

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



First-ever dementia MOOC a hit with students

The world's first Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) about dementia, the University of Tasmania's *Understanding Dementia*, is a hit with students.

Launched in July, the course attracted 9300 registrants from more than 60 countries worldwide and boasts enviable retention rates, with more than 67 per cent of participants who commenced the course still studying after four weeks.

Completion rates are around six per cent for other international MOOCs.

The free 11-week course, developed by UTAS' Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre, is addressing an area of genuine international community need, with dementia described by the World Health Organisation as *the* public health issue of the 21st Century.

Understanding Dementia MOOC participants are reporting a transformation of their understanding, knowledge and care practices to improve the quality of life for people with dementia. One participant said working on a daily basis with residents with dementia can be "very difficult."

"This course is giving me a clearer understanding and I am thoroughly enjoying the learning experience," they said.

"I can now start to spread my knowledge with my team members. This will assist our team to understand our residents a lot better. Therefore they will receive even better care."

With a growing international reputation for the quality of its dementia education, Wicking is now offering a fully online Bachelor of Dementia Care.

The degree is offered to students internationally who wish to undertake university study in dementia care. Recognising dementia education as an area of acute community need, The University of Tasmania is offering subsidised fee structures for students Australia-wide and overseas.

With the success of the first iteration of the *Understanding Dementia* MOOC, online education providers will be watching this space for insight into the recipe for success, as well as the demand for future iterations of the course starting in March 2014.

For more information, please visit: www.utas.edu.au/wicking/wca/mooc or www.utas.edu.au/dementia-care

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