

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Free support groups for family caregivers of persons with dementia to feature audiologist Renee Koffend in December

The online support groups for family caregivers of persons with dementia hosted by the Isa Psychological Services Center at the University of Guam will continue in December. Two sessions will feature Renee L.G. Koffend, who holds a doctorate in audiology and is a licensed and board-certified audiologist at Guam Hearing Doctors. She will present on hearing, hearing loss, and its impact on communication, memory, and balance in persons with dementia.

The sessions are free of charge to partners, family members, and other caregivers of persons with dementia throughout Micronesia. All support groups are client-centered and confidential.

December sessions

This month's groups will be held at the following times:

- 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 2
- 10 a.m. – noon on Saturday, Dec. 5



- 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 16 (featuring Renee Koffend, Au.D., CCC-A)
- 10 a.m. – noon on Saturday, Dec. 19 (featuring Renee Koffend, Au.D., CCC-A)

Koffend will be available after her presentations to answer questions from the group participants.

What to expect

The support groups provide a safe place to share the stresses and challenges, successes and rewards of caring for a loved one with dementia with others who may be going through similar experiences. They also provide a forum for caregivers to participate in presentations led by health care professionals and other community members with expertise in caring for persons with dementia.

The support groups are facilitated by Iain Twaddle, who holds a doctorate in clinical psychology, of Isa Psychological Services Center; Health Services of the Pacific social worker Rhoda Orallo, who holds a master's in social work; and Isa counselor Nikolas Gutierrez, who holds a bachelor's degree in psychology.

Sign up to participate

The support groups launched in August in collaboration with the UOG School of Health's Guam/Micronesia Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program. They will be held year-round on the first and third Wednesdays and Saturdays of each month at 6 p.m. on Wednesdays and 10 a.m. on Saturdays. The support groups will be conducted remotely on Zoom during the pandemic.

To sign up for a family caregiver online support group, call or email Dr. Iain Twaddle or Nikolas Gutierrez at (671) 735-2883 or isa@triton.uog.edu or Rhoda Orallo (671) 735-3277 or nfcspmgr@teleguam.net.

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