

MEDIA RELEASE

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A trailblazer in dementia specific educational innovation

Churches of Christ in Queensland (CofCQ) and Leading Age Services Australia (LASA), the voice of aged care, are pleased to announce their partnership in an educational tool to improve understanding and quality of care of people living with dementia.

The Virtual Dementia Tour™ allows people to experience first-hand what it is like to live with dementia by means of sensory stimulation.

It encompasses a 10 minute immersive experience, followed by a facilitated 30 minute debrief by a qualified certified trainer, which assists to raise awareness and educate aged care staff to be more empathetic and compassionate when engaging with and delivering care to people living with dementia.

The VDT™, exclusively licenced to CofCQ, is used in more than 20 countries and has positively impacted more than 3 million people.

Churches of Christ in Queensland's Chief Executive Officer, Gary Edwards said, "This collaborative partnership with LASA demonstrates a unified commitment and well-defined vision to further develop the aged care sector's understanding on dementia, to improve individualised quality of care.

"The VDT™ is at the forefront in driving positive social change and is creating shared value across the sector. This education fosters a deeper community connectedness and is creating safe and supportive environments for families, friends and communities."

"This is an important initiative given the increasing numbers of older Australians living with dementia," said LASA CEO Sean Rooney.

"This partnership demonstrates the commitment of LASA and Churches of Christ in Queensland in providing innovative solutions to help the carers of people living with dementia.

"Our ageing population presents an innovation imperative for the age services industry.

"We need to accelerate innovation and collaboration in our industry to translate ideas into action, resulting in better outcomes for older Australians."

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With more than 438,000 people in Australia currently living with dementia it is the second leading cause of death and the leading cause of death among women in Australia.

More than half of all residential aged care residents have a diagnosis of dementia and they tend to have much higher care needs than residents who do not have dementia.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) estimated in 2016 that up to 90% of residents in high care may have some form of cognitive impairment.

Training opportunities can be accessed via <https://lasa.asn.au/the-virtual-dementia-tour/>.

Further Information on the Virtual Dementia Tour™ can be found at www.virtualdementiatouraustralia.com.au . Alternatively contact the VDT™ team at virtualdementiatour@cofcqld.com.au or phone 1300 970 733. .

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About us

Churches of Christ in Queensland has been an active part of the community since 1883. We have a significant presence in Queensland, Victoria and Vanuatu with hundreds of local services. Our staff and volunteers positively impact tens of thousands of lives each year. We

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operate a range of missional and community care services to assist families, the elderly and people in need through church communities and our care services groups operated through Churches of Christ Care and Churches of Christ Housing Services.

We are one of Australia's largest and most diverse not-for-profit organisations, operating services throughout Queensland and Victoria. Active in the areas of children, youth and family services; community housing; retirement living; home and community care; and residential aged care services, we provide Christ-inspired care and compassion to vulnerable people at different stages of their life journey.

Our other missional services include children's, youth, women's and second half ministry; chaplaincy support in community and residential aged care services; mission action partnerships; and global mission projects.

About Leading Age Services Australia (LASA)

LASA is the national association for all providers of age services across residential care, home care and retirement living/seniors housing. Our purpose is to enable high performing, respected, and sustainable age services that support older Australians to age well by providing care, support and accommodation with quality, safety and compassion - always.

We represent providers of age services of all types and sizes located across Australia's metropolitan, regional and rural areas. Consistent with the overall industry profile, 57% of our Members are not-for-profit providers, 33% are for-profit providers and 10% are government providers.

Our diverse and representative membership gives LASA the ability to speak with credibility and authority on issues of importance to older Australians and the age services industry.