

### July 2020

1. The Canberra Symphony Orchestra is piloting a new program designed to benefit people with dementia through live concerts which provide socialisation and stimulation. The program hopes to measure positive behavioural changes linked to the musical experience, and focuses on strong elements of familiarity and allowing the participants to “just be and listen”.  
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2. Researchers say the risk of developing dementia is significantly higher (up to 86% higher) if an individual has both hearing and vision impairments (DSI – Dual Sensory Impairment). A study by the University of Washington consisted of 2,051 individuals, with and without DSI. Follow-up examinations over an eight-year period revealed the following likelihoods of developing dementia: 14.3% of those without any reported hearing or vision loss developed dementia. 16.9% of those reporting a single impairment developed dementia. 28.8% of those with DSI developed dementia. Alzheimer’s disease was the most common form of dementia diagnosed.  
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3. Research from the University of Kentucky suggests a newly-identified form of dementia may often be misdiagnosed as Alzheimer’s disease (AD). Previous studies have found that LATE (limbic predominant age-related TDP-43 encephalopathy) could make up to 20% of misdiagnosed AD cases; this new research adds a fourth type – QMP (Quadruple Misfolded Proteins) to the mix. Patients with QMP were found to progress from mild cognitive impairment to dementia at a much faster rate than subjects with three or less pathologies. Further research is needed to determine exactly how the four interact and affect disease outcomes.  
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4. A new computer game from the UK, aims to depict a day in the life of a person living with dementia, as they try to piece together fragments of memories that make up their life. The creators explore how living with dementia can affect someone’s life, as well as the lives of those around them and was developed with support from medical professionals and to help create a sensitive and realistic portrayal of the condition.  
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5. Racism may well be a risk factor for dementia, according to researchers at the University of California. Older black and Hispanic people are almost twice as likely to develop the disease and researchers say this may be a direct result of long-term stress and hypertension caused by racial experiences, segregation and other socio-economic factors associated with being non-white.

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6. Monash University has released findings from their study identifying barriers to effective medication management in people with dementia. Their research involved four key stakeholder groups (carers, general practitioners, nurses and pharmacists) from a wide range of communities and healthcare settings. They identified the three main obstacles to optimum management of medications: poor communication and relationships between stakeholders, infrequent medication reviews and lack of practitioner training, and evidence and guidelines to navigate prescribing and deprescribing decisions. The study found that, while a carer's role is vital, changes need to be made to the way medication is managed by health professionals in order to reduce carer burden.

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