Communication & Dementia: A brief Introduction

HOW
DEMENTIA
CHANGES
COMMUNICATION
**Myth:** Dementia only affects *memory.*

**Fact:** Changes to *communication* are a big part of living with dementia

### What changes?
- Dementia can cause changes throughout the brain
- Impacts on many different aspects of communication
- Language, memory, attention, movement, emotional regulation, perceiving and making sense of what is happening

### What does this look like?
Can show in many different ways
- Impacts on all types of communication (speaking, understanding, writing, reading)
- Trouble finding words or getting point across; trouble understanding lots of information at once, lots of speakers; trouble with newly learned languages,
- More effort to be part of conversations;
- Fluctuates (good days and bad days)
- Difficulties generally increase over time

### Why is it important?
- Essential for participating in the community and at home
- Working hard can be stressful, impact self-esteem
- Maintaining relationships, new relationships, managing conflict and worries
- Expressing identity (opinions, what like to talk about, life history), preferences, needs (basic, medical, connection)
- Communication is a human right

### Info and support
- Local dementia organisations & support groups
- Aphasia associations & support groups
- Speech Pathology Associations

### Watch the 3-part Communication & Dementia videos series
Scan QR code or visit: [itee.uq.edu.au/florence-community](http://itee.uq.edu.au/florence-community)
“Living with communication changes is very frustrating at times. I feel that I need to keep checking with others that I’m making sense. I feel that’s because I forget what I’ve just said and I’m really wanting to be reassured by that person or persons that they’ve really understood me.”

Natalie, living with dementia

“Conversation is exhausting. Trying to follow conversations... it’s much easier to talk than it is to listen. So when people think we’re tired and think they’ll talk to us instead of expecting us to talk to them, they don’t realise that that’s actually much harder for us.”

Bobby, living with dementia