

Tweed Regional Museum marks Dementia Month

Working towards becoming a dementia friendly community

Tweed Regional Museum held an information seminar for volunteers at the Murwillumbah branch last week as part of Dementia Awareness Month.

This activity is part of the Museum's commitment to becoming a Dementia Friendly organisation. The seminar was delivered by Chris Vannucci from Dementia Australia on Monday, 17 September.

Council has been working with Dementia Australia on the Dementia Friendly Communities program since 2016.

A report detailing activities in Tweed Shire was presented at last Thursday's Council meeting. The report provided Councillors with examples of how a dementia-friendly community can improve the quality of life, health and wellbeing of people living with dementia as well as their carers, often a partner or close family member.

One of the common experiences for people following a diagnosis of dementia is isolation through the loss of friends and social connections. This occurs as people distance themselves from the person, mainly through fear and lack of understanding about what it means to have dementia.

Dementia-friendly communities including the Dementia Friend campaign tries to address these misunderstandings and encourage everyone in the community to be inclusive and supportive of the person with dementia.

Museum Director Judy Kean said the process of working with Dementia Australia had been great.

"The support, expertise and information provided has opened our eyes to the simple things we can do, and what a difference these changes can make," Ms Kean said.

"Dementia Australia facilitated a tour of the Museum by volunteers from the Tweed Dementia Action Group earlier this month and we are now working through their advice.

"Community facilities such as ours can offer comfortable and enjoyable experiences for those living with dementia and we're delighted that a number of our volunteers took the opportunity to increase their awareness."

Earlier this month, Tweed Regional Gallery launched 'slow art tours' as an engagement strategy suited to people living with dementia. The Richmond Tweed Regional Libraries will also provide dementia awareness sessions for members of the community.

For more information about Dementia Awareness month visit Dementia Australia's website <https://www.dementia.org.au/dementia-awareness-month>

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