

**UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA | WICKING DEMENTIA CENTRE  
LAUNCH OF THE UPDATED *UNDERSTANDING DEMENTIA*  
MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSE (MOOC)  
REMARKS BY  
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, MONDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**VICE-REGAL SALUTE**

Good evening. I warmly welcome you all to Government House.

May I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose land we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their deep connection to land, sea and waters, and their ongoing commitment to community.

I welcome everyone here tonight to mark the release of our Wicking Centre's updated *Understanding Dementia* MOOC. Our guests include those with lived experience of dementia who have contributed to the MOOC, community partners and supporters of the Wicking Centre's work; healthcare professionals; and senior representatives from the University of Tasmania and from the aged care and health sectors.

Our Wicking Centre is a world leader in dementia research and education. It is embedded in our Tasmanian community through initiatives such as the *Island Study Linking Ageing and Neurodegenerative Disease* and a multidisciplinary diagnostic clinic. These initiatives seek to understand how to reduce the dementia risk of people in our State.

This *Understanding Dementia* MOOC has put Wicking's work on the global stage, contributing to a greater understanding of dementia. Since its inception in 2013, over 750,000 people across 229 countries have completed this MOOC – a truly global outcome!

The MOOC is the fifth most highly rated MOOC globally. Research has also shown that the MOOC is the main educational form of professional development accessed by staff in residential aged care facilities.

This refreshed MOOC, available from today, is the first comprehensive update and includes the latest research and best practice in dementia care and education, much of it undertaken here in Tasmania.

The course is designed as a journey, starting with the brain and expanding outward to the person, their care network, and the wider community.

The final of four modules – *Being and belonging with dementia* – focuses on community inclusion and therapies that foster connection and engagement. This is in keeping with the theme of World Alzheimer's Month, and yesterday as World Alzheimer's Day, which is advocacy for greater awareness and understanding around dementia.<sup>1</sup> As the MOOC outline states: *No exams. No cost. Just life-changing knowledge that empowers you to make a difference.*

May I congratulate the Wicking Centre and everyone here tonight on the release of the updated MOOC.

May I also thank our pianist, Miffy Wang, who is an Honours piano student at the Conservatorium of Music and a recent recipient of the Ossa Prize Award. Miffy has just completed a tour, performing around our State. So, thank you very much, Miffy.

Please now enjoy your time here at Government House.

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<sup>1</sup> See #AskAboutDementia.