

# Minnesota Dementia Strategic Plan

## Background

In January 2022, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) formed a group called the Minnesota Healthy Brain Partnership (MNHBP). Our vision is that as we age in Minnesota, we all have equitable opportunities to attain the best possible brain health and wellbeing, including those of us impacted by dementia. The MNHBP includes organizations that work on issues related to dementia and meets to advance this important work.

The Minnesota Healthy Brain Partnership's goals are to work with communities facing the most health challenges to co-create and put into action a plan that reduces dementia risk, detects dementia earlier, and improves the health and well-being of caregivers and people living with dementia.

From January 2022 – March 2023, the MNHBP worked on creating the Minnesota Dementia Strategic Plan (MDSP). The group started by agreeing on common goals that were also consistent with the [CDC Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map \(www.cdc.gov/aging-programs/php/nhbi/roadmap.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/aging-programs/php/nhbi/roadmap.html), the [2019 Minnesota Alzheimer's Disease Working Group Legislative Report \(www.lrl.mn.gov/docs/2019/mandated/190068.pdf\)](http://www.lrl.mn.gov/docs/2019/mandated/190068.pdf) and the Minnesota State Plan on Aging.

The MDSP was also shaped by feedback from community meetings, a survey of dementia partners, interviews, a workshop with the Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging's Diverse Elders Coalition, and other reports on aging, dementia, and caregiving.

The plan is organized into four main areas:

1. Educate and Activate
2. Develop Policies and Partnerships
3. Ensure Culturally Responsive Caregivers
4. Accountability, Monitoring and Evaluation

## Minnesota Dementia Strategies

### Educate and Activate

- **Raise Awareness:** Teach people about dementia, including what causes it, how early detection and diagnosis can help, and the importance of caregiver health and well-being.
- **Educate Providers:** Inform health care and social service providers about local, culturally responsive resources for dementia.
- **Support People with Dementia:** Help people living with dementia and their care partners understand the disease, plan for future changes, and find services that can help.
- **Reduce Stigma:** Work with communities to create messages that address misinformation and provide an accurate understanding about dementia.
- **Eliminate Discrimination:** Work with communities to address discrimination and build welcoming spaces, programs, and care for people living with dementia and their care partners.

### Develop Policies and Partnerships

- **Ensure Community-Led Planning:** Ensure the meaningful involvement of the communities most closely connected to and impacted by dementia, including underrepresented and underdiagnosed communities and people living with dementia and their care partners play a key role in driving statewide strategies.
- **Advance Shared Action:** Unite communities and organizations to co-create and lead actions using culturally responsive language and practices that lower the risk of dementia, detect it earlier, and support the wellbeing of people with dementia and their care partners.
- **Coordinate State Efforts:** Collaborate across state and local government including cooperation between the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS)/Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA), Age-Friendly Minnesota Council (AFMN), and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to put in place and track the following actions from the Alzheimer's Disease Working Group Legislative Report:
  - Review, strengthen, and expand the rights of vulnerable adults in long-term care settings.
  - Require training on cognitive impairment through health care licensing boards.
  - Make clinical training at nursing facilities eligible for Medical Education and Research Cost (MERC) funding.
  - Clearly define Minnesota's dementia care standards across residential settings.

### Ensure Culturally Responsive Care Teams

- **Coordinate Resources:** Promote and help people to use tools and resources that can prevent and detect dementia early and improve care.
- **Increase Screening and Detection:** Support clinics and community-based organizations that serve communities with health inequities to increase screening and early

detection.

- **Offer Training:** Create and share ongoing training and materials for people who care for those living with dementia.
- **Build Connections:** Improve relationships and referrals between community organizations and clinics to better support families and people living with dementia.

## Accountability, Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Collect, Use, and Share Information:** Gather and share what we learn about reducing dementia risk, increasing early detection, and supporting people living with dementia and their caregivers.
- **Track Memory and Thinking Challenges:** Administer the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance (BRFSS) Subjective Cognitive Decline module regularly and explore potential state added questions to support planning and collective action across statewide stakeholders.
- **Track and Understand Caregiving Data:** Administer the BRFSS Caregiving module regularly and explore potential state added questions to support caregiver related planning and collective action across statewide stakeholders.
- **Identify Community-Driven Data:** Partner with community organizations to find out what additional information is needed about caregiving and early detection of dementia.
- **Track Shared Indicators:** Create a shared system with communities and partners to monitor and guide efforts to reduce dementia risk factors, bolster screening and detection, improve dementia care and outcomes for Minnesotans impacted by dementia.
- **Ensure Community Accountability:** Ensure that the Minnesota Dementia Strategic Plan (MDSP) actions and indicators are transparent, tracked, and shared back to the communities and partners involved to guide decision-making.

## Partnership recognition

The MNHBP includes people from the following organizations: the Alzheimer’s Association Minnesota/North Dakota Chapter, Act on Alzheimer’s/Trellis, Central Minnesota Dementia Community Action Network, The Barclay Group, SEWA-Asian Indian Family Wellness, Memory Keepers Medical Discovery Team, Minnesota Department of Human Services, Minnesota Board on Aging, Volunteers of America Minnesota/Wisconsin, Center for Healthy Aging and Innovation, BOLD Public health Center of Excellence on Dementia Caregiving, the Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging, and the Minnesota Department of Health.

The Healthy Brain Workgroups include people with the following areas: dementia caregivers, community advocates, health care professionals, academics, Area Agency on Aging, local public health, and community organizations.

Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging’s Diverse Elders Coalition “is an initiative sponsored by the Leadership Council comprised of individuals and organized that work to end ageism, racism and the disparities facing older Minnesotans. Members are drawn from organization across Minnesota that serve Black, Indigenous, People of Color, LGBTQ+, undocumented, immigrant, refugee, and other essential voices.” For more information visit <https://www.mnlcoa.org/>

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