

## The Healthy Brain Initiative: The Public Health Road Map for State and National Partnership -- Mississippi Project

### 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>. Mississippi was among the seven states awarded funding under this initiative. The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) worked with the University of Alabama Prevention Research Center to develop an implementation plan for Mississippi's Alzheimer's State Plan to promote brain health at the clinical and community levels and to increase the capacity of the public health workforce to address cognitive health. The Alzheimer's State Plan required an implementation plan for promoting brain health that incorporated the needs of clinicians, communities, and individuals with an interest in delaying the onset and reducing the burden of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. This was accomplished in Mississippi by conducting key informant interviews and utilizing the Root Cause Analytical (RCA) model to understand the antecedent conditions for promoting brain health in Mississippi. A survey was disseminated to a broader public health audience to further define these antecedents. The results of the

RCA served to inform the development of an implementation plan that will target Mississippi State Department of Health staff and partners and convey the relationship among brain health, public health, and chronic disease.

### What are the key accomplishments of the project?

- Twenty structured interviews were conducted to address three key problem statements identified by the Alzheimer's Association and the MSDH to plan and prioritize implementation to promote brain health in Mississippi.
- The results of the interviews were aggregated into two separate "summary maps" and antecedents were extracted to populate a validation survey for distribution at the Empowering Communities for a Healthy Mississippi Conference. A total of 48 preconference attendees and 66 conference attendees completed the survey.
- To complete the prioritization process, the terminal antecedent conditions were formed into statements and programmed into an online survey in which respondents were asked to review the antecedents and determine whether each met the scope of the Mississippi State Plan for Alzheimer's and Other Dementias, feasibility for success within two years, and available resources to address the statements.
- A report of key informant and survey results has been completed to inform implementation of the state plan.

### What additional lessons have been learned?

- It is essential to demonstrate the correlation between chronic disease and Alzheimer's disease through state-specific data.
- It takes time to introduce what's traditionally considered to be "off topic" materials to existing partners and internal staff. That being said, this project has provided the opportunity to begin those conversations and it is expected that the work to infiltrate brain health into chronic disease programs and plans will continue beyond the timeframe of the project period.

#### 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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