



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Amanda Horner
952-220-2553
amanda@hornerstrategies.com

Ten Minnesota Communities Receive Grants to Support “Dementia Friendly” Efforts

MINNEAPOLIS (April 25, 2016)— Ten communities and their lead organizations have been awarded a grant from ACT on Alzheimer’s to closely consider how best to prepare their communities for the impacts of Alzheimer’s and other dementias and to work toward community-wide support of people touched by the disease.

The communities are in six rural areas: Arlington (City of Arlington), Ely (Northwoods Partners), Granite Falls (Living at Home Block Nurse Program – Granite Falls), Litchfield (Meeker Memorial Hospital), Pine City (City of Pine City), and Sartell (Opportunity Matters), and four urban areas: Anoka (Impact Services), Chanhassen (City of Chanhassen), Duluth (The Victory Fund), and West African Community in Brooklyn Center (Holy Trinity Episcopal Church). The new communities join 33 existing communities statewide.

The Alzheimer’s Association estimates there are 91,000 Minnesotans age 65 and older living with Alzheimer’s and many thousands more with other dementias. The grantees will join community engagement efforts across Minnesota to both prepare local communities for the growing impacts of Alzheimer’s and create supportive environments for everyone touched by the disease.

ACT on Alzheimer’s has developed best practice tools and resources to help communities build awareness of dementia and identify strategies relevant to their specific needs, such as training businesses and health care settings on dementia friendly practices, educating law enforcement, and reaching out to diverse communities.

ACT on Alzheimer's is a statewide, volunteer-driven collaboration seeking large-scale social change and community capacity-building to transform Minnesota's response to Alzheimer's disease. Working with communities striving to become dementia friendly is one of ACT's key strategies.

"As the population of Minnesota ages, it's important to build awareness and supportive environments for people living with dementia," said Emily Farah-Miller, executive co-lead for ACT on Alzheimer's. "Every part of the community plays a role in creating a culture that develops respect and inclusion for people with dementia, makes services and resources available, and promotes meaningful engagement in community life. A dementia-friendly community supports care partners and can make it possible for people with dementia to extend the time outside of residential care settings. That helps everyone – families and taxpayers who pay for institutional care, employers who have workers trying to balance work and caregiving demands, and most importantly, people living with Alzheimer's."

The grant awards are funded through Blue Plus (an HMO affiliate of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota), Medica Foundation, Stratis Health's Building Healthier Communities Award, and Greater Twin Cities United Way and administered through the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging. Learn more about the work of ACT on Alzheimer's at www.actonalz.org

###