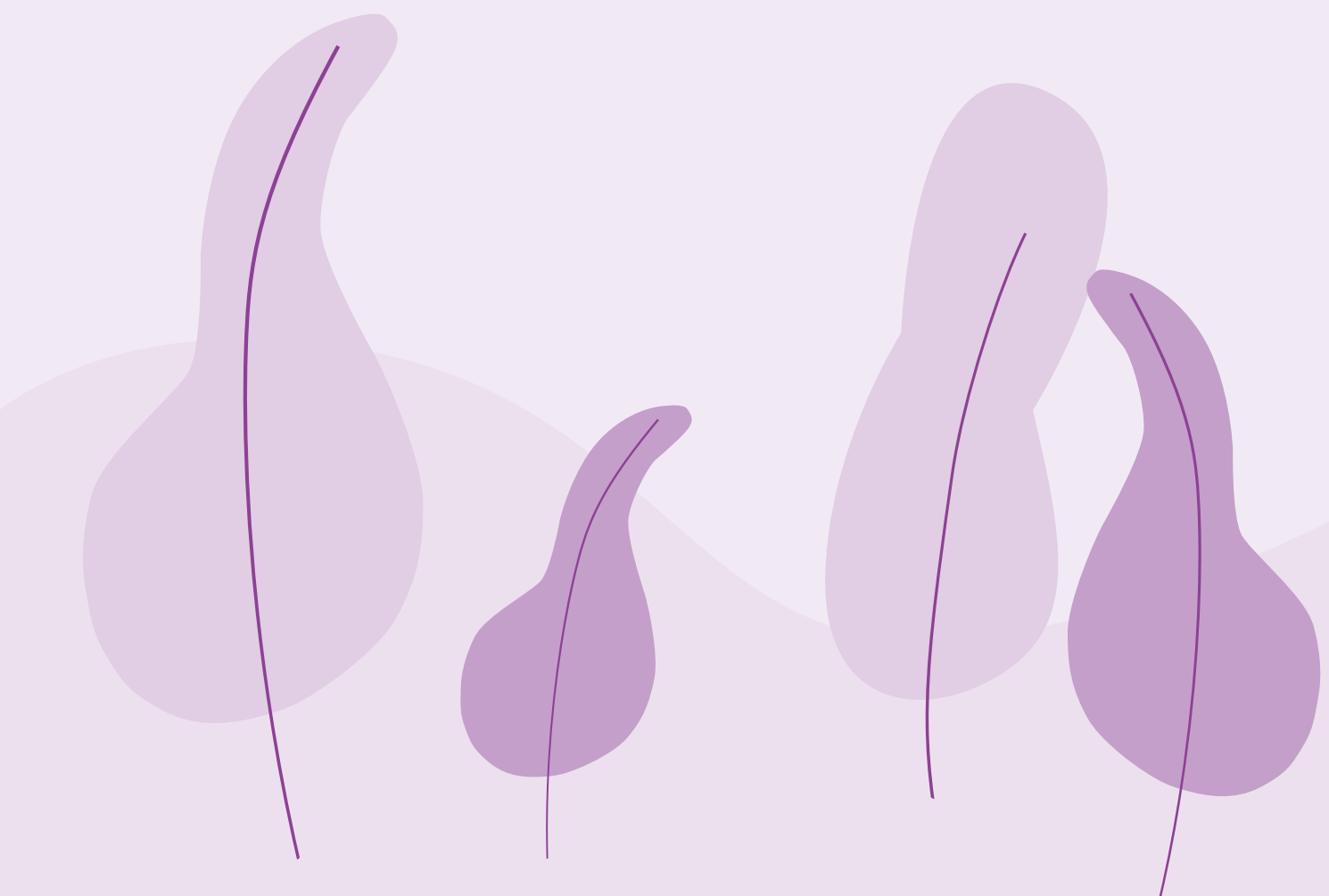


✉ verilyconnect@latrobe.edu.au

Connect to other
Australian rural carers
using online chat and
video-conference meetings

Get information about
dementia, about
keeping well, and
about locally-available
services and support

**It's easy to use, free, and we
provide local face-to-face
support. Give it a try!**



verilyconnect

An Australian Government Initiative

🖱 verilyconnect.org.au

☎ 02 6024 9718

✉ verilyconnect@latrobe.edu.au