

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA**

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## Taking dementia education online

The World Health Organisation has highlighted dementia as a public health priority. It is predicted that there will be approximately one million Australians suffering from dementia by 2050.

The dramatic increase in dementia cases globally, and the consequent need for quality dementia education, has inspired the University of Tasmania's Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre to offer the first online dementia care degree to students internationally.

The Bachelor of Dementia Care has evolved into a fully online degree to appeal to people in the sector who wish to undertake flexible learning either full-time or part-time.

Joan Robinson was one of the first students to undertake the course in its first intake in 2012. Residing in Coonabarabran, a small town lying between Tamworth and Dubbo in northern New South Wales, access to the course played a large role in her decision to take up study.

"I chose to study at the University of Tasmania because the course was offered by distance and from highly esteemed academics. I wanted to increase my knowledge of dementia so I can make a positive difference in the lives of those with dementia, their families and the care workforce," Joan said.

"Since studying the degree, all components of the course have been wonderful. Course content, lecturers, online presentations, support systems and having access to lecturers and fellow students has been invaluable."

Dr Andrea Carr, Course Coordinator, said "although the degree is primarily designed for care workers, we have people from a range of backgrounds including registered nurses, aged care facility management personnel and family members of people with dementia.

"The response from students to date has been overwhelmingly positive, with many reporting feeling empowered by being able to apply what they are learning with confidence."

The University of Tasmania has seen this as an area of priority in terms of community need and is offering the opportunity of HECS scholarships for 2013/2014 if students enrol in semester 5, beginning in November 2013.

“We are very excited to be able to offer the degree in this new fully-online format and will be giving potential students an opportunity to find out more in our Launceston and Hobart information sessions this week,” Dr Carr said.

For more information visit: [www.utas.edu.au/dementia-care](http://www.utas.edu.au/dementia-care) or call 1800 982 600.

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