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First Memory Clinic in south west Sydney to fight rising dementia

From next year, south west Sydney will be on the frontline of the fight against dementia with the establishment of a new Memory Clinic.

According to Western Sydney University, suburbs such as Camden, Campbelltown and Macquarie Fields will see up to a 460 per cent rise in the number of dementia diagnoses by 2050.

But the Memory Clinic, led by Western Sydney University in conjunction with South Western Sydney Local Health District, will help support the community's health, social and economic needs.

Western Sydney University dementia researcher, Dr Genevieve Steiner, said they were aiming to build a region-first clinic, taking a multidisciplinary approach to dementia diagnosis and care that would be a flagship model of care for the nation.

"At the moment it takes years for people to be diagnosed with dementia, and for many of them it involves endless rounds of appointments with various specialists and delays in getting them the right treatment," she said.

"The Memory Clinic will allow patients to be diagnosed more quickly and for all-around care plans to be put in place sooner.

"We want to be leading Australia in terms of the model of care we will offer. The Memory Clinic will integrate patient care with the latest cutting-edge research and training, offering a nation-leading service."

Campbelltown Hospital staff specialist geriatrician and Western Sydney University Clinical Dean, Dr Mark Hohenberg, said the clinic would house a wide range of specialists and health professionals who would contribute to the patients' medical and holistic care needs.

"The specialist clinic staff will include; geriatricians, neurologists and psychiatrists as well as allied health professionals, including dietitians, occupational therapists and social workers," he said.

"Our team will not just focus on the medical care, but also the overall wellbeing of our patients, carers and families."

"The care plans will allow patients to remain independent in their homes for longer and will dramatically reduce both presentations to hospital for patients with dementia, as well as the time required in hospital to manage medical and social complications.

"The memory clinic will improve the quality of life for those affected by dementia in all of its forms, focusing on the patient, their family and their carers."

The clinic is expected to open in south west Sydney in 2018 as a partnership between Western Sydney University and a wide range of stakeholders including South Western Sydney Local Health District and South Western Sydney Primary Health Network.