A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO ALZHEIMER'S AND OTHER DEMENTIAS

A Public Health Approach to Alzheimer's and Other Dementias is an introductory curriculum from the Alzheimer's Association that is intended to increase awareness of the impact of Alzheimer's and other dementias as well as the role of public health. Developed as part of a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Alzheimer's Disease and Healthy Aging Program, and in partnership with Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health, this curriculum addresses cognitive health, cognitive impairment, and Alzheimer's disease and is for use by undergraduate faculty in schools and programs of public health. It can also be adapted for other purposes. This work supports *The Healthy Brain Initiative: The Public Health Road Map for State and National Partnerships* (Road Map) goal of developing a competent workforce. The curriculum has four modules that are designed to be used individually or as a whole.

The following materials are provided for each module:

- **Faculty Guide**, including:
    - Learning objectives
    - Competencies
    - Discussion questions
    - Learning activities
    - Slide guide with talking points
    - Sample test questions
    - Case studies
    - Video resources
    - References
- **PowerPoint slides**
- **Novel Approaches for Implementing the Curriculum**

ABOUT EACH MODULE

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE – A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS (Module 1)

Module 1: Alzheimer's Disease – A Public Health Crisis frames Alzheimer's disease and dementia as a public health epidemic with a large and rapidly growing burden that has a significant impact on the nation. Alzheimer's disease is felt at a **national**, **state**, and **local** level through **financial burdens**, **resource needs**, and **professional requirements**.

Module 1 focuses primarily on the U.S. as it explores the current and projected scope of the epidemic, the financial burden on federal and state governments as well as individuals, and the care burden on caregivers and the health care system. Health disparities are highlighted, as rates of Alzheimer's disease are substantially higher for African-Americans and Hispanics.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of *Module 1: Alzheimer's and Dementia – A Public Health Crisis*, students will be able to:

- Provide a general description of dementia and Alzheimer's disease

- Explain the current and projected scope of the Alzheimer's disease epidemic

- Discuss the cost burden of Alzheimer's disease for federal/state governments and individuals/caregivers

- Describe the care burden of Alzheimer's disease, including caregivers and the health care system

- Identify health disparities related to Alzheimer's and dementia

- Explain why public health must play a role in addressing the Alzheimer's disease epidemic

ALZHEIMER'S AND OTHER DEMENTIAS – THE BASICS (Module 2)

Module 2: Alzheimer's and Other Dementias – The Basics provides background information on Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. It lays a foundation for what cognitive health is and how changes within the brain may lead to cognitive aging, cognitive impairment, and Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

The module then shifts to focus more specifically on Alzheimer's disease. Learners gain a general understanding about the stages of Alzheimer's disease, risk factors, and how the disease is diagnosed and treated. The module also addresses unique aspects of Alzheimer's disease (including financial hardship, stigma, and vulnerability to abuse) and the role of caregivers and caregiving impacts.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of *Module 2: Alzheimer's and Other Dementias – The Basics*, students will be able to:

- Define cognitive health

- Define and differentiate between dementia and Alzheimer's

- List at least five early signs of Alzheimer's

- Describe the changes that occur during the course of Alzheimer's disease

- Describe the role of caregivers in the care of someone with Alzheimer's

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF PUBLIC HEALTH? (Module 3)

Module 3: What is the Role of Public Health? briefly describes the Alzheimer's disease epidemic in the U.S., followed by a discussion of four tools of public health that may play significant roles in mitigating the Alzheimer's disease crisis.

The four public health intervention tools discussed are:

1. Surveillance/monitoring

2. Primary prevention

3. Early detection and diagnosis

4. Ensuring safety and quality of care

Each tool is described and applied to the context of a public health response to Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Progress to date and challenges associated with each tool are addressed.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of ***Module 3: What is the Role of Public Health?*** students will be able to:

- List four key tools public health can apply to the Alzheimer's epidemic

- Describe surveillance/monitoring and how public health practitioners can apply it in response to Alzheimer's disease

- Name the two Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) modules that pertain to cognitive decline and caregiving

- Describe primary prevention and how public health practitioners may apply it in response to Alzheimer's disease

- Explain why it is important to promote early detection of Alzheimer's disease

- Summarize one workforce challenge that affects the safety and quality of care for people living with dementia

DEMENTIA CAPABLE SYSTEMS AND DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES (Module 4)

Module 4: Dementia Capable Systems and Dementia Friendly Communities addresses the public health response to the Alzheimer's disease epidemic at the state and community levels. The module describes the concepts of "dementia capable" systems and dementia friendly

communities, both of which involve accommodating the needs of a population with memory loss, and a variety of related **physical**, **cognitive**, and **behavior** symptoms, as well as other **co-morbidities**.

Module 4 explores how public health may support the development of such systems at the state and local levels through support services and programs, workforce training, and the creation of dementia friendly communities.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of *Module 4: Dementia Capable Systems and Dementia Friendly Communities*, students will be able to:

- Define dementia capable systems and dementia friendly communities

- Explain how public health can contribute to the development of dementia capable systems by analyzing community-support needs, developing support services and programs, and establishing workforce training, and also to the creation of dementia friendly communities

- List at least two support services that may benefit a caregiver of someone with Alzheimer's or dementia

- Identify at least three professions that would benefit from workforce training related to Alzheimer's and dementia

- Describe at least two components of a dementia friendly community

HOW TO USE THE MATERIALS

- ✓ The four modules were designed for use either as a set or as stand-alone modules.

- ✓ Users are free to make changes to the materials to fit their needs, including: adding, modifying or removing content, graphics, talking points, discussion questions, or learning activities.

- ✓ The Faculty Guide for each module includes a slide guide that contains the information as presented in the slide, talking points, space for presenter notes, and references.

- ✓ The talking points included in the Faculty Guide should not be read word for word; each presenter should review the materials before delivering the material to ensure familiarity and deliver the information in his/her own style.

- ✓ Delivery time will generally be 60-90 minutes per module, depending on class engagement, presenter style, and the addition or elimination of any content, discussion questions, or learning activities.

✓ Discussion questions are included in the slide deck of each module. These may be modified or removed at the discretion of the presenter. Questions may also be used for other activities such as small group discussion or individual writing assignments.

✓ Video resources, a list of articles, and case studies are also included to help in learning more about the topics presented in each module.

✓ Test questions are provided with each module as an additional resource for faculty.

✓ All materials are 508 compliant. (*Note: if changes are made to the curriculum, it is recommended that changes continue to follow 508 compliance guidelines. For more information on 508 compliance visit the Department of Health and Human Services website:* https://www.hhs.gov/web/section-508/making-files-accessible/index.html

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ABOUT THE COVER

The cover illustration created by **Sophie Banspach, BS,** depicts the growing prevalence of Alzheimer's in the United States, showing differences across age and race on a stylized linear plane.

DISCLAIMER

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