



# State of Nevada Department of Health and Human Services **TASK FORCE ON ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE**

Senator Valerie Wiener (Ret.), *Chair*  
Peter Reed, Ph.D., *Vice Chair*

*Members:* Senator Joseph Hardy, Assemblyman James Oscarson, Charles Bernick, M. D., Jill Berntson, LSW, Gini Cunningham, Jane Fisher, Ph. D., Jacob Harmon, Wendy Simons

## **Basic Facts about Alzheimer's Disease and Other Forms of Dementia**

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia and accounts for approximately 70 percent of all persons diagnosed with dementia. For most forms of dementia including Alzheimer's disease, there is no cure.

Symptoms include short- and long-term memory loss, difficulties with problem solving and performing step-wise tasks, and impaired communicative abilities. The cognitive decline from dementia is significantly different from what is expected from normal aging and interferes with the completion of activities of daily living. Individuals with dementia may live from 2 to 20 years with the disease, becoming increasingly dependent on others for their care.

The number of Americans with dementia is estimated at more than 5.4 million. Dementia occurs in approximately 1 in 9 people. Currently, according to the Alzheimer's Association, 41,000 Nevadans has Alzheimer's disease. This number is expected to increase to 64,000 by 2025. Nationally, Nevada has the third highest growth rate of this disease at 64 percent. By 2050, if there is no cure, the number of Americans—and Nevadans—with dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, will more than double.

## **The Work of the Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease (TFAD)**

The Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease (TFAD) was created within the Department of Health and Human Services with the passage of Assembly Bill 80 in the 2013 Legislative Session. The Task Force is responsible for carrying out the State Plan that was developed pursuant to Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 10 of the 2011 Legislative Session. This plan serves as a blueprint for identifying specific actions that will allow for the development and growth of a top-quality and comprehensive support system for individuals affected by Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.

TFAD, staffed by the Aging and Disability Services Division, is made up of ten members from a diverse background of interests in Alzheimer's disease, including medical professionals, caregivers, service providers, legislators, educators, and policy developers. The Nevada State Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease, deemed as the official plan by the 2013 Legislature, was completed in January 2013. As required by law, TFAD thoroughly vets the State Plan, updates it biannually, and provides an Annual Report to the Governor and the Legislature on or before February 1. The 2015 State Plan includes a list of 20 recommendations, which address: access to services; quality of care and quality of life; and public awareness about Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. The updated 2017 State Plan includes 16 recommendations, Appendix A, Retired Recommendations with annual monitoring, and Appendix B, Resources for Persons and Caregivers of Persons with Alzheimer's Disease and Other Forms of Dementia.

The members of the Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease appreciate the opportunity to serve the State in this very worthwhile endeavor. The State Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease is a critical blueprint, which by necessity, must be reviewed frequently. This plan helps create a vital awareness about the disease and, more importantly, action steps that are necessary to address the needs of persons living with Alzheimer's disease, as well as their families and caregivers.

The State Plan, Annual Report, and other information about TFAD is available at:

<http://adsd.nv.gov/Boards/TaskForceAlz/TFAD/>

Agenda Item VII A-1 (SILVER)  
Meeting Date: 11-15-17

## **TFAD State Plan Summary Points:**

- ◆ Sustain a statewide information and referral system.
- ◆ Support legislation that improves access to quality Telehealth Services.
- ◆ Promote efforts to develop toolkits for outreach to diverse cultural communities.
- ◆ Address affordability of services for persons with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.
- ◆ Support collaborations between medical professionals and medical associations to adopt and promote the use of best-practice diagnostic guidelines for Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.
- ◆ Encourage adoption of specialized care pathways.
- ◆ Support development of quality long-term care options for people living with dementia in Nevada.
- ◆ Provide caregivers with access to evidence-based education and support services related to dementia.
- ◆ Support caregivers with information and resources about caring for persons living with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.
- ◆ Support Dementia Friendly Communities, where those living with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia, along with their caregivers, feel and experience the respect, dignity, support, value, and inclusion in everyday community life.
- ◆ Build capacity of community organizations to recruit and manage volunteers.
- ◆ Support the development and implementation of the Guardianship "Bill of Rights," which was created by the Commission to Study the Administration of Guardianship in Nevada's Courts.
- ◆ Ensure best-practice hospital transitional care programs for caregivers and persons with dementia.
- ◆ Support the development and implementation for the Veterans in Care (VIC) initiative.
- ◆ Support the standardization of the system of driver evaluation and improve the infrastructure, services, and support for persons with dementia whose driving ability may be compromised.
- ◆ Foster the development of Dementia Friendly Communities awareness campaigns to provide information about the early signs of dementia and to advance Dementia Friendly Communities across the State.
- ◆ Encourage the business community to establish and implement employee assistance programs and dementia-friendly activities that encompass dementia-related education and training for employees, including those who are caregivers.

## **Links to Nevada Resources**

- ◆ Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division—<http://adsd.nv.gov>
- ◆ Nevada's Aging and Disability Resource Center—<http://nevadaadrc.com> (See Programs, Alzheimer's Information)
- ◆ Nevada 2-1-1—[www.nevada211.org](http://www.nevada211.org)