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MEDIA RELEASE

WIMMERA Health Care Group is encouraging people to visit loved-ones with dementia this Christmas.

Residential services lifestyle and leisure program manager, Kelly King said while it could be difficult and emotionally testing to visit a person with dementia, it is well worth the effort.

Miss King said there were a lot of ways to help make visiting a loved-one with dementia easier and beneficial to the resident.

“A good idea is to take something with you to the visit to engage the person, this could be a magazine, or a newspaper that you can read or take part in the quizzes together,” Miss King said.

“You can also read their mail out loud to them or write letters to family and friends on their behalf. It also helps to introduce yourself and remind them of your relationship to them to reduce their anxiety.”

Miss King said other ways to make the visit easier include accepting silence and not thinking of it in a negative way, and utilising the person’s strengths.

“Their strength’s may be their sense of humour or long-term memory, and you can use that to your advantage. Another good tool is a communication book where you write down who came to visit and what was talked about,” she said.

“But most importantly, know that your visit makes a positive difference. It might not be easy sometimes, and you may not feel like you are helping, but you certainly are.”

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