



alzheimer's  association®

# Alzheimer's Public Health News

October 2015

## Upcoming Webinar - The Value of Knowing: the Importance of Early Detection

**REGISTER**

*"If Alzheimer's cannot be prevented, cured, or even slowed, why promote early detection and diagnosis?"* This common question will be answered from a public health perspective during a webinar on **November 12 from 2:00-3:00 pm EST**. Learn why public health needs to take action on this issue and what can be done. [Registration](#) is open.

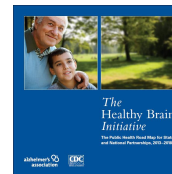
Cyndy Cordell, Director of Health Care Professional Services for the Alzheimer's Association, will:

**ROAD MAP ACTION ITEM E-01**  
Identify and promote culturally appropriate strategies designed to increase public awareness about dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, to reduce conflicting messages, decrease stigma, and promote early diagnosis.

- Explain early detection;
- Explore why as many as half of people with Alzheimer's and other dementias have not been diagnosed; and
- Discuss the benefits of early diagnosis for patients, care partners, and health care systems.

The webinar will also feature actions public health

## The Road Map



The CDC Healthy Aging Program and the Alzheimer's Association partnered to develop an updated Road Map

for the public health community to address cognitive health, Alzheimer's disease, and the needs of caregivers through 35 actions.

## Public Health Agenda

alzheimer's association  
combating alzheimer's disease  
public health agenda



The Alzheimer's Association has identified three key elements of an Alzheimer's public health agenda: surveillance, early detection, and promotion of brain health.

## Risk Reduction Resource

**Brain Health As You Age: You Can Make a Difference!** 

From the Administration for Community Living, the Brain Health As You Age resource provides the public health and aging communities with evidence-based, ready-made materials to encourage people to keep their brains healthy.

## The 10 Warning Signs

**KNOW** the **10 SIGNS**

EARLY DETECTION MATTERS

departments have taken to promote early detection and diagnosis. For example, detection of possible cognitive impairment is a mandatory element of the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (AWV), and some public health departments have educated providers about the AWV and about validated cognitive assessment tools. Other steps public health can take include educating the public about the early warning signs of Alzheimer's.

Please be sure to [register online](#), mark your calendars, and forward to any interested colleagues.

## Surgeon General's "Call to Action" on Physical Activity Includes Importance to Cognitive Health



A new public health campaign from U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy – *Step It Up! The Surgeon*

*General's Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities* – highlights the many benefits of physical activity, including the positive effect on cognitive functioning.

The campaign, focused on promoting physical activity nationwide through increased walking and improved community walkability, incorporates the role that regular exercise has on brain health and healthy aging. Noting that regular physical activity among older adults leads to better cognitive function and may delay the onset of cognitive decline, *Step It Up!* encourages all Americans to avoid inactivity and engage in regular aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities.

Public health officials can promote and participate in the Surgeon General's

**ROAD MAP ACTION ITEM E-05**  
**Promote consistency of cognitive health messages among national, state, and local levels using models such as the National Diabetes Education Program.**

new campaign by advancing programs and policies that make communities safe and easy to walk as well

The Know the 10 Signs campaign is a national education effort to increase awareness of the warning signs of Alzheimer's disease and the benefits of early detection and diagnosis.

### Contact

For more information on the Healthy Brain Initiative, the public health agenda, or Alzheimer's disease in general, contact [Molly French](#) or check out [alz.org/publichealth](http://alz.org/publichealth).

as by educating the public on the benefits of regular exercise, including improved cognitive health. To aid implementation, *Step It Up!* offers a [variety of materials](#), including a partners' guide to improve community walkability, promotional web buttons, and a social media hashtag (#StepItUp).

## Two Studies Reveal Burden of Dementia on Caregivers



Unpaid caregivers – predominantly family members – for people with dementia provide more intensive care as well as more hours of care per month than caregivers for

people with no dementia, according to two studies published in [Health Affairs](#).

In [one study](#), researchers found among older adults with dementia, 53.1 percent of informal caregivers provided help with intensive self-care activities (such as bathing, dressing, and eating) while only 10.7 percent of older adults without dementia needed self-care assistance. Further, nearly 40 percent of people with dementia required help with three or more self-care activities compared with just 14.4 percent with no dementia.

[Another study](#) found adults with dementia received an average of 171 hours per month of care from unpaid caregivers, significantly more than cognitively normal adults (66 hours/month). Additionally, African-American and Hispanic care recipients were much more likely to need intensive informal care than their white counterparts.

Given the large role informal caregivers play in the day-to-day health and care of people with dementia, the public health community can – consistent with

**ROAD MAP ACTION ITEM W-05**  
Develop strategies to help ensure that health care professionals recognize the role of care partners in the care coordination of persons with dementia, including Alzheimer's disease.

the [Public Health Road Map](#) – help ensure health care professionals recognize the role of care partners in the care coordination of their loved ones (action item W-05).

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For subscription services or to view previous issues of Alzheimer's Public Health News, please visit <http://alz.org/publichealth/public-health-news.asp> or contact John Shean ([jshean@alz.org](mailto:jshean@alz.org)).

For additional information or questions, please contact [jshean@alz.org](mailto:jshean@alz.org).  
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The [Alzheimer's Association](#) is the world's leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's disease®.

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Alzheimer's Association National Office, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Fl. 17, Chicago, IL 60601  
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