

Mum had always been full of life, made friends easily, loved her home, well, her garden mostly. Housework had never been her priority – we were. We began to see some changes; constantly repeating herself, forgetting conversations and muddling appointments. We had all tried to talk to her about these lapses, but she became quite angry which was so unlike her. Mum put it down to “just getting older”.

We contacted her local doctor who suggested one of us should be present at her next visit. The doctor asked a lot of questions and after talking with us requested some tests and referred Mum to CDAMS.

Through the clinic process we saw the clinic coordinator, a geriatrician and a neuropsychologist, who were interested in the history of the changes as well as how we all were coping with them.

At the Family Feedback Meeting, the team gave us an explanation of why these changes were occurring. They also provided a lot of useful information on Mum’s condition and treatment available. We also discussed how best to manage both now and in the future.

We still have our ups and downs, but at least now we understand what is happening and where to turn for help.

Where Is CDAMS Located?

Melbourne and Metropolitan Areas

Centre	Suburb	Telephone
Austin & Repatriation Medical Centre	Heidelberg	9496 2531
Bundoora Extended Care Centre	Bundoora	9495 3272
Caulfield General Medical Centre	Caulfield	9276 6010
Kingston Centre	Cheltenham	9265 1291
Melbourne Extended Care Centre	Parkville	8387 2000
Mt Eliza Centre	Mt Eliza	9788 1276
Peter James Centre	Burwood	9881 1867
St Georges Health Service	Kew	9268 0577
Sunshine Hospital	St Albans	8345 1246

Victorian Country Areas

Centre	Region	Telephone
Grace McKellar Centre	Barwon (Geelong)	5279 2438
Baw Baw Health and Community Care Centre	Gippsland (Drouin)	5625 0242
Queen Elizabeth Centre	Grampians (Ballarat)	5320 3704
Arapiles Building Wimmera Base Hospital	Grampians (Horsham)	5381 9333
North East Health Service	Hume (Wangaratta)	5722 1663
John Lindell Rehabilitation Unit	Loddon Mallee (Bendigo)	5454 8500

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CDAMS

Cognitive Dementia and Memory Service



CDAMS

A specialist diagnostic service for people who are concerned about memory loss or changes to thinking (cognition).

The Cognitive, Dementia and Memory Service (CDAMS) was developed by the Victorian Government in recognition of the need to provide a specialist multidisciplinary diagnostic, referral and educational service for people experiencing memory loss, or changes to their thinking, and for those who care about them.

Early diagnosis is important to determine appropriate treatment needs and to plan for the future. It provides people with a timely opportunity to learn about their condition, understand changes as they occur and to cope with day to day issues of cognitive impairment.

Anyone experiencing changes to their memory and thinking, or those who support them, are welcome to contact CDAMS.

Referrals can be made through general practitioners, community agencies or by self referral directly to CDAMS.

Forgetfulness and Normal Ageing

As part of the ageing process some people may notice some mild slowing in their memory and thinking. This is normal. If, however, the changes become progressively more obvious and begin to impact on everyday life, an assessment of memory and thinking would be appropriate.

What Causes Memory Loss or Changes to Thinking?

There are many causes of cognitive impairment and memory loss, including:

- Depression, anxiety/stress
- Dementia – any type eg Alzheimer’s Disease
- Neurological disorders such as Stroke, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson’s Disease
- Traumatic brain injury
- Alcohol
- Side effects of medication
- Vitamin deficiency

Accurate diagnosis is vital so that appropriate treatments and information can be recommended.

Symptoms of memory loss and changes in thinking can include:

- Rapid forgetting
- Repeated questions or conversations
- Losing items e.g. wallet, keys
- Forgetting appointments, birthdays, social commitments.
- Becoming lost while driving
- Problems finding words during conversations
- Difficulties learning new skills
- Reduced ability in doing well known tasks e.g. bill paying, cooking
- Behavioural or personality change
- Feeling overwhelmed or confused by new situations

What Is CDAMS?

CDAMS is a specialist diagnostic clinic which aims to assist people with memory loss, or changes to their thinking, and those who support them.

CDAMS provides:

- Expert clinical diagnosis
- Information on appropriate treatments
- Education, support and information
- Direction in planning for the future
- Information on dealing with day to day issues.
- Linkages for clients or their family to other service providers or community supports

What is Involved in a CDAMS Assessment?

A CDAMS assessment will include medical and allied health consultations, and may include a visit to your home. Where appropriate, other specialist assessments will be conducted e.g. neuropsychology. The outcome of these consultations and recommendations will be discussed with the client, and if agreed to, with their family and general practitioner.

CDAMS Specialists may include:

- Geriatrician/Neurologist
- Neuropsychologist
- Social Worker / Family Therapist
- Psychogeriatrician
- Occupational Therapist
- Community Nurse