COVID-19 & DEMENTIA CHALLENGES AROUND THE COMMUNITY

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WHAT IS “DEMENTIA”? 

Dementia is a general term for the impaired ability to remember, think, or make informed decisions that interferes with doing everyday activities.

- Alzheimer’s disease is the most common cause of dementia
- Vascular dementia is the next most common cause
1 in 5 American Indian/Alaska Native adults age 45 and older report memory problems that have been getting worse over the past year.

CDC infographic
DEMENTIA PROGRESSION

Healthy Cognitive Functioning → Mild Cognitive Impairment → Early Stage Dementia → Moderate Dementia → Severe Dementia

Requires Caregiver Assistance
People with dementia are likely to have more problems because of the pandemic situation.

Pay Attention to

1. Isolation
2. Caregivers
3. Chronic conditions

Healthy Brain Initiative’s Road Map for Indian Country
ISOLATION: REDUCE

Why is isolation a problem for people living with dementia?
- Faster decline
- Risk for self-neglect
- Delays or lapses in getting care
- Depression

What can you do to reduce isolation?
- Check in… and not just virtually
- Adapt communications for dementia
- Keep connected to community

>> Follow all safety guidelines.
How has COVID-19 made it harder for caregivers?

- Less outside help
- More responsibility
- Not caring for their own health
- Exhaustion, depression, resiliency low

What can you do to strengthen caregiving?

- Find ways to let caregivers have a break
- Ask them how they are doing
- Offer help with other responsibilities
Why is it harder to manage chronic conditions during COVID-19?

- More confusion or being “uncooperative”
- Figuring out if there is a health problem
- Getting routine care

How can you support care for chronic conditions?

- Partner with clinics to help support following care plans
- Community health representatives
- Educate family and neighbors about trouble signs
COVID-19 & DEMENTIA

Aim to
1. Reduce isolation
2. Strengthen caregivers
3. Support care for chronic conditions

Healthy Brain Initiative’s Road Map for Indian Country
COVID-19 & DEMENTIA

CONTACT TRACING: SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR DEMENTIA

Webinars

Alzheimer’s Association
alz.org/PublicHealth-covid19
alz.org/publichealth/IndianCountry

Customizable Poster

Tip Sheets
RESOURCES ON DEMENTIA

Caregivers
Alzheimer’s Association’s
- Free helpline: 800.272.3900
- alz.org/covid19help
- Info about dementia behaviors
Also
- VA Caregivers video series

Health & Care Professionals
- HRSA Training Curriculum (in modules with free CMEs/CEUs): Alzheimer’s Disease & Related Dementias
- alz.org/training

CDC

cdc.gov/aging
cdc.gov/aging/covid19
CONTACT US

Molly French
mfrench@alz.org
alz.org/publichealth/IndianCountry
alz.org/PUBLICHEALTH-covid19

24/7 Helpline
800.272.3900
alz.org/covid19help