

# MEDIA RELEASE



**Monday, 4 February, 2018**

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## **Nyngan to host free community forum to increase awareness of dementia and memory loss**

The Nyngan community is invited to come along to a free public forum on dementia, including what help is available and how to support a person living with dementia or memory loss.

The forum will be held on **Monday 18 February from 10:30am -12:30pm at Nyngan Health Service (free morning tea provided).**

Guest speaker is Jenny Roberts from Dementia Australia who will bring the Dementia Australia 'Memory Van', a mobile service that aims to increase awareness of dementia in the community and highlight the importance of brain health and dementia risk reduction.

Key topics include Dementia Australia's services and other supports available in the region, memory changes, what is dementia, and caring for people with dementia.

Researcher Dr Kristina Gottschall from the University of Newcastle's Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health (CRRMH) will also share information about The Virtual Dementia Friendly Rural Communities (Verily Connect) project, a \$1.7 million project designed by the CRRMH and the John Richards Centre for Rural Ageing at La Trobe University.

Verily Connect is trialling online technologies to support carers of people living with dementia in 12 rural communities across Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia and is looking for carers as well as volunteers to help the carers use the online technologies.

In addition to Nyngan, communities taking part in the trial include Edenhope, Warracknabeal, Heathcote, Horsham, Robinvale, Kooweerup, Kyneton, and Mansfield in Victoria, Molong in NSW and Victor Harbor and Riverland in SA.

Kristina will showcase the main online technologies including a specially designed app and a free, easy to use online face-to-face meeting portal.

"We are really encouraging carers of people living with dementia to have a go at the online technologies, especially if they don't feel comfortable with computers, iPads or Smart Phones.

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“It is critical we get feedback about this technology so we can help support those who are carers and make caring feel less isolated,” Kristina said.

“We hope to get many carers, volunteers and support services in the Nyngan region involved in the trial as possible,” she said.

Details for the forum are:

**Date: Monday 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2019**

**Time: 10:30am – 12:30pm (free morning tea provided)**

**Location: Nyngan Health Service, 15 Hoskins St, Nyngan NSW 2825**

**For more information about the community meeting:**

Email: [kris.gottschall@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:kris.gottschall@newcastle.edu.au)

Phone: (02) 6363 8438 or 0429 695 325

For more information about Verily Connect, head to [www.verilyconnect.org.au](http://www.verilyconnect.org.au)  
For more information about Dementia Australia, head to [www.dementia.org.au](http://www.dementia.org.au)

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call **000** or go to your nearest hospital emergency department. If you're concerned about your own or someone else's mental health, you can call the **NSW Mental Health Line on 1800 011 511** or **Lifeline on 13 11 14**.

For best practice guidelines on Mental Health Reporting, visit <http://www.mindframe-media.info/>

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