

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. Oregon was among the seven states awarded funded under this initiative. The Public Health Division of the Oregon Health Authority collaborated with the Prevention Research Center at the Oregon Health & Science University to work with partners across public health program areas to address two prioritized action items from the national Road Map that build on existing statewide efforts to address brain health and cognitive impairment. The two action items included: (a) use surveillance data to enhance awareness and action in public health programming; and (b) develop strategies to help ensure that public health departments have expertise in cognitive health and impairment related to research and best practices. Activities undertaken as part of this project included analysis of existing surveillance data to enhance Oregon's understanding of the public health burden associated with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and integration of cognitive health and impairment into state and local government plans aimed at improving the public's health,



What are the key accomplishments of the project?

- The cognitive impairment and caregiver health data analysis using 2012/2013 BRFSS data was completed.
- A panel survey resulted in 576 completed surveys which were analyzed in September 2015. Survey results were incorporated into a presentation by September 25, 2015, in preparation delivered at a partner meeting in October 2015.
- Communication and coordination with community partners, including the Prevention Research Center and the Alzheimer's Association, is now more strategic and intentional. This funding opportunity provided an opportunity for greater alignment and support of data collection and data driven strategic planning.
- State and local public health, aging and cognitive health partners were convened in October 2015 to accelerate local conversations regarding the integration of brain health and healthy aging into community health improvement plans.
- Oregon hosted a state-specific White House Conference on Aging. At the conclusion of the session, three priorities were identified: (1) promote Age-Friendly Communities throughout Oregon; (2) require Medicare to reimburse for integrated care, chronic disease self-management education and caregiver support; and (3) improve access to mental health support for caregivers.

What additional lessons have been learned?

- Many conversations regarding healthy aging and cognitive health are happening throughout Oregon. The energy and emphasis on this work is a priority for many partners. This can be both exciting and challenging to balance different voices and interests. While cognitive health is a priority in Oregon, it is critical to fully integrate it in other work moving forward, specifically in communities working to improve health across the lifespan. There are opportunities to integrate cognitive decline prevention into existing chronic disease prevention initiatives, specifically heart disease and vascular health.

For Additional Information:

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

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