A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO ALZHEIMER’S AND OTHER DEMENTIAS

DEMENTIA CAPABLE SYSTEMS AND DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Define dementia capable system and dementia friendly community
- Explain how public health can contribute to dementia capable systems through support services/programs, workforce training, and dementia friendly communities
- List at least two services that may benefit a caregiver
- Identify at least three professions that would benefit from workforce training
- Describe at least two components of a dementia friendly community
INTRODUCTION: DEMENTIA & ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE

- Dementia is a decline in mental ability that interferes with daily life
- Alzheimer’s disease is the most common form of dementia
  - Progressive loss of memory and brain function
  - Requires increasing aid and assistance
  - No cure and limited treatment options
- Huge financial and emotional burden
- Public health plays important role in addressing Alzheimer’s disease
States/communities play significant role

- Assessing burden
- Risk reduction
- Care services: health care, support services, government agencies
- Public and private resources: transportation, grocery stores, places of worship, financial institutions, law enforcement
Imagine you or someone you care about has Alzheimer’s or dementia.

What might be some of your concerns or fears about going out in your community?

How could those be addressed at a community level?
TWO FRAMEWORKS: DEMENTIA CAPABLE SYSTEM AND DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

- Designed to meet the needs of older adults within a community
- Aim to help older adults remain independent and in the community as long as possible
- Bring together community members and key stakeholders to focus on accommodations, provide support, and improve quality of life for older adults

Dementia Friendly America®
DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

- Health care, community services, resources
- Safe and accessible
  - Transportation
  - Mobility
- Respectful and supportive
- Public education and workforce training
- Technology
  - GPS, GIS
  - Registry
Accommodate needs of population with:
- Memory loss
- Physical, cognitive, and/or behavioral symptoms
- Co-morbidities

Knowledgeable workforce/residents:
- Identify people with dementia
- Work effectively with them
- Inform/refer to services
DEMENTIA CAPABLE: PUBLIC HEALTH

- Analyzing community support needs
- Building connections to support services and programs
- Providing workforce training
- Establishing dementia friendly communities
DEMENTIA CAPABLE: PUBLIC HEALTH (CONTINUED)\textsuperscript{9,10}

- Use data to inform the public health program and policy response to:
  - Cognitive health
  - Cognitive impairment
  - Caregiving
- Evaluate training and programs
- Estimate gap between workforce capacity and demand for services
SUPPORT SERVICES & PROGRAMS
DEMENTIA CAPABLE SYSTEMS AND DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES
What kinds of support services might people with Alzheimer’s and their caregivers need?
SUPPORT SERVICES: ALZHEIMER’S

- Support groups
- Wellness programs
- Care services, including in-home care
- Legal and financial services
- Residential care
- Transportation
- Adult day care
EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS

- **Reducing Disability in Alzheimer’s Disease (RDAD) – University of Washington**
  - Focus: teach family caregivers strategies

- **Minds in Motion (MIM)**
  - Focus: improve function in early stages with mild cognitive impairment

- **Sharing History through Active Reminiscence and Photo – imagery (SHARP) – Oregon Health & Science University**
  - Focus: neighborhood walking groups to trigger memories and increase social engagement

- **Skills2Care – Thomas Jefferson University**
  - Focus: occupational therapy-based strategies for caregivers
DISCUSSION QUESTION 3

What is the role of public health in connecting people to the services they need?
Evidence-based programs and interventions
Information and referrals
Identify gaps in available support services
Funding, space, expertise
SUPPORT SERVICES: PARTNERSHIPS

- Offices on Aging / Aging and Disability Resource Centers / Area Agencies on Aging
  - Education
  - Caregiver and safety assessments
  - Support programs
  - Resources
- Non-profit organizations
- Residential care facilities
WORKFORCE TRAINING
DEMENTIA CAPABLE SYSTEMS AND DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES
WORKFORCE TRAINING OVERVIEW

- Health care
- Direct care
- Public health
- First responders
- Other support services: transportation, customer service, faith-based organizations
DISCUSSION QUESTION 4

What training should health care and direct care professionals receive?
Basics of dementia
Benefits of early diagnosis
How to address physical, cognitive, emotional, behavioral symptoms
Assisting caregivers
Managing co-morbidities
Use of validated assessment tools (health care)
DISCUSSION QUESTION 5

What training should public health professionals receive?
WORKFORCE TRAINING: PUBLIC HEALTH

- Alzheimer’s as a public health priority
- Importance of early detection
- Cognitive health and risk reduction
- Types and availability of resources and supports
- Caregiver burden and needs
- Surveillance
- Health disparities
- Unique issues (stigma, abuse, advance planning)
DISCUSSION QUESTION 6

What training should first responders receive?
Situations involving stress or fear

Training needs:
- Identifying Alzheimer’s and dementia
- Effective interaction/communication
- Resources
- Registries, technologies
WORKFORCE TRAINING: OTHER PROFESSIONS

- Public transportation, customer service, faith/spiritual communities, etc.
  - Awareness
  - Recognizing need for help
  - Resources
  - Communication
  - Ways to assist and support
CAREGIVER NEEDS AND SUPPORT
DEMENTIA CAPABLE SYSTEMS AND DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES
SUPPORT SERVICES: CAREGIVERS

- Education/information/training
  - Alzheimer’s/dementia
  - Behavioral management
  - Available resources
  - Self-care
SUPPORT SERVICES: CAREGIVERS (CONTINUED)\textsuperscript{20,21}

- Counseling/support groups
- Case management
- Respite services
CONCLUSION: DEMENTIA CAPABLE AND DEMENTIA FRIENDLY

- States/communities play significant role
- Dementia capable systems and dementia friendly communities
  - Analyze community support needs
  - Support services and programs
  - Workforce training
  - Caregiver training and support
For more information, please visit:

Alzheimer’s Association website at http://www.alz.org

CDC’s Alzheimer’s Disease and Healthy Aging Program at https://www.cdc.gov/aging/


**COMPETENCIES**

- **Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education (AGHE):**
  - I.6.7 Promote and apply the use of appropriate forms of evidence-based interventions and technologies for older adults, their families, and caregivers
  - II.4.5 Provide the following groups information and education in order to build a collaborative aging network:
    - Key persons in the community (police officers, firefighters, mail carriers, locale service providers, and others)
    - Aging workforce professionals and personnel (paid and unpaid; full-and part-time) in the field of aging

- **Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) Foundational Competencies:**
  - 2. Locate, use, evaluate, and synthesize public health information (bachelors level)
  - 4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy, or practice (masters level)

- **Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice:**
  - 8A3. Describes the ways public health, health care, and other organizations can work together or individually to impact the health of a community
  - 8A4. Contributes to development of a vision for a healthy community (e.g., emphasis on prevention, health equity for all, excellence, and innovation)
REFERENCES

REFERENCES 2