

No stopping happy wanderers

by HEATHER GRANT-CAMPBELL

QUEENSLANDERS Christine and Paul Bryden love to travel. Recently returned from trips to Japan and the US, they're keenly anticipating a cruise taking in South-East Asian destinations early next year.

Not terribly remarkable for a retired couple? What if one of them has dementia?

"Life doesn't need to stop because of a diagnosis," Christine, 68, told *The Senior*.

Paul added: "With careful planning and special considerations, anything can be achieved."

Christine, who was diagnosed with dementia 20 years ago, and Paul have welcomed the development of a step-by-step guide for travellers with dementia and their carers by QUT in partnership with Brisbane Airport Corporation and Alzheimer's Australia.

Previously, no guidelines existed for dealing with such passengers for airlines, airports or carers.

"Simple measures such as good, clear directional signage using universal symbols is not just dementia-friendly: it makes finding your way around an airport easier for everyone," Paul said.

Christine agreed. "I can get terribly tired and stressed by busyness and unfamiliar surroundings and sounds, to the point



BON VOYAGE – Christine and Paul Bryden say having dementia is no reason to stop exploring the world.

of developing migraines. That's not a great start to travel!"

Brisbane Airport Corporation managing director Julieanne Alroe said the airport had gained valuable insight into how it can make simple changes to public spaces, such as creating "quiet places" within the terminals

for people to set down and rest.

These can make a tremendous difference – not just for people with dementia but for travellers with other special needs.

"We hope that by promoting dementia awareness whilst embracing the many initiatives that come with making a pas-

Top tips for dementia-friendly travel

- Plan your trip thoroughly, in advance and in detail, including getting to the airport.
- Visit the airport beforehand to familiarise yourself with its layout.
- Use services you are familiar with, for example stick to one airline, and book flights at quieter times.
- Don't be in a rush – allow time
- Keep hand luggage to a minimum and consider earplugs an essential for your carry-on luggage.
- Choose seats together, with easy access to in-flight toilet.
- Make use of wheelchair assistance services at airports (even if ambulatory).
- Factor in flexible stopovers to allow gradual adjustment to different time zones.

senger's experience more enjoyable, other airports in Australia will be encouraged to jump on board and become dementia-friendly too," she said.

■ Download the airport users travel guide at dementiakt.com.au/resource/airport-user-guide

GIVEAWAY



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