

Wherever possible, please include: 'If this story has prompted any questions or concerns, please call the **National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500** (24 hours a day, seven days a week) or visit **dementia.org.au**.'

Monday 16 October 2023

### **Dementia Australia survey highlights overlooked impacts of caring roles**

According to a survey about balancing work and care responsibilities conducted by Dementia Australia, 80 per cent of respondents caring for a loved one living with dementia have made some form of change to their employment as a result of their caring responsibilities.

Dementia Australia is sharing the results of the survey<sup>1</sup> of more than 100 people this National Carers Week (15-21 October) to highlight the often-overlooked impacts of caring roles and to remind carers the National Dementia Helpline is available for them 24/7 on 1800 100 500.

Carers provide a wide range of supports including emotional support, personal care and activities of daily living for the person they care for.

While caring for a loved one can be a positive experience, a carers own health, wellbeing and daily activities, such as employment, can be greatly affected as they strive to support the person they care for.

Dementia Advocate Bobby Blake is one of many carers whose long and successful career was impacted when she began caring for her husband Ross, who was diagnosed with dementia in 2020.

"Many aspects of our life changed when Ross was diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia and as his dementia progressed, it quickly became clear to me that I couldn't continue working and provide the support he needed," Ms Blake said.

"I was working full-time in a job I really enjoyed but eventually I had to reduce my hours and find a new role so I could support Ross through his changing needs.

"At one point, I was offered a promotion which would have been a great opportunity, but I had to decline as I knew I wouldn't be able to commit to the hours that role required. I wasn't considered again for any other promotion."

Ms Blake explained employment became a welcomed break from her caring responsibilities and upon giving up work recognised that she needed to seek support.

"Working was truly an outlet for me and a good distraction from home life. It felt like a huge step to have to give that up, so I knew I had to find support elsewhere to cope," Ms Blake said.

"One of the first phones calls I made was to Dementia Australia and the support has been absolutely invaluable. I don't know where I would be without the various support they have provided me over the years since Ross' diagnosis."

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<sup>1</sup> Dementia Australia (2022) Submission to the Senate Select Committee on Work and Care Inquiry  
<https://www.dementia.org.au/sites/default/files/2022-09/Dementia-Australia-Submission-to-the-Senate-Select-Committee-on-Work-and-Care-Inquiry.pdf>

Dementia Australia CEO Maree McCabe AM said the results of the survey, alongside stories like Bobby's, highlights the need for carers to be recognised and supported.

“There are more than 400,000 Australians living with dementia and the network of unpaid carers is invaluable to ensuring people living with dementia can maintain their quality of life,” Ms McCabe said.

“While many carers tell us it can be a rewarding experience, it can also come with many challenges that change over time. That is why it is so important for carers to seek support and know that we are here for them no matter their situation.

“I encourage all carers to call the National Dementia Helpline at any time of the day or night, on 1800 100 500. We support everyone impacted by dementia or mild cognitive impairment, everywhere across Australia, and can direct carers to life-changing support.”

Dementia Australia is the source of trusted information, education and services for the estimated more than 400,000 Australians living with dementia, and the more than 1.5 million people involved in their care. We advocate for positive change and support vital research. We are here to support people impacted by dementia, and to enable them to live as well as possible. No matter how you are impacted by dementia or who you are, we are here for you.

For support, please contact the **National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500**. An interpreter service is available. The National Dementia Helpline is funded by the Australian Government. People looking for information can also visit **dementia.org.au**

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When talking or writing about dementia please refer to [Dementia-Friendly Language Guidelines](#).

**Note to Editors:**

We request, where possible, details for the **National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500** appear alongside news stories about dementia, as these stories often prompt questions or concerns:

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