

Expanding Dementia Action in Communities Across the Country

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CDC Awards Funding for Public Health Action on Dementia

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has awarded new five-year cooperative agreements for national activities in support of public health action on dementia. In addition to the Alzheimer's Association [continuing to lead](#) the Healthy Brain Initiative (HBI) and to serve as the Public Health Center of Excellence on Dementia Risk Reduction, the following seven organizations are receiving CDC funding to help bring effective public health dementia interventions to more communities:

- University of Minnesota
- New York University
- University of California, San Francisco
- Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Epidemiology Center
- National Association of Community Health Centers
- NORC at the University of Chicago
- University of Pennsylvania

With more than 7 million Americans living with Alzheimer's, the need for coordinated public health action continues to grow. These awards support ongoing access to tools, technical assistance and evidence-based strategies for state, local, Tribal and territorial health departments.

Explore Public Health Action in Your State

Be Counted! Input Your Dementia Work Today

The annual reporting period for the [HBI State and Local Road Map for Public Health, 2023–2027](#) is now open. State health departments and local BOLD program grant recipients are encouraged to work with their local Alzheimer's Association chapter to complete this year's report using the [HBI Road Map Evaluation Tool](#). A pre-populated Excel version of the tool is available by request at publichealth@alz.org. The reporting period is open through Dec. 15.

The information submitted will be shared back with states as a state-specific report for your own use. Data are also aggregated for an annual report. The [2025 Aggregated Report](#) highlights implementation across 35 state and local health departments, which together reached more than 121,000 primary care providers with brain health information and shared dementia-specific tools and resources with more than 283,000 caregivers. [Watch August's webinar](#) to explore findings from the 2025 report and hear from two health departments about their experience completing the evaluation.

Access the Evaluation Tool

Implementing the HBI Road Map in Cameron County, Texas

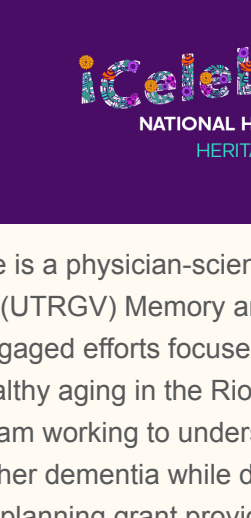
Community organizations and public health partners in Cameron County, Texas, are expanding community-based dementia programs, with support from the Building Our Largest Dementia (BOLD) Infrastructure for Alzheimer's program award. This video highlights how Memory Cafés in Cameron County bring together people living with dementia, caregivers and families for conversation and learning. These gatherings create welcoming spaces where families can share experiences, learn practical caregiving strategies and build supportive community connections.



Y esta es su oportunidad de venir y participar junto con su ser querido.

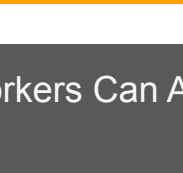
SPOTLIGHT
ON PRACTICE

Putting Research into Practice



I believe that research cannot happen in isolation and that effective prevention must be informed by the communities it is designed to serve.

Gladys Maestre, MD, PhD
Director of Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center for Minority Aging Research and Professor, Neuroscience, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley



NATIONAL HISPANIC & LATINO HERITAGE MONTH

Dr. Gladys Maestre is a physician-scientist and director of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) Memory and Aging Center, where she leads research and community-engaged efforts focused on Alzheimer's disease, dementia prevention and healthy aging in the Rio Grande Valley. Since 2016, she has led a multidisciplinary team working to understand the region's high burden of Alzheimer's and other dementia while developing strategies to mitigate their impact. Through a planning grant provided by the Alzheimer's Association and her broader research and outreach, Gladys and her team are helping bring brain health programming, training and prevention strategies into communities most affected by dementia.

Community Health Workers Can Advance Public Health Efforts on Dementia

Community health workers (CHWs) are trusted messengers in the communities they serve. As such, they are well positioned to help address dementia across the full continuum – from reducing risk before symptoms appear to recognizing early warning signs and supporting families navigating a diagnosis. A recent [Frontiers in Public Health](#) article explores the growing role of CHWs in dementia-related public health efforts.

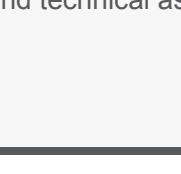
In partnership with the National Association of Community Health Workers (NACHW), the Alzheimer's Association and the three BOLD Public Health Centers of Excellence hosted a [webinar](#) to equip CHWs with practical tools and strategies for this work. The session connected brain health and dementia care to CHW core competencies and shared ready-to-use materials for community outreach.

View Recording

Applications Open for HBI Road Map Strategists and Champions

Two Funding Opportunities

GROWING LOCAL AND TRIBAL PUBLIC HEALTH CAPACITY ON BRAIN HEALTH



The Healthy Brain Initiative (HBI) is growing local and Tribal public health capacity on brain health, dementia and caregiving with two funding opportunities. Applications are now open to join the next cohort of HBI Road Map Strategists and Road Map Champions.

Under the HBI Road Map Strategist Program, led by the Alzheimer's Association and the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), up to eight local health departments will receive \$50,000 to advance population health approaches related to dementia using the [HBI State and Local Road Map for Public Health, 2023–2027](#).

Similarly, the HBI Road Map Champion Program, led by the Alzheimer's Association and the American Indian Public Health Resource Center at North Dakota State University, provides up to eight Tribally-led health programs and urban Indian health organizations with \$50,000 to advance community-focused population health approaches related to dementia using the [HBI Road Map for American Indian and Alaska Native Peoples](#).

Over the course of the year, both programs also include education, peer support and technical assistance.

Learn More and Apply

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

[Annual Wellness Visits Could Be Linked to Earlier Detection of Mild Cognitive Impairment](#)

Older adults who had a Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) were more likely to be diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) within two years after the AWV compared with similar individuals who did not have an AWV, according to a study published in *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics*. Researchers used Health and Retirement Study data from 2011 to 2019 and accounted for differences in education, poverty, residence and other factors. Both groups showed similar rates of cognitive decline as well as time to a dementia diagnosis. Nevertheless, an MCI diagnosis is still important – through the AWV or some other clinical appointment – because of the increasing clinical benefits of such a diagnosis, including eligibility for disease-modifying therapies and potential ability to address modifiable risk factors.

[Quitting Smoking Brings Dementia Risk Down Nearly to Level of People Who Never Smoked](#)

Compared with adults who kept smoking, those who quit had a 16% lower risk of dementia and approached never-smoker levels about seven years after cessation, according to research recently published in *Neurology*. This lower risk was largely limited to those who gained little or no weight in the two years after quitting. The study, using data from the Health and Retirement Study, supports previous findings that those who quit smoking can lower their dementia risk almost to the levels of never smokers.

HEALTHY HABIT HIGHLIGHT

Quitting smoking can lower the risk of cognitive decline back to levels similar to those who have not smoked. It's never too late to stop. Adding a brain health message to local tobacco cessation outreach gives community members one more reason to consider quitting.

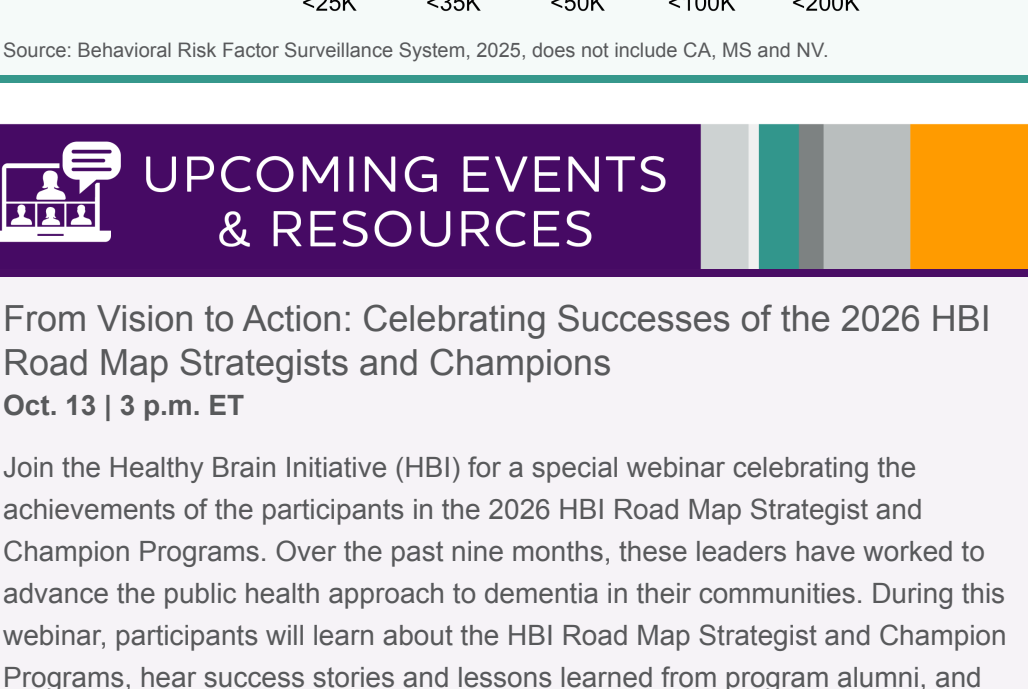


The 10 Healthy Habits for Your Brain infographics are now available in 11 languages: [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#), [English](#), [Haitian Creole](#), [Hindi](#), [Hmong](#), [Korean](#), [Samoan](#), [Spanish](#), [Tagalog](#) and [Vietnamese](#).

DATA INSIGHTS

Among adults aged 45 and older, smoking – a risk factor for cognitive decline and possibly dementia – is inversely related to income, according to the recently released data from the 2025 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey. This is consistent with evidence that some social determinants of health (SDOH), such as [economic factors](#), may affect risk for cognitive decline. The Public Health Center of Excellence on Dementia Risk Reduction has published a [toolkit](#) about how public health agencies can address dementia-related SDOH.

Percent of Adults Age 45+ Reporting Current Smoking by Annual Income (in USD)



Annual Income (in USD)	Percent of Adults Age 45+ Reporting Current Smoking
All	11.4%
<15K	27.0%
15 to <25K	21.1%
25K to <35K	16.1%
35K to <50K	13.7%
50K to <100K	10.1%
100K to <200K	6.8%
200K +	3.6%

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2025, does not include CA, MS and NV.

UPCOMING EVENTS & RESOURCES

From Vision to Action: Celebrating Successes of the 2026 HBI Road Map Strategists and Champions

Oct. 13 | 3 p.m. ET

Join the Healthy Brain Initiative (HBI) for a special webinar celebrating the achievements of the participants in the 2026 HBI Road Map Strategist and Champion Programs. Over the past nine months, these leaders have worked to advance the public health approach to dementia in their communities. During this webinar, participants will learn about the HBI Road Map Strategist and Champion Programs, hear success stories and lessons learned from program alumni, and explore future opportunities to become part of the Strategist and Champion Programs.

Register

Apply Now: ASTHO Opportunities in Brain Health, Caregiving and Falls Prevention

Applications are due Oct. 30 at 11:59 p.m. ET

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) is accepting applications for two cohort-based learning communities.

- The [Brain Health and Caregiving Virtual Learning Community](#) will support state teams in learning about and implementing promising policies, models and strategies for advancing brain health and caregiving, as outlined in ASTHO's [From Policy to Practice: Supporting Brain Health and Caregiving at the State Level and Applying Healthy Aging Practices and Policies to Advance Brain Health and Caregiving](#). No direct funding is offered through this learning experience.
- The [Falls Prevention Virtual Community of Practice](#) will provide a platform for teams to exchange insights, develop action plans, refine implementation approaches and strengthen planning for expanding falls prevention through community-clinical linkages. Participants will also contribute to ASTHO's Virtual Falls Prevention Summit in summer 2027, highlighting promising practices and evidence-based interventions to a national audience. Funding is available to support older adult fall activities through this learning experience.

Learn More

Register for AAIC® Advancements: Reducing Disparities in Brain Health

Oct. 30-31 | Charlotte, NC and Online

This conference will convene leaders from academia, community organizations, government and philanthropy to advance brain health for all. Brain health disparities are shaped by complex, intersecting factors, and no single discipline or sector can address them alone. Over two days, this meeting will examine brain health disparities from biological, clinical, behavioral, sociocultural, environmental, community and life-course perspectives, with sessions designed around shared priorities and actionable next steps. Registration remains open for both in-person and online attendance.

Register Today

Join the Alzheimer's Association Public Health Team at APHA

Nov. 1-4 | San Antonio, TX | Booth #1464

The Alzheimer's Association public health team will be at [APHA 2026](#). Stop by our booth to explore strategies on brain health, early detection and diagnosis, and caregiver support. You can also find us at these presentations and posters:

Charting Public Health Progress Across the Lifespan for Brain Health, Dementia, and Caregiving

Nov. 1 | 3-4 p.m. CT | Exhibit Hall 3-4

This poster shares insights from the Healthy Brain Initiative (HBI) Road Map Implementation Evaluation Project, showcasing how health departments across the country are undertaking efforts to address brain health, dementia, and caregiving.

Black Brain Health Equity Discussion and Breakfast

Nov. 2 | 8:30-10 a.m. CT | Grand Hyatt San Antonio River Walk, Lone Star Salon E

This panel discussion, hosted by the Epilepsy Foundation of America in collaboration with the APHA Black Caucus of Health Workers, will highlight the impact of Alzheimer's in Black communities and the work to improve equitable access to brain health education, early detection, and care through community partnerships and culturally responsive outreach.

APHA Public Health Film Festival: Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map in Action

Nov. 2 | 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. CT | Hemisfair Ballroom 3

Healthy Brain Initiative (HBI) Road Map in Action is a seven-part video series documenting how public health departments and their communities are putting the HBI Road Map into practice. View featured films from this series in the Growing Older, Living Better: The Future of Healthy Aging session.

Bridging Research and Practice: A Public Health Roundtable Advancing Brain Health Action

Nov. 2 | 12:30-1:30 p.m. CT | Exhibit Hall 3-4

This poster will review a roundtable discussion about translating dementia prevention trials into public health practice.

Advancing Brain Health Through Community Health Worker Integration Across National, State and Local Public Health Systems

Nov. 3 | 2:30-4 p.m. CT | Room 212B

Community health workers (CHWs) are key players in addressing brain health and dementia across the care continuum. This symposium brings together national partners and state programs to highlight coordinated strategies embedding brain health into CHW training, practice, and chronic disease prevention.

Community-led Collaboration for Dementia Risk Reduction

Nov. 4 | 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. CT | Room 006D

This presentation – part of a larger session on Indigenous Lifecourse Wellness, Safety, and Community Care – will highlight community-driven strategies and partnerships that support dementia risk reduction in American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

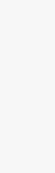
Recording Available: Brain Health on Iowa Public Radio

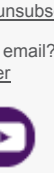
On the Sept. 22 episode of Iowa Public Radio's *River to River*, Dr. Robert Kruse, state medical director of the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services, Dr. Yogesh Shah of Broadlawns Memory Clinic, and Shelby Roberts of the Alzheimer's Association discussed brain health, early identification and care for those living with dementia.

Listen

HBI ROAD MAP

HBI ROAD MAP FOR AI/AN PEOPLES

STATE SPECIFIC RESOURCES & DATA

PUBLIC HEALTH & DEMENTIA CURRICULUM

BRAIN HEALTH RESOURCES

10 EARLY SIGNS OF ALZHEIMER'S

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The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to lead the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia – by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementias.

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