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NEW DEMENTIA SHORT COURSE INFORMING WEST COAST HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

A new short course aimed at educating carers of patients suffering from dementia is expected to help relatives and health professionals learn how to manage and understand the nature of the condition.

The Adult Community Education (ACE) course at Tai Poutini Polytechnic in Greymouth has been introduced in conjunction with Alzheimer's Canterbury and the polytechnic's own tutor for 'Community Support Services'.

Sue Thomson, programme organiser of ACE classes at Tai Poutini Polytechnic, says dementia is a progressive decline in cognitive function due to damage or disease in the body beyond what might be expected from normal aging. The condition is incurable.

The dementia course, which runs only for a day, addresses the issues that arise during caring for those suffering from the condition and also relating to the disease, and shares new information and research to West Coast caregivers.

Tai Poutini ran an introductory session early last year for the dementia course and got a great response. "It is so important to be informed and learn more about this subject so that those suffering from dementia can be cared for by knowledgeable and skilled professionals and carers," Thomson says.

The course begins on May 26 and runs between 9am and 3pm. It is tailored to adult learners and is industry specific to meet employment requirements on the West Coast.

The dementia course aims to benefit most nurses, rest-home staff, community workers, clergy, community caregivers, volunteers and other health professionals as well as relatives who are also carers of dementia sufferers.

"ACE short courses allow adults to learn more about what they are interested in, as well as upskill existing professionals who can put to use the new knowledge within a matter of days," Thomson says.

Tai Poutini Polytechnic offers Adult and Community Education classes that provide opportunities for participation in educational, vocational, leisure and social learning situations.

ENDS

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About Tai Poutini Polytechnic

Tai Poutini Polytechnic (TPP) offers a range of exciting programmes including outdoor education, ski patrol, ecotourism, jade and hard stone carving, professional chef and civil construction. Tai Poutini Polytechnic has campuses in Auckland, Cambridge, Christchurch, Wanaka, Invercargill, Westport, Greymouth, Reefton and Hokitika. In 2009 TPP offers programmes at Greymouth, Reefton, Westport and Hokitika Campuses with no tuition fees* (* conditions apply).