

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)¹. Illinois was among the seven states awarded funded under this initiative. The Illinois Department of Public Health worked with the University of Illinois Prevention Research Center and other stakeholders to expand implementation of priority action items of the Road Map. Accomplishments from a previous 12-month grant provided by NACDD, with support from the CDC, provided the foundation for Illinois to undertake a variety of activities aimed at implementing priority recommendations from the Road Map, including: (a) utilizing data to enhance awareness and action in public health programming among state and local public health and aging organizations; (b) identifying standard basic core competencies for all health and social service providers; (c) identifying dementia specific training components by utilizing survey results of organizational competencies; and (d) coordinating state and local efforts to impact prioritized short- and long-term recommendations of the Illinois Alzheimer's Disease State Plan.

What are the key accomplishments of the project?

- The health department met with the University of Illinois several times to identify opportunities for meaningful analysis of the existing data on Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and caregiving. These meetings resulted in the development of state-level Burden Briefs and plans to develop similar briefs in the future.
- The Alzheimer's Disease Advisory Committee (ADAC) core competency subcommittee was convened regularly to guide research, discuss findings and craft wording for core competencies. These efforts resulted in the development of a list of core competencies which were carefully selected through many hours of review of national research, best practices and engagement of subject matter experts from across Illinois. The core competencies will be used to inform development of training for care partners and providers which will improve care and quality of life for persons with dementia and their caregivers in Illinois.
- A comprehensive training was developed and conducted to share the results of the additional data analysis conducted as part of this project, disseminate the list of core competencies, and further engage key stakeholders in discussions related to implementation of prioritized recommendations from the Illinois state plan for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

What additional lessons have been learned?

- Receipt of external funding can allow state health departments to work on projects and achieve goals that would not otherwise be possible. For example, this project allowed the Alzheimer's Disease Advisory Committee and their partners to advance the recommendations of the *Illinois Alzheimer's Disease State Plan: 2013-2017*.
- Time spent identifying the target audience for the core competencies was essential to advancing this work.
- In establishing a set of competencies, it is sometimes more realistic and manageable to initially develop a relatively limited set of core competencies which can serve as a foundation for the development of additional profession-specific competencies in the future.

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

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