



An Australian Government Initiative

Designing for people with dementia:

NEW SERVICE FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA FUNDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND AGEING

The Department of Health and Ageing has commissioned the University of Wollongong based NSW/ACT Dementia Training Study Centre (DTSC) to provide education and advice to aged and health care managers who are in the process of planning new, or refurbished, facilities for people with dementia.

A new service offering design advice will be launched in Western Australia in March 2012. The Centre is establishing a team of environmental design experts, led by Professor Richard Fleming, who will offer a service directly to the managers and architects who are actively involved in designing facilities for people with dementia.

KEY STEPS

•DISCUSSION OF EVIDENCE BASED DESIGN PRINCIPLES The service will provide information on evidence based design drawn from a thorough review of the international literature and many years of experience. However it will not stop there. The most exciting and useful part of the service involves the assessment of the building or the plans.

•ASSESSMENT OF DESIGN

If the project involves refurbishment then the existing building is systematically assessed, if a new facility is being built then the plans are used in the assessment.

•DISCUSSION

The results of the assessment are used as the basis of a discussion between the manager, the architect and the DTSC expert where they tease out any differences between the planned design features and those that can be recommended on the basis of the available evidence. This discussion of the gap between the actual and the ideal is always interesting. It provides a chance for the DTSC expert to pass on current information and for the expert to learn from the managers and architects about the limitations imposed by operational and other restraints. The end result is an enjoyable and stimulating exchange of ideas that improves the design.

WHEN DOES THE NEW SERVICE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA START?

The service has begun in New South Wales and Victoria and will open in Western Australia in March. Visits start in late March 2012.

The NSW/ACT DTSC has been funded by the Department of Health and Ageing to provide this service to forty aged or health care providers. If you would like to arrange for a telephone discussion about accessing this service please email a request to A.Osborne@curtin.edu.au

