

# Dementia Enablement Guide

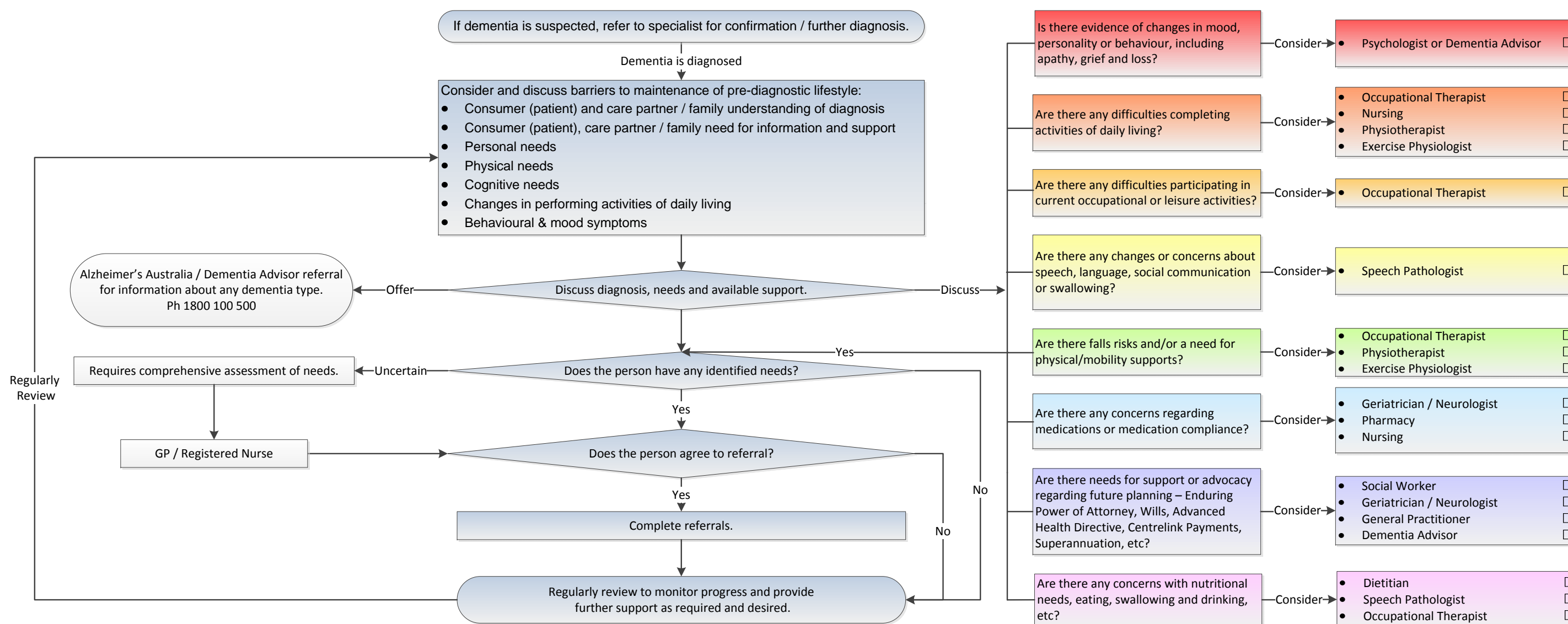
People diagnosed with dementia, their care partners, and family and friends can find it hard to come to terms with a dementia diagnosis. Dementia is a terminal illness for which support such as grief and loss counselling is imperative. Support includes both early intervention and ongoing assistance to adjust to changes, develop coping strategies, maintain maximal independence and improve quality of life. Assistance to maintain general, physical and mental health as well as chosen

lifestyle and social / community involvement should be considered and a holistic care plan generated. Care plans which detail abilities, disabilities and goals should be reviewed regularly and referral to appropriate therapeutic interventions offered.

Holistic assistance which encourages a person to live to his or her personal potential is the cornerstone of good care. By

## Statewide Dementia Clinical Network

adopting an enabling approach focused on preferred occupation and meaningful activity, independence and well-being, people diagnosed with dementia and their care partners have an opportunity to live to their post-diagnosis potential. Additionally, care partners may benefit from targeted education and access to peer support.



See over for role descriptions

## Role Descriptions

**Accredited Exercise Physiologists** are health professionals who specialise in exercise for people with chronic/ complex conditions or injuries. Exercise physiologists provide education and advice about lifestyle changes.

**Accredited Practicing Dietitians / Nutritionists** focus on nutritional needs and provide expert nutritional, dietary advice and practical strategies to ensure the best food choices and health outcomes.

**Dementia Advisors** offer assistance through: counselling, education, referrals, access to a range of resources.

**Occupational Therapists (OTs)** help people achieve their goals for remaining independent and participating in all activities of daily living, including home, work and leisure. OTs provides advice about: adapting tasks; accessing specialised equipment; and modifying the environment to facilitate independence and safety for the person living with dementia in the workplace, in the home and in the community.

**Pharmacists** can advise about prescribed and over the counter medicines and whether they interfere with thinking. They answer a wide range of questions which people may have, and they also help to find ways to make sure medicines are taken correctly.

**Physiotherapists** assist people to manage pain or other body changes e.g. mobility, balance, falls prevention, walking aids, exercises, flexibility and breathing. They also teach the safest ways of providing physical help to someone else.

**Psychologists** help people to manage emotional responses to illness and improve their physical and mental health. They can offer goal oriented cognitive rehabilitation and counselling / strategies for issues including adjustment, grief and loss, behaviour and mood changes, difficult personal decisions, pain management, behaviour change and memory concerns. Psychologists may also assist capacity assessment.

**Registered Nurses** work with clients, doctors and health professionals, providing care-coordination, education and assistance to help people to stay as well as possible.

**Social Workers** provide support during times of stress and change e.g. grief, adjustment to illness, and personal difficulties. They provide counselling and can help with matters such as Enduring Power of Attorney and Advance Health Directives, community services, and Centrelink payments.

**Specialists: Geriatrician, Neurologist, Neuropsychologist, Psychiatrist, Older Persons Mental Health Service:** Specialists can assist with dementia subtype classification, management of uncharacteristic signs and symptoms including change in behaviour and mood.

**Speech Pathologists** assess, monitor and provide advice on ways to retain and improve speech, language, communication and swallowing abilities. Assistance in this way may increase independence, function and engagement