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## Aged care scholarship awarded to improve dementia diagnostic tests

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Clinical neuropsychologist Matthew Staios will be able to further his research into dementia diagnosis in the Greek Australian community after being awarded the Anna Matthews OAM Scholarship by Froniditha Care.

The Greek Australian PhD student is the first recipient of the scholarship and will receive \$10,000 to help him cover research costs.

Currently completing his research at Monash University, Mathew is creating and adapting a range of tests to detect dementia in culturally and linguistically diverse Australians.

He says measures and tests currently in use are likely to result in misdiagnosis, and has seen this first hand with the elderly Greek community.

“Greek Australian elderly have difficulties answering the questions in the diagnostic tests because of their language and cultural barriers,” he said.

“That’s why it’s so important to create qualitative tests that are adaptable to more cultures and languages, so we don’t run the risk of people being misdiagnosed with dementia and not be given the right treatment options.”

The scholarship will see him able to purchase test materials, employ a research assistant and attend conferences and intensive training in Greece.

Froniditha Care is committed to furthering research in this field after years of seeing how dementia has ravaged the Greek Australian elderly community first hand.

Froniditha Care CEO George Lekakis AO hopes to see dementia patients’ wellbeing and treatment plans improve thanks to Mr Staios’ research.

“Dementia is an incurable disease and is life-changing for the patient and their loved ones,” Mr Lekakis said.

“Treatment options are limited and earlier diagnosis or more tailored diagnostic tools will help immensely.”

The Anna Matthews OAM Scholarship was introduced to encourage and assist research that contributes to the wellbeing and care of ageing adults from a culturally and linguistically diverse background.

The scholarship also honours the memory of the late Anna Matthews OAM, a Froniditha Care pioneer who was instrumental in campaigning for specialised aged care in Australia.

Her work was to make sure ageing multicultural citizens were able to be understood and enjoy culturally and linguistically appropriate care.

For more information please contact Froniditha Care on 03 9552 4100.

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