



# Creating Enabling Environments

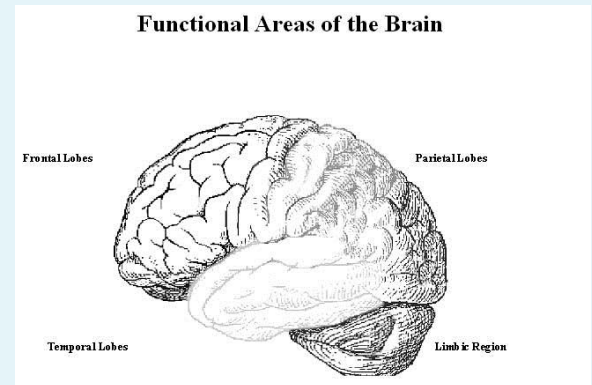
*Dementia & the Built Environment*

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# The Disabilities of Dementia

- Memory Loss
- Disorientation
- Perception Problems
- Illusions/Delusions/Hallucinations
- Sensory overload



Approach Dementia impairment as a Disability Issue



# The Impact of the Environment

The effect on the person includes:

- Loss of sense of identity
- Disattachment
- Exclusion
- Reduced self initiation
- Diminished personhood





# Building for your Care Philosophy

- Do you know what your philosophy or model is?
- Does the environment help or hinder your goals?
- Does your organisation have a philosophy for its buildings?



*Large spaces hinder person centred care*



# Getting Rid of the Institutions

- Uniformity
- Depersonalised
- Long Corridors
- Lack of privacy
- Lack of control
- Lack of relationships
- Large spaces





# Going Beyond “Homelike”

What makes a home?

It is a “feeling” more than by design

- Familiarity
- Scale
- Identity
- Control of the front door and fridge
- People
- Human Habitats

What message does your front door send?



# What happens when have no home?

- Is behaviour seen in homeless people mirrored in people with dementia in long term care?
- Are Behaviours really due to dementia or due to the environment people with dementia are forced into?
- When a person with dementia says “they want to go home”, what are they really telling us?





# Creating a Dementia Enabling Environment

Key Principles of good dementia design:

- Compensate for disability
- Maximise independence/reinforce personal identity and enhance self esteem/self confidence
- Demonstrate care for staff
- Be orientating and understandable
- Welcome relatives and the community
- Control and balance stimuli

Mary Marshall (1998)



# Reduce Social Groupings where possible

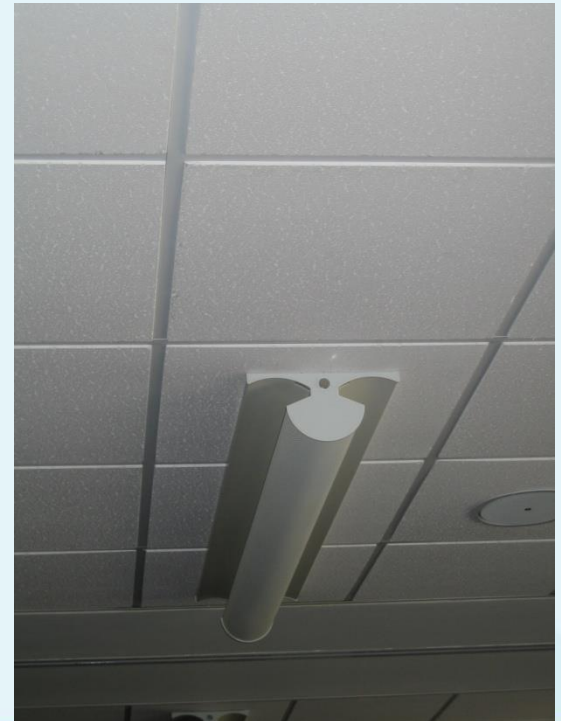




# Let there be light!

- Lighting levels are generally 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of what they should be

Resource: Light and Lighting for people with dementia –  
Stirling University



# Using Colour Contrast to Aid Perception Difficulties

- Contrast is key and accepted to be the most important aspect of colour usage in a dementia care environment







Using bright  
coloured plates  
increased food  
intake by 25% and  
liquid intake by 84%  
(Dunne,2006)



Research shows that increasing  
lighting levels and increasing colour  
contrast between food, plate and  
table increase food intake  
(Brush 2001)





# Flooring



- No stripes
- No Fleck patterns
- No highly polished vinyl
- No light on dark contrast





# Improving Orientation

- Orientation Cueing
- Signage
- Line of Sight Orientation
- Long Term Memory







# Finding the right room



50% greater success in  
finding room  
independently  
(Namazi, 1990)





# Signage

- Big
- Bold
- Contrasting
- Symbols and Words
- Culturally and Age Appropriate
- Eye Level
- On Door





# Line of Sight Orientation

- The most effective orientation method
- If it can be seen it is more likely to be used





# Increase Self Initiation Opportunities







# Imbue life with variety and spontaneity





# Controlling Sensory Stimulation





# Using Audit tools

Stirling DSDC Audit Tool

Environmental Audit Tool – Richard Fleming

(Adapting the Ward- NSW Health, 2003)

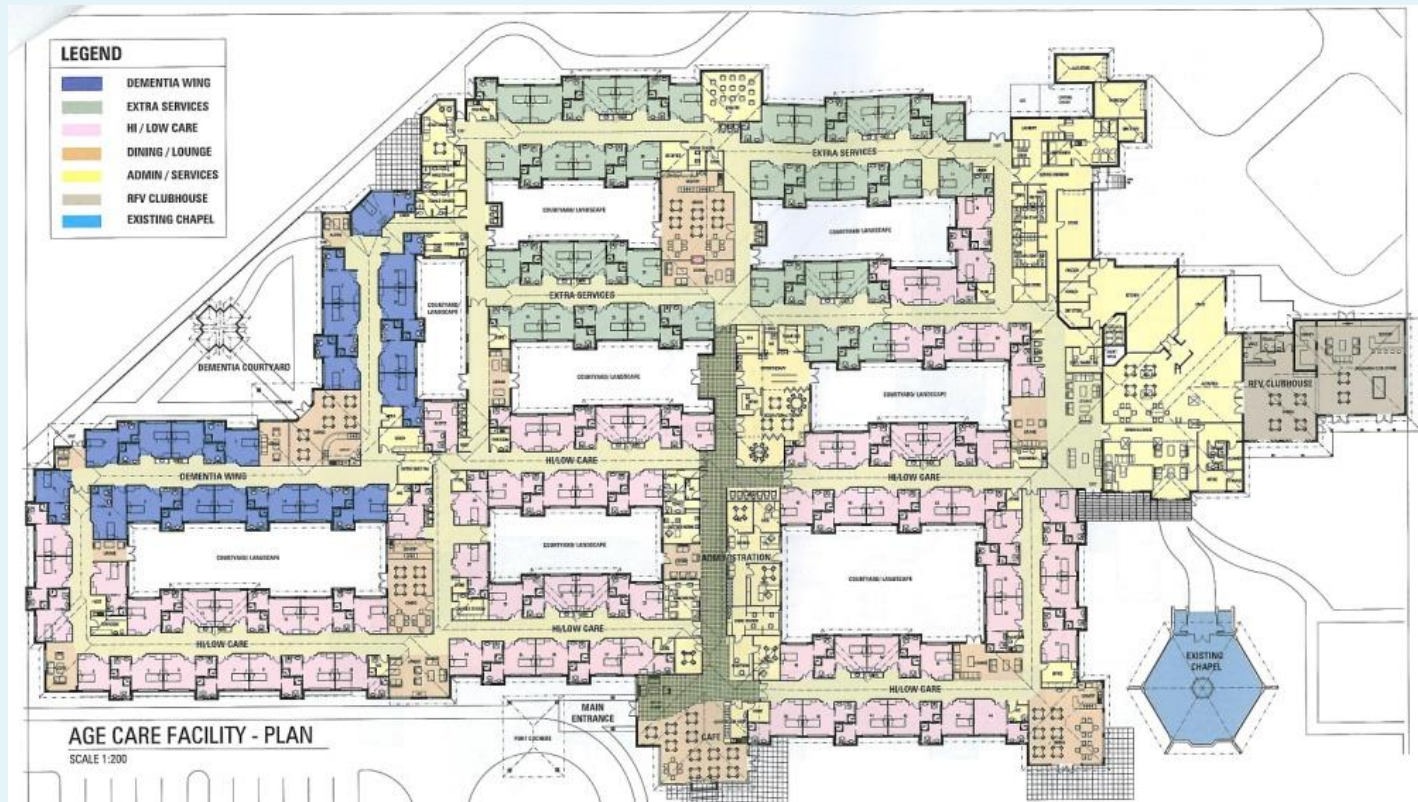
A range of new audit tools will be designed over the next 18 months (End of life, day centres, gardens and homes)





# Where into the future?

This?







# Exciting Models

- Very Supported Housing (UK)
- Group Homes (UK)
- Apartments for Life (Holland and Oz)
- Shared living (Germany)
- Greenhouse Model (USA)





# D.E.E.P.

## *Dementia Enabling Environments Project*

2 year national project to translate research into practice

Collaboration between AAWA and Uni of Wollongong

Activities will include:

- Design workshops
- Family carer adapting the homes workshop
- New Audit tools for day centres and home environments
- Virtual dementia design centre website
- Influencing Design Guidelines
- Better learning resources through AA libraries



# Other Resources

- AAWA ½ day workshops – Design, Gardens and Assistive Technology
- Extensive design lending library at AAWA
- Design School – HammondCare Sydney

Coming soon – Showcase enabling house featuring best practice design and technology on Curtin Campus

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