

## What were the goals of the project?

In April 2015, the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD), with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), funded selected state and territorial health departments to implement priority action items from ***The Healthy Brain Initiative: The Public Health Road Map for State and National Partnerships, 2013 - 2018*** (a.k.a., the Road Map)<sup>1</sup>.



Arizona was among the seven states awarded funded under this initiative. The Arizona Department of Health Services Bureau of Tobacco and Chronic Disease Healthy Aging Program, in collaboration with the University of Arizona College of Medicine Center on Aging, the University of Arizona Prevention Research Center, the Alzheimer's Association-Desert Southwest Chapter, and other partners worked to raise awareness of cognitive health concerns in underserved populations experiencing barriers to care. Activities undertaken to increase awareness of cognitive health concerns included: (a) expanding and sustaining primary care provider and Community Health Worker training, (b) providing Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias education, provider training, and outreach to increase screening and referrals to the Arizona's underserved population; and (c) expanding the training to local public health department staff and other community organizations in counties throughout the state to promote screening, early diagnosis, and intervention.

## What are the key accomplishments of the project?

- Key informant interviews were conducted with health department staff and community health workers to assess Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) content knowledge, attitudes and skills, as related to early recognition, assessment of cognitive impairment, screening, referral, and caregiver support and resources.
- Over 400 health department staff and community health workers have been trained using materials and content informed by feedback obtained from the key informant interviews.
- Care Partner Information Sheets were developed for persons who provide care to persons with ADRD, including family members, volunteers, and community health workers. These fact sheets provide basic background information, helpful tips, and community resources on a variety of topics associated with ADRD. The fact sheets are written at the fifth grade level and address topics in a way that acknowledges the unique needs of medically underserved and special populations, including racially and ethnically diverse populations.
- Numerous partnerships have been formed between the state health department, community partners, and academia to reduce the burden associated with ADRD and prioritize ADRD as a public health concern.

## What additional lessons have been learned?

- There is a great need among community health workers for training related to ADRD, with a specific focus on enhancing overall knowledge and understanding about ADRD, screening patients for ADRD, and making appropriate referrals to ADRD resources and specialists.
- Community health workers should also be trained in how to support caregivers of those persons with ADRD, including how to assist caregivers to effectively handle end-of-life issues and concerns.
- Motivational interviewing can be a useful strategy for training community health workers to effectively and comfortably interact with persons with ADRD and their caregivers.

## For Additional Information:

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<sup>1</sup> Available online at: <http://www.cdc.gov/aging/pdf/2013-healthy-brain-initiative.pdf>

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