



Alzheimer's Public Health News

February 2022

Risk Reduction Goal Added to National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease

A goal focused on addressing the risk factors for dementia has been added to the most recent update to the [National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease](#). This is the first goal added to the National Plan since it was released in 2012.

A growing body of evidence shows that addressing many cardiovascular-related conditions and heart-healthy behaviors — such as high blood pressure, physical inactivity, smoking, diabetes and obesity — can lower the risk of cognitive decline and possibly dementia. The new goal, which seeks to improve healthy aging and reduce risk factors for Alzheimer's and other dementias, underscores the growing importance of risk reduction as a key component in the fight against Alzheimer's.

The National Plan identifies six strategies to help achieve the goal, including taking public health action to address the risk factors, addressing inequities in risk factors, translating findings into clinical practice, and expanding research on risk factors.

For information on how public health can work to address dementia risk factors, contact the Alzheimer's Association's Public Health Center of Excellence on Dementia Risk Reduction at CenterOfExcellence@alz.org.

Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map Implementation Toolkit Released

To assist other public health agencies in addressing cognitive health and Alzheimer's disease, the Washington State Department of Health has released [Implementing the Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map: A Toolkit for Public Health Organizations](#). The toolkit provides step-by-step actions public health organizations can take to fully integrate the [2018-2023 Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map](#) into their workflows. The toolkit includes a planning guide to assess current work being done, checklists for Healthy Brain Initiative (HBI) action steps, and other useful documents and resources.

Alzheimer's Public Health Curriculum



A free, flexible curricular resource introduces Alzheimer's as a public health issue.

The HBI Road Map



Designed for state and local public health practitioners, the Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map encourages 25 actions that help promote brain health, address cognitive impairment, and support the needs of caregivers.

Road Map for Indian Country



Designed for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities, the Healthy Brain Initiative *Road Map for Indian Country* is a guide for AI/AN leaders to learn about Alzheimer's and begin planning their response to dementia.

Project VITAL Helps Engage Nursing Home Residents with Dementia

Customized, senior-friendly tablets are an effective way to connect and engage people with dementia in long-term care facilities, according to recently published [findings](#) on Project Virtually Inclusive Technology for All (Project VITAL). Project VITAL is a public-private partnership between the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, the Alzheimer's Association and other stakeholders that sought to address the social isolation, stress, and well-being of individuals with dementia, their families, and their caregivers, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The evaluation of the initiative also found individuals with dementia were most engaged with content focused on cognitive engagement and relaxation, and that the program did not significantly detract staff from their other duties.

Upcoming Events and Recordings

The BOLD Public Health Center of Excellence on Dementia Caregiving will host **The Public Health Opportunities and Challenges of Dementia Caregiving National Conference** on **June 14-15, 2022**, at the MacNamara Alumni Center in Minneapolis, MN. The keynote session will highlight why dementia caregiving is and should remain a public health priority. Virtual sessions will be available. Attendance is free; register today [here](#).

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Contact

For more information on the Healthy Brain Initiative, public health priorities, or Alzheimer's disease in general, contact [Ben Denno](#) or check out alz.org/publichealth.