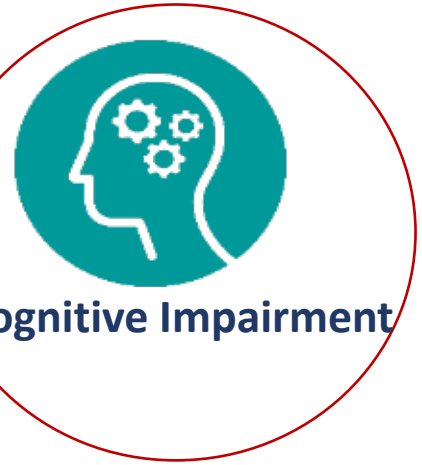
Cognition
A focus on delirium

CEC Comprehensive Care - Minimising Harm model

Building Blocks for a Safe Ward

- Safety Huddles
- Post incident huddle e.g. Post Fall huddle
- Purposeful/intentional rounding
- Clinical bedside handover
- MDT bedside rounds
- Transfer of care - clinical handover
- Data intelligence

Hydration and nutrition



Cognitive Impairment

Patient care fundamentals

'what matters to me'
Engage patient, family, carer in care planning

Safe and early mobilisation

End of life care

Medication review

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Patient Story – Mrs Betty Smith

83-year-old female presented to hospital post fall

Lives alone

Chronic medical conditions - currently stable

She has hearing and vision impairment

Painful right arm, poor medication compliance noted by NSW Ambulance Service

Does this sound familiar?

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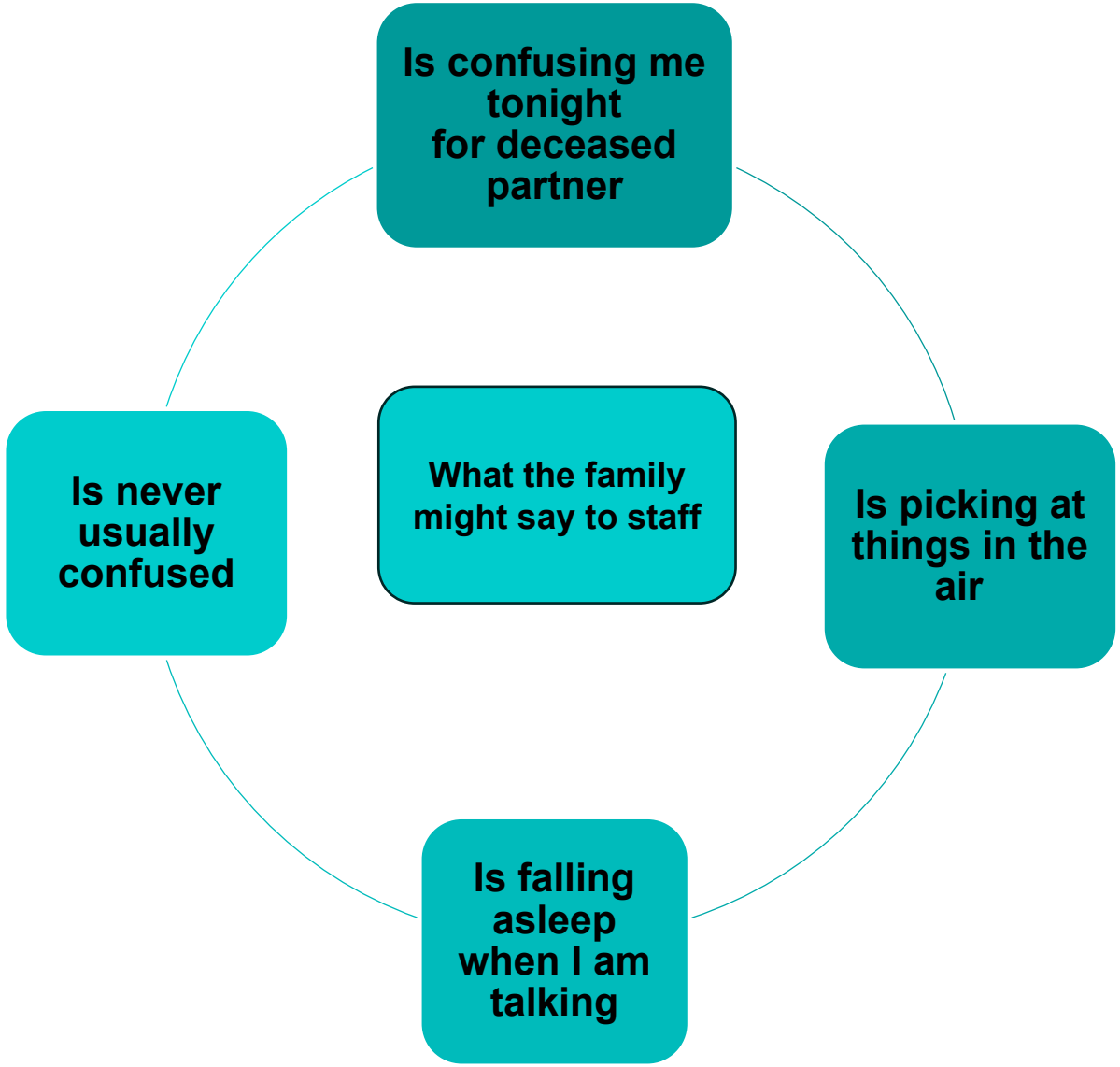
You met Mrs Smith and assist her out of bed, manage to stand her up and assist with transfer into a chair - right colles #

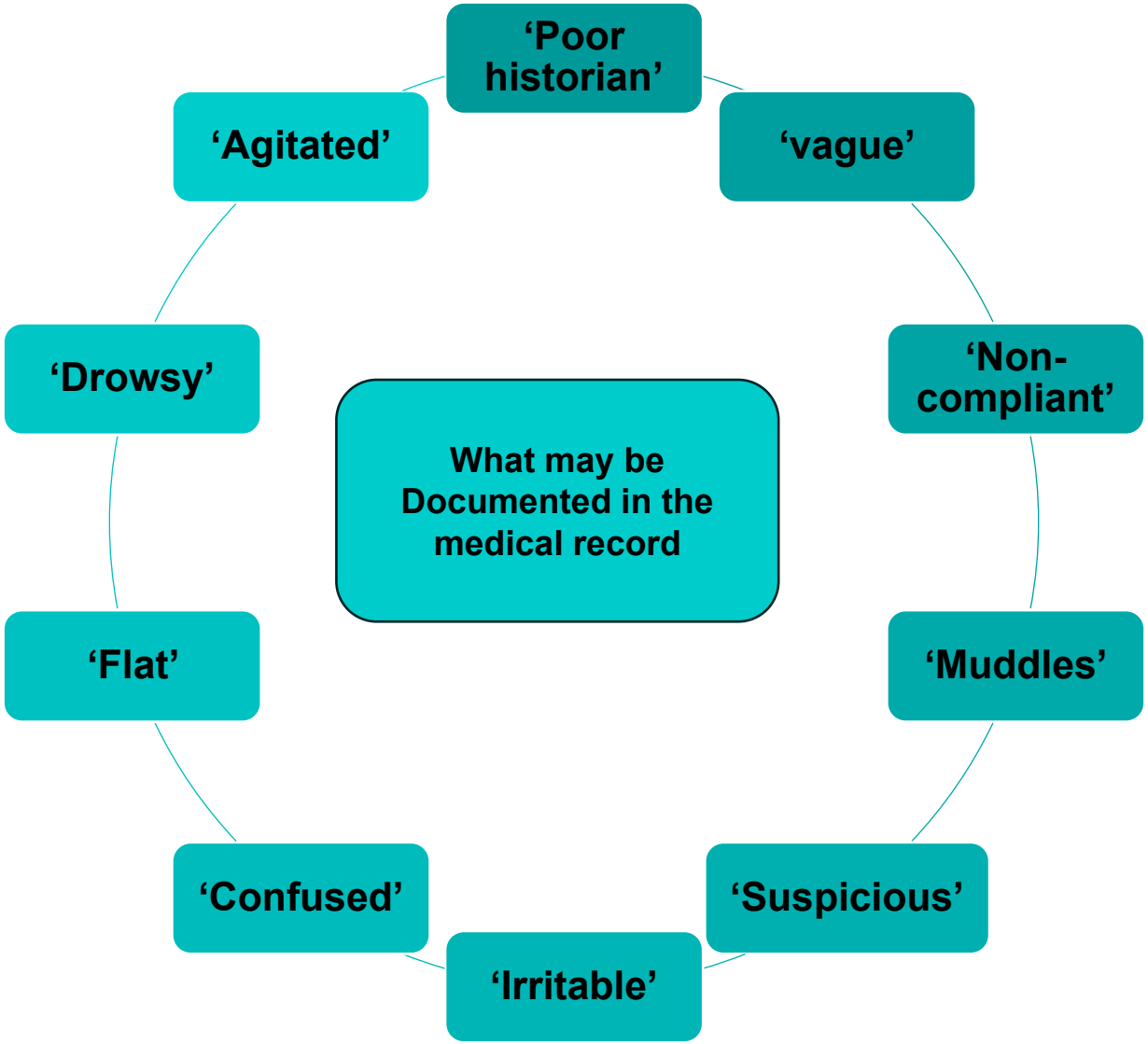
She insists she is ok but rather abrupt with you

Mrs Smith is quite distracted with other noises and people in the room, looking around, talking to herself

When you return she asks “ who are you? when can I leave this jail?”

You note her breakfast is untouched


Is confusing me tonight for deceased partner
Is never usually confused
What the family might say to staff
Is picking at things in the air
Is falling asleep when I am talking


‘Poor historian’
‘vague’
‘Non-compliant’
‘Muddles’
‘Suspicious’
‘Irritable’
‘Confused’
‘Flat’
‘Drowsy’
‘Agitated’
What may be Documented in the medical record

What is delirium?

*Delirium is an **ACUTE** change in mental status*

It is a medical emergency

It develops over a short period of time (hours to days)

Change in consciousness, attention, cognition & perception

It is often under recognised

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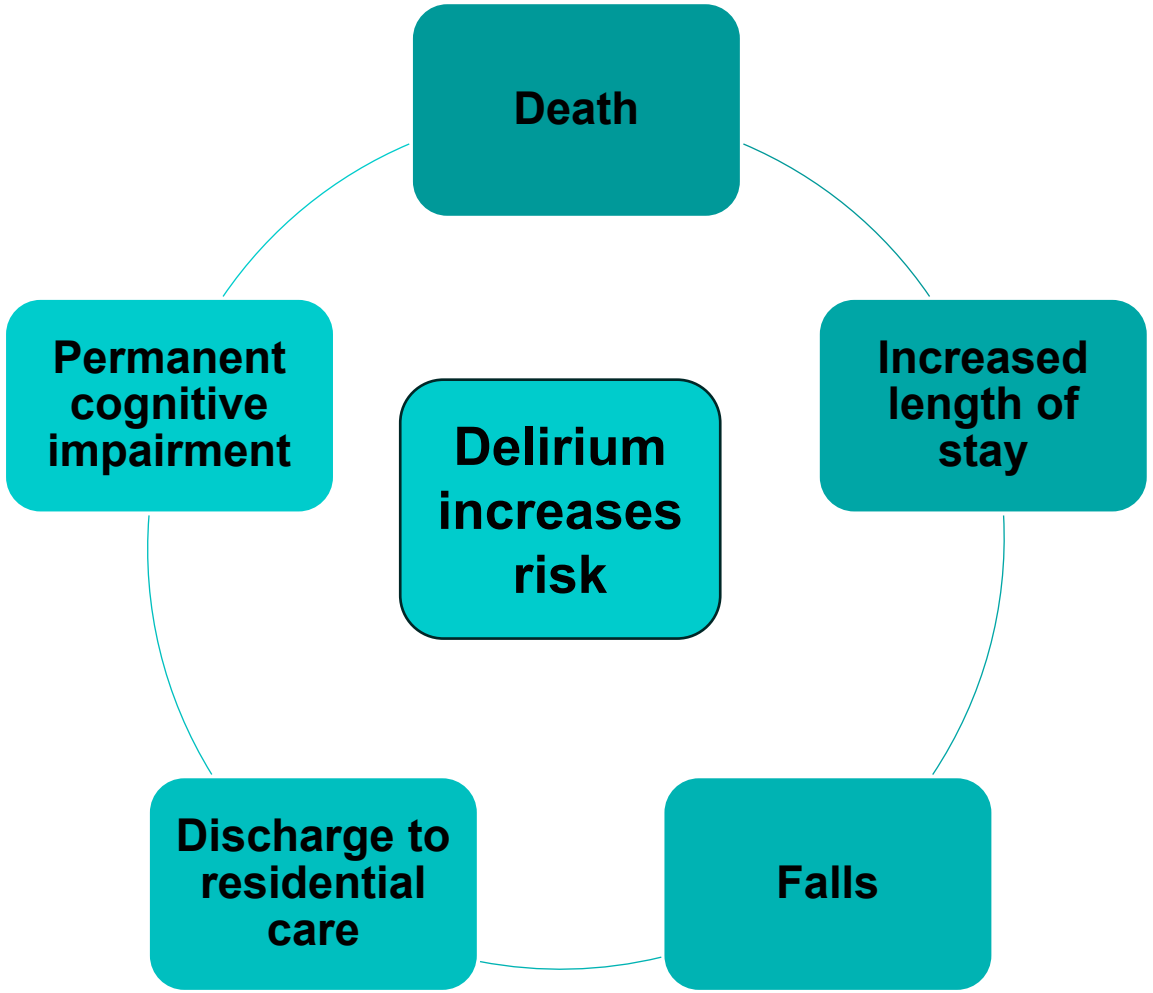
Types of delirium

Hyperactive delirium	Hypoactive delirium	Mixed delirium
		

Why is understanding delirium important?



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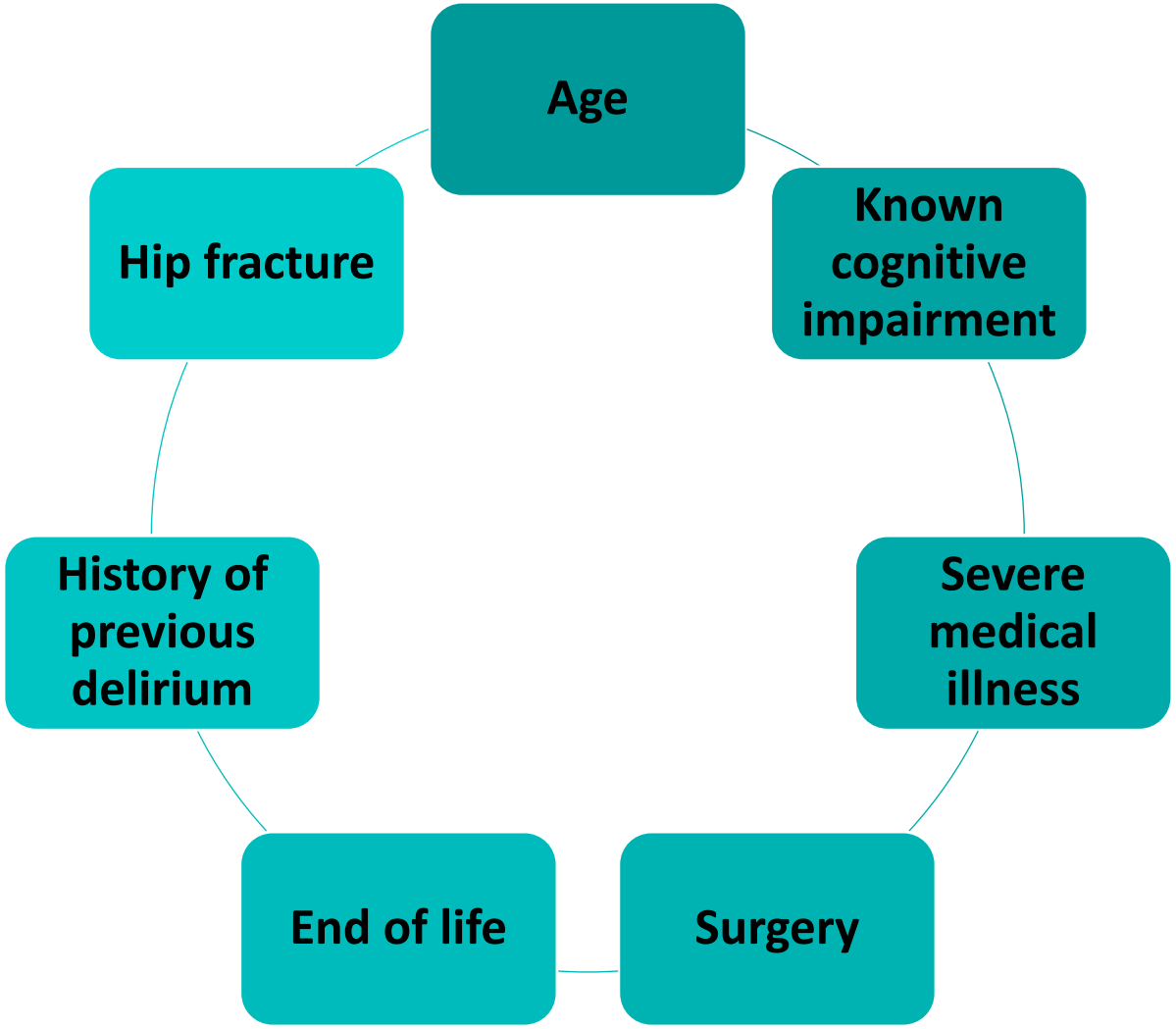
Key risk factors for developing Delirium



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When to screen for delirium

On Admission

Change in:

Condition
Function
Cognition
Concentration
Memory
Thinking
Decision making

A **new** onset **of confusion**, or **new change in behaviour**

Note ACVPU Alert;
Confusion/ change in behaviour, rousable by Voice; rousable only by Pain; Unresponsive scale

Anyone can recognise a delirium using a validated screening tool e.g. 4AT

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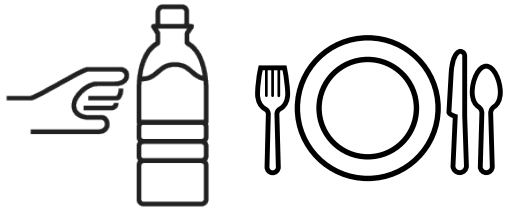
When a patient is identified with a delirium

Communicate with multi-disciplinary team

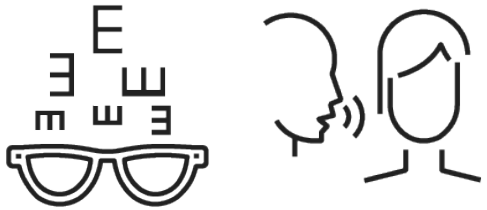
Identify and implement strategies to address risk factors

Delirium management strategies to consider

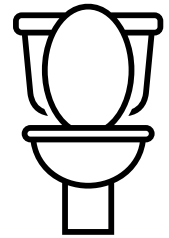
Pain



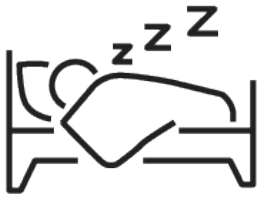
Hydration & Nutrition



Vision & Hearing



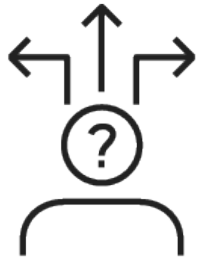
Bowels & Bladder



Sleep

Communication

Family/Carer Involvement



Orientation

Mobilise

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Supporting patients with delirium

- Up out of bed, showered dressed in day clothes
- Mobilise and sit patients out of bed
- Assist with meals, offer regular fluids and dental hygiene
- Ensure bowel and bladder working
- Ensure use of aids to assist hearing and vision
- Pain and discomfort addressed
- Careful use of medicines, investigations and interventions
- Quiet calm environment and family presence if available

Note: Provide fundamental compassionate care

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Be-Betty-Centred

- Gently reassure, reorientate, distract and agree if necessary
- Involve family member/s –Top 5 / Sunflower
- Increased supervision
- Low lighting at night
- Remove all medical attachments, where possible
- Take Betty for regular walks
- Have familiar objects and provide sensory distraction

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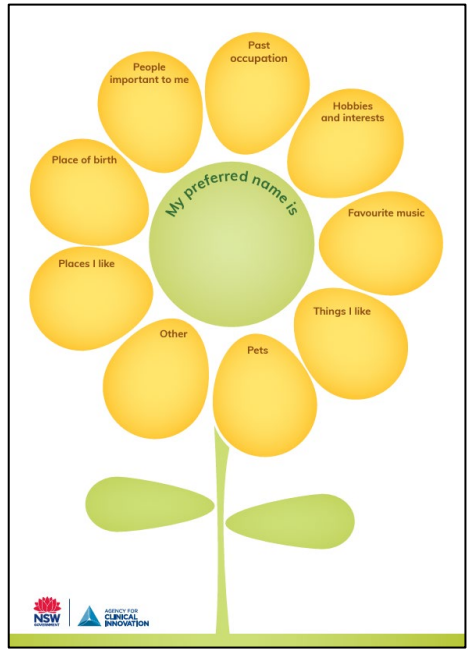
Tools to support communication

Showing visual pictures or objects can trigger understanding when words fail

e.g. cue cards, clocks that display day, date and time

TUESDAY
MORNING
10:30AM
April 2, 2024

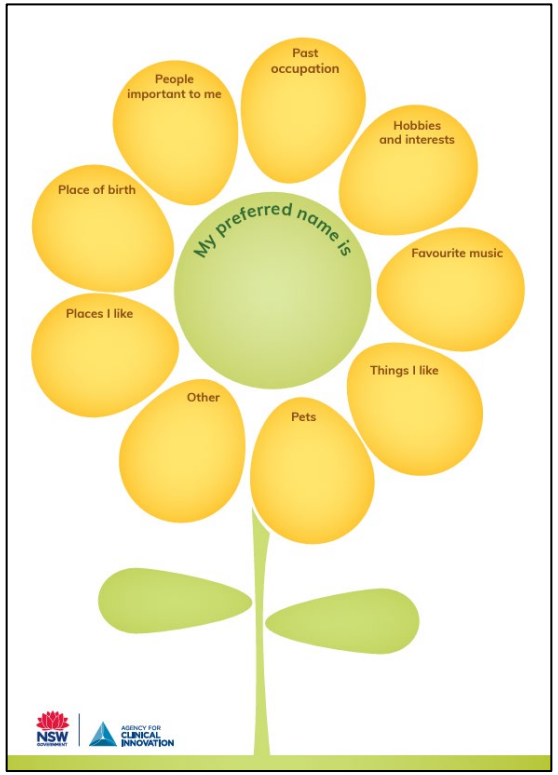
Consider using a tools such as the sunflower or Top 5 tool

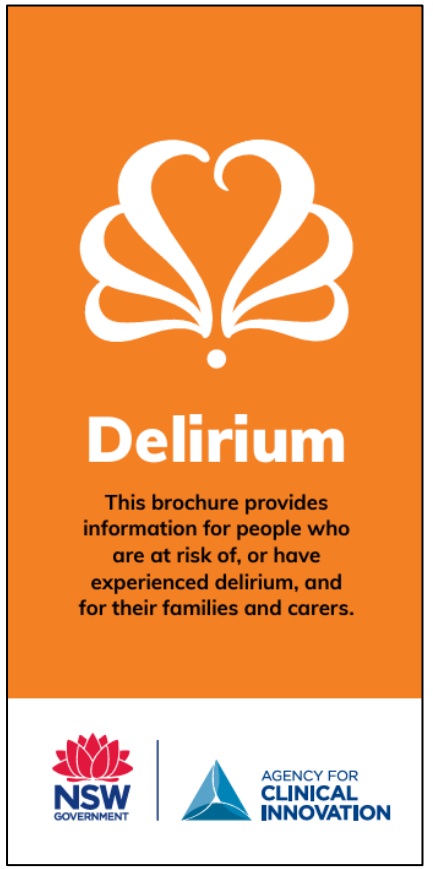


Resources

My Health Learning Delirium modules	
Delirium Stage 1	233003664
Delirium Care Stage 2	266621954

https://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/improve-quality/teamwork-culture-pcc/person-centred-care/dementia-care





www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/networks/aged-health

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