



# State and Local Road Map for Public Health, 2023–2027

Since the initial creation of the Healthy Brain Initiative (HBI) in 2005, HBI partners have worked together to implement public health strategies that promote brain health, address dementia and support people with dementia and their caregivers. The Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map Series guides this effort by creating a framework for public health action. It reflects the longstanding collaboration between the Alzheimer’s Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to advance understanding and inclusion of cognitive decline as a central part of public health practice. This newest Road Map in the series — *Healthy Brain Initiative: State and Local Road Map for Public Health, 2023–2027* — is a guidebook for state and local public health practitioners to address brain health in their communities.

Much has been learned about how public health systems can impact brain health. Public health systems are defined by CDC as “all public, private, and voluntary entities that contribute to the delivery of essential public health services within a jurisdiction.” The efforts of these systems have led to an increasing number of states and jurisdictions creating, updating and implementing plans that address brain health, cognitive impairment, dementia and caregiving. Their work has been accelerated by passage of the Building Our Largest Dementia Infrastructure for Alzheimer’s Act (BOLD Act) (Public Law 155-406) in 2018. The BOLD Act supports public health efforts for strengthening systems, environments and policies to promote risk reduction, improve early detection and diagnosis, prevent and manage comorbidities, avoid preventable hospitalizations and support dementia caregiving.

This Road Map builds on the progress to date and advances equity by fully integrating brain health and caregiving into state and local public health practice and addressing social determinants of health that impact brain health across the life course.

The overarching vision of the HBI is that everyone deserves a life with the healthiest brain possible.

To help achieve this vision, the HBI Road Map’s specific outcomes are to:

- » *Increase community partnerships*
- » *Increase integration with other chronic disease efforts*
- » *Increase policy action and implementation*
- » *Increase data availability, quality and utilization*
- » *Increase data-informed decision making and action*
- » *Reduce stigma and bias about cognitive decline*
- » *Increase knowledge and skills of current and future workforce*
- » *Increase public knowledge about brain health, risk factors for dementia and benefits of early detection and diagnosis*
- » *Increase public knowledge and use of services for people living with dementia and their caregivers*

The chapters of the Road Map address these outcomes in four domains with specific actions for each outcome. Data and examples are included throughout to help state and local health departments achieve these outcomes both individually and collectively.

**Download the HBI Road Map Now ►**



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# HBI ROAD MAP ACTION AGENDA

## STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS AND POLICIES

### *Increase community partnerships*

**P-1** Convene and leverage diverse and inclusive **multi-sector coalitions** to strengthen supportive, equitable policies within communities, workplaces and health care settings across the life course of brain health.

**P-2** Utilize **community-clinical linkages** to improve equitable access to community-based chronic disease prevention, dementia support and healthy aging programs.

**P-3** Partner across the community to promote **equitable access to services, supports and quality care** for people living with dementia and their caregivers.

**P-4** Partner with **public and private health plans** to implement evidence-informed policies and programs that impact social determinants of health related to brain health and cognitive impairment.

### *Increase integration with other chronic disease efforts*

**P-5** Build on existing **state and local public health chronic disease, healthy aging, and disability programs and policies** to address social determinants of health and improve health equity related to brain health.

### *Increase policy action and implementation*

**P-6** Equip **policymakers** with information on risk factors, the stigma associated with cognitive impairment and the impact of social determinants of health; and offer evidence-informed policy options across the life course.

**P-7** Join ongoing coalitions and partnerships to **prevent or remediate abuse, neglect and exploitation** of people living with dementia.

## MEASURE, EVALUATE AND UTILIZE DATA

### *Increase data availability, quality and utilization*

**M-1** Support implementation of the **Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)** optional modules for Cognitive Decline and Caregiving and use the data to develop and inform programs and policies.

**M-2** Supplement existing state, local and BRFSS data with data from **health systems, health plans, pharmacies, and other health care providers and community organizations** to better understand disparities and opportunities for improving equity.

**M-3** Evaluate **implementation of the HBI Road Map actions** to identify successes and needed improvements.

### *Increase data-informed decision making and action*

**M-4** **Translate data analyses and evaluation findings** into state and community strategic and health improvement plans that support brain health across the life course and quality of life for people living with dementia and their caregivers.

**M-5** **Share findings** with community organizations, agencies, policymakers and provider associations to help focus and inform community awareness efforts, resource needs, programs and policies, particularly for populations most impacted.

## BUILD A DIVERSE AND SKILLED WORKFORCE

### *Reduce stigma and bias about cognitive decline*

**W-1** Provide evidence-informed training and informational resources for **primary health care providers** to facilitate culturally sensitive conversations about brain health with patients and caregivers across the life course.

### *Increase knowledge and skills of current and future workforce*

**W-2** Train current and future **public health professionals** about risk factors for cognitive decline and dementia and ways to integrate this information with other chronic disease prevention strategies.

**W-3** Promote inclusion of the life course approach to brain health in **licensing, certification and continuing education requirements** for health care and allied professionals.

**W-4** Strengthen training of **community health and direct service workers** about brain health across the life course to improve equitable care and quality of life for those living with cognitive decline and to support caregivers.

**W-5** Partner with **public safety and emergency response agencies** to improve their ability to recognize and meet the needs of people living with cognitive decline and dementia.

## ENGAGE AND EDUCATE THE PUBLIC

### *Increase public knowledge about brain health, risk factors for dementia and benefits of early detection and diagnosis*

**E-1** **Engage diverse audiences** to develop **culturally responsive messaging** about brain health, cognitive decline, healthy aging and caregiving.

**E-2** Disseminate culturally responsive messaging to **encourage conversations** about brain health, cognitive decline, healthy aging and caregiving.

**E-3** **Engage with communities**, especially **those at highest risk**, about risk factors for dementia and how people living with dementia can best thrive in their communities.

**E-4** Embed cognitive decline risk factors into evidence-informed **health promotion and chronic disease prevention awareness and education campaigns**.

**E-5** Partner with **educational systems (K-12 and post-secondary)** to include brain health and dementia in their curricula.

### *Increase public knowledge and use of services for people living with dementia and their caregivers*

**E-6** Enhance communication with **people living with dementia, their families and caregivers** about how to access services, care and social supports.

**E-7** Ensure **caregivers** have information, tools and resources about their vital role and ways to maintain their own **health and well-being**.