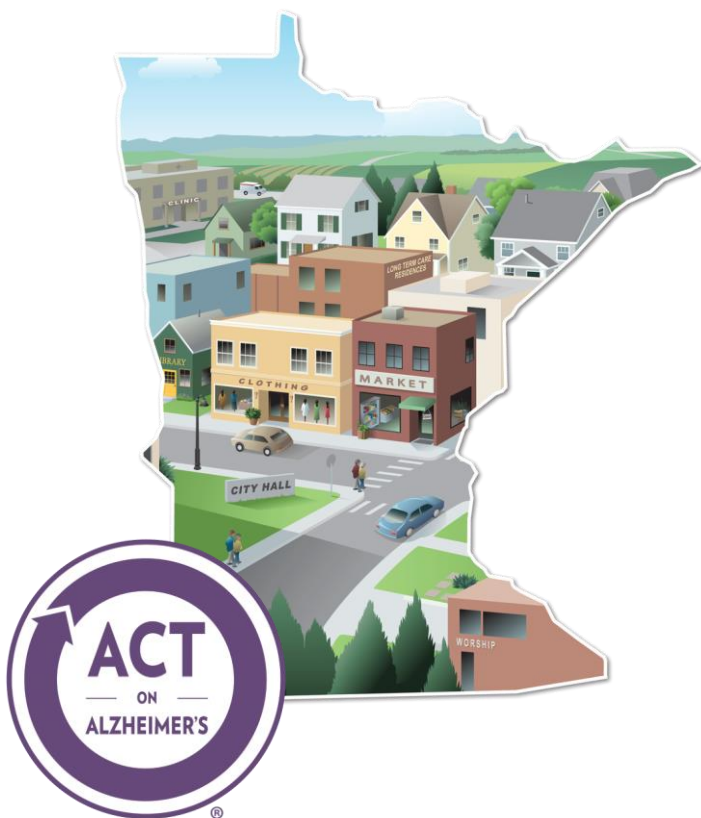




Dementia Friendly @ Work Training

Participant's Guide

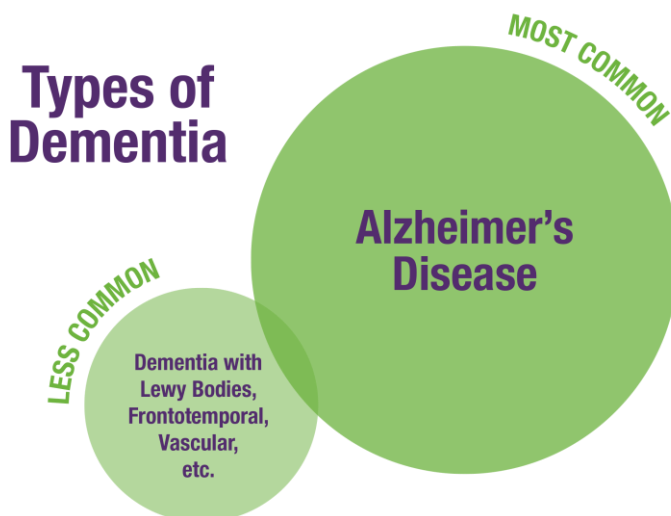


In our communities, nearly 60 percent of people with Alzheimer's disease, a form of dementia, live in their own homes and need support from families and community members. THANK YOU for taking action to learn more about creating dementia friendly environments for everyone touched by Alzheimer's.

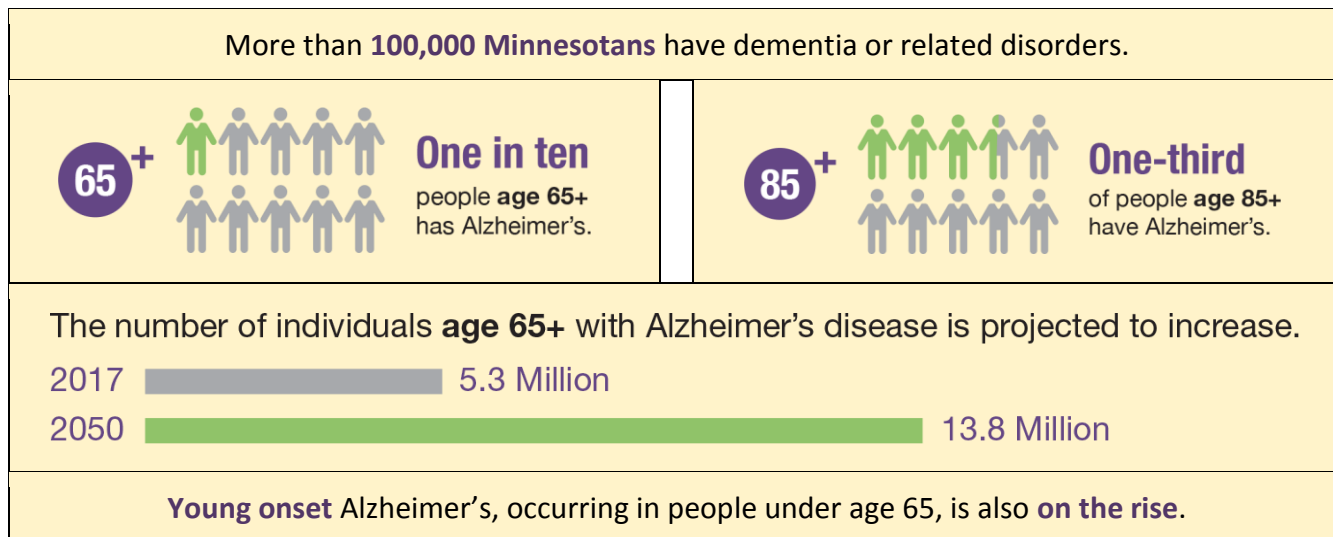
This training will help you understand dementia and the warning signs of Alzheimer's disease. It will give you communication tips and tips on creating an informed, safe, and respectful environment for a person living with dementia so that dementia friendly is "at work" everywhere.

Dementia: What You Should Know

Dementia is not a specific disease. It's an overall term that describes a wide range of symptoms associated with a decline in memory or other thinking skills severe enough to reduce a person's ability to perform everyday activities. Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia and accounts for 60 to 80 percent of cases. Other types of dementia include Dementia with Lewy Bodies, Frontotemporal, and Vascular.



Know the Facts about Alzheimer's



Know the 10 Early Signs and Symptoms

10 Early Signs and Symptoms	What You May Notice
Memory loss that disrupts daily life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A customer walks out of the store without paying for items. • A customer calls for the third day in a row to refill a prescription that you filled last week. • A member of your faith community looks to his spouse to answer questions when he would have taken the lead in the past.
Challenges in planning or solving problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A neighbor tells you she can't make her favorite cookies because the recipe doesn't work anymore. • An employee turns in a financial document with errors and does not seem to understand the errors.
Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, at work or leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cashier isn't able to count the money in her drawer at the beginning of work and is frustrated that "the way we do this changed." • As a police officer you find a long-time community resident driving in circles. He explains that he can't find the church and is sure they changed the street names in town.
Confusion with time or place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A customer comes into the grocery store and is very confused about where she is, how she got there and what she is supposed to do while she is there. • A patient begins to show up at your dental office on the wrong day and time.
Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A customer comes into your car repair shop multiple times because of small dents and dings. This time he says that the city just moved the light pole behind his garage and he is unable to see correctly. • A patient comes in to the medical office frequently for falls—down steps, on pavement, at home.

<p>New problems with words in speaking or writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A bank customer who has always been very independent asks you to read documents for him. • A drug store customer points to things she needs and asks for “that stuff over there”. She can’t find the right words to clarify what she wants and becomes frustrated.
<p>Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A customer sets down their purse or wallet, cannot find it and blames you for stealing it. As a gentleman leaves the county office, he leaves all his paper work behind. • You find all of a patient’s take-home instructions in the waiting room of the medical clinic.
<p>Decreased or poor judgment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A regular customer withdraws a large amount of cash several times over a few weeks, which is out of character for him. • A friend tells you that her mother gives money away to every charity that calls her.
<p>Withdrawal from work or social activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A regular at Bingo starts to have trouble following along and doesn’t come anymore. • As a waitress at the local café you notice that one of the Thursday coffee regulars isn’t coming anymore.
<p>Changes in mood and personality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone who has been easygoing seems angry every time he comes into the store. • A woman who has been independent for many years calls the police because she believes someone is climbing in her windows. She cries and seems very fearful.

What do you see at your workplace?

Communication

Consider these tips when communicating and interacting with someone showing signs of dementia.

- ✓ **Approach the person from the front.** The person with dementia may have a loss of peripheral vision. Often times they have tunnel or binocular vision. Approaching from the front may reduce fear or prevent them from being startled.
- ✓ **Speak clearly and be patient.** Speak clearly, calmly, and allow the person time to understand information. It may take a little longer for information to process for someone with dementia. They may hear the information but have trouble interpreting what they hear. Try using different words if the person is not responding. Use simple short sentences and avoid direct questions. Keep choices to a minimum and don't raise your voice. When possible, use a quiet, non-distracting space/place to talk.
- ✓ **Listen closely.** Listen carefully to what the person has to say. Give plenty of encouragement as you look for clues about what they may be trying to communicate. The person may seem confused and say something that doesn't make sense to you. If the person finds it difficult to come up with a word, suggest one. But, be careful not to interrupt or finish their sentence. Don't rush. Try to go at their pace and work through the situation as best you can.
- ✓ **Smile warmly and make eye contact.** Someone with dementia may find it difficult to understand what is being said, but may quickly interpret the look on your face, your tone of voice, and your body language. Use a friendly tone and give body cues that respect their personal space.
- ✓ **Respond to a look of distress.** At times, people with dementia may have forgotten where they live. If someone looks lost and distressed, offer to help by asking if their address is on something in their pocket or bag. When necessary, local police can be of help.
- ✓ **Watch for signs of change and offer help accordingly. Every day can be different.** For some people with dementia, each day can bring a change in what they can do. How you help someone may differ each time you interact with them.

Practice/Discussion

What is a situation regarding a community member or customer that may occur in your organization?

Discuss key steps on how you and/or your team would handle the situation in your organization. List three key points below.

1.

2.

3.

Creating a Dementia Friendly Physical Space

Small changes in a physical space can make a big difference in making an environment feel safe to someone with dementia. A welcoming environment (both indoors and outdoors) helps a person with dementia continue to access everyday activities like shopping, banking or participating in their faith community. There are many best practices for improving access. Most are relatively low cost and can benefit everyone, including people with dementia.

- ✓ **Entrances** should be clearly visible and understood as an entrance. Make sure that glass doors are clearly marked.
- ✓ **Signage** for finding your way around should be clear, should use bold type, and should have contrast between the words and the background. Signs should be mounted to the doors or spaces they refer to – not mounted on nearby surfaces. Signs should be at eye level and well-lit. Avoid using highly stylized or abstract images or icons on signage. Think about placing signs at key decision points for someone who is trying to navigate your premises for the first time. Signs for getting to and from public restrooms are particularly important.
- ✓ **Lighting** at entrances should be high powered and include natural light when possible. Avoid pools of bright light and deep shadows as they appear to be “holes” to people with vision issues.
- ✓ **Flooring** should be plain, not shiny, and not slippery. Bold patterns on carpets, curtains or wallpaper can cause perceptual problems; plain walls and flooring are recommended. Keep floor finishes flush; stepped surfaces can cause confusion. Pathways should be wide.
- ✓ **A family/unisex restroom or changing facility** will allow someone to be assisted without causing embarrassment to them or another user.
- ✓ **Quiet** areas for someone who may be feeling anxious or confused can help that person recover enough to independently complete what they were doing.
- ✓ **Seating** areas in large spaces, especially areas where people are waiting, can help someone relax.
- ✓ **Layout** of an area should be free of clutter and arranged to make it easy to move around.

Take Action to Become Dementia Friendly @ Work

Think about your physical environment and how it may affect someone with dementia. What barriers may there be for someone with dementia? Write down ideas your organization could consider to make it more dementia friendly.

What is one idea you learned in today's training that you will implement within the next month to be dementia friendly?

Resources in Your Community

Alzheimer's Association MN/ND 24/7 Helpline serves people with memory loss, caregivers, health care professionals, general public, diverse populations, and concerned friends and family, and provides referrals to local community programs and services, dementia-related education, crisis assistance and emotional support. 1-800-272-3900 or www.alz.org/mnnd

Senior LinkAge Line® provides information and assistance and connects people with resources in their community. 1-800-333-2433 or www.MinnesotaHelp.info®