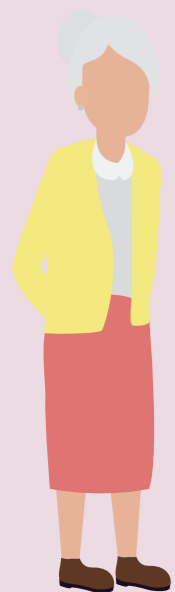


Ivy's journey

Charters Towers – Residential Aged Care Facility – Parkinson's Disease

Ivy is an 86-year-old woman who lives with her daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren on a property 30kms out of Charters Towers. Ivy has a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease and her family has noticed a significant decline in her condition over the last 6 months. After Ivy is diagnosed with dementia, it is increasingly difficult for her to remain at home.



Ivy's daughters are both retired. They are both very close to their mother and promised they would care for her so she didn't need to go into residential aged care. Ivy's grandchildren help as much as they can.

Key Themes:

- Palliative care not a core subject in aged care training
- Many GPs find it difficult to provide care for their patients when they enter residential care
- Advance care planning
- Complex bereavement
- Waitlists for aged care services

TRANSPORT

The Queensland Ambulance Service crew have responded to emergencies when Ivy has been unwell or had a fall, as well as transferred her to & from Townsville and later assisted with transport to appointments when Ivy couldn't walk.



COMPLEX MEDICATION REGIME

The pharmacists at the hospital always prioritise seeing Ivy quickly as her medications are time critical. While the general practitioners and community pharmacists have provided regular education and reassurance to Ivy and her daughter over the years.

CHARTERS TOWERS HOSPITAL CARE

The multi-disciplinary care team at the hospital know Ivy and her family well. Ivy has seen many doctors, nurses and allied health professionals come and go over the years. The occupational therapist and physiotherapist have completed home visits to organise equipment and provide training to the family. Ivy is referred to My Aged Care for ongoing support.



TERTIARY CARE

Ivy often gets transferred by ambulance to Townsville University Hospital (TUH) for specialist care. The Clinical Nurse Consultant for Parkinson's is Ivy's main contact but the whole team know her well. Ivy's daughters continue to care for Ivy when she is in hospital as her care needs are complex. On the last visit, the geriatrician diagnoses Ivy with dementia.

ONLINE SUPPORT

Ivy's grandchildren search online for more information on caring for people with Parkinson's and Dementia. They share information from Parkinson's Australia, Dementia Support Australia and CarerHelp with their mother and aunt.



CARER BURNOUT

Ivy is eligible & waitlisted for a Level 4 Home Care Package. She was allocated a Level 2 package until a Level 4 was available. Ivy's daughters use as much assistance as they can, but since Ivy started having symptoms of dementia it has been hard.

Ivy's daughters are very distressed when they have no choice but to use residential aged care for respite.



RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE

Ivy has increasing & prolonged admissions to Charters Towers Hospital. Ivy's daughters are very distressed when they have no other option but to organise residential aged care for Ivy. Ivy stays in the hospital waiting for a bed to become available. After moving into the aged care home, Ivy has a new GP and continues to have frequent hospital stays.

Potential issues/barriers:

- Travel to Townsville
- Family's ability to care for her increasing medical needs with declining health
- Specialist palliative care service not routinely considered for people with neurological conditions
- Workforce shortages across all services and limited backfill for leave in some services



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