

THE NEVADA STATE PLAN
TO ADDRESS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE
AND OTHER DEMENTIAS

2025-2026



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The Department of Health and Human Services
Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease

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Nevada State Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease and other Dementias 2025-2026

**Prepared by the Nevada Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease (TFAD)
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Introduction

The Impact of Dementia:

The term 'dementia' refers to a collection of symptoms that comprise a person's cognitive function, including, but not limited to, changes in their memory, problem solving, reasoning and capacity to fulfill activities of daily living. While Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, comprising about 60 to 80 percent of all dementia diagnoses, approximately 130 different causes of dementia have been identified, including Vascular dementia, Lewy Body dementia, Frontotemporal dementia, and many others. Often people living with dementia are experiencing the effects of more than one cause, referred to as 'mixed dementia.' For the purposes of this plan, labeled as addressing 'Alzheimer's disease and other dementias', the Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease references 'dementia' as the overarching condition being addressed.

According to the Alzheimer's Association's *2024 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures*, it is estimated that 6.9 million people are living with dementia in the US. Further, one in nine people ages 65 and older are living with dementia, with dramatic increases as one ages from 65 – 74 (5%) to 85+ (33%). In addition to those estimated to be living with dementia, as noted in the Alzheimer's Association report, approximately 16.6% of people over the age of 65 are living with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI), which is a form of cognitive decline that may serve as a precursor to later dementia.

There is an increased prevalence of Alzheimer's among minority and underserved populations, specifically Black and Latino communities. Older Black Americans are twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's and other dementias than Older Whites, while Older Latino Americans are one and a half times more likely to develop.

In Nevada, the Alzheimer's Association report estimates that there were approximately 54,900 people living with dementia in 2020. The impact of this large population of people living with dementia in Nevada is, and will continue to be, significant in many ways, including disenfranchisement and stigma of those living with dementia, challenges among family members and other care partners in effectively supporting people living with dementia, capacity of long-term supports and services, declines in general workforce productivity, and strains on the healthcare workforce and financing (i.e., Medicare and Medicaid). The costs of these impacts are immeasurable.

With this explosive need in Nevada, the Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease (TFAD) contributes timely and essential information as well as insights through its State Plan, Annual Reports, and bi-monthly meetings. On a continuous basis, TFAD provides focused and crucial information about current and needed policies, practices, and programs to the Nevada State

Legislature, as well as to units of the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, including the Aging and Disability Services Division, Division of Public and Behavioral Health,

and Division of Health Care Financing and Policy, which work daily to serve the needs of people living with dementia across all of Nevada.

Additional Context for the State Plan:

The 2025-2026 Nevada State Plan to Address Alzheimer’s Disease and other Dementias, prepared by TFAD, includes fourteen recommendations related to ensuring that effective information, education, care and support, and public policy appropriately address dementia on behalf of all Nevadans. This is down from seventeen recommendations from the previous biennium due to retirement.

- Recommendation #1: Statewide Information and Referral System
- Recommendation # 9: Volunteers
- Recommendation # 15: Organizational Outreach

While these recommendations are being retired, their work will be continued throughout TFAD’s efforts. Specifically, a statewide information and referral system has been embedded in various state agencies, and included with various “no-wrong-door” partners such as Nevada 211 and Nevada Care Care Connection which TFAD will continue to monitor. Additionally, the work within recommendations #9 and #15 have been included in various recommendations as part of their efforts.

Reflected within the formal recommendations, TFAD also states its support for several core concepts forming a general framework for understanding and proactively supporting a positive lived experience of dementia. These include TFAD’s support for:

- Dementia-friendly communities, where those living with dementia, along with their care partners, feel and experience respect, dignity, support, value and inclusion in everyday community life;
- Innovative ways of thinking that provide opportunities for people living with dementia to experience full and meaningful lives;
- The promotion of brain health to reduce risk of cognitive impairment and the early detection of cognitive impairment, which are critical tools for addressing cognitive health in states and communities, as outlined in the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) *Healthy Brain Initiative Roadmap 2023 – 2027*, and in alignment with the priorities of the BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer’s Act;
- Proactive collaborations between healthcare professionals, first responders, community organizations, the business community, educators, care partners, volunteers and others to provide dementia-friendly services and supports that nurture a full and optimal quality of life for people living with dementia;
- Ongoing education and professional development for people who, directly or indirectly, serve and support people living with dementia, as well as their care partners;
- Preserving the rights of people living with dementia is paramount to their self determination and quality of life;
- Best practices, informed by existing and emerging evidence, for all individuals and entities that are making contributions to the quality of life and well-being for people living with dementia, as well as their caregivers and care partners;

- Continuous and expansive public awareness activities that increase the critical consciousness within Nevada’s communities regarding the importance of understanding dementia, honoring the lived experience of dementia and valuing the potential contributions that may be made by people living with dementia;
- Monitoring and surveillance of the presence of dementia within Nevada, as well as the impact and effectiveness of TFAD recommendations, state and community based initiatives to support people living with dementia and their caregivers and care partners;
- The continual inclusion of dementia as a relevant, protected condition in the ADSD Olmstead State Plan; and last but not least,
- TFAD embraces the foundational assumption that despite the cognitive and physical challenges that accompany dementia, when offered the proper supports and respect, people can live well with dementia.

These fourteen recommendations have been grouped into four objections. The recommendations have been renumbered, due to recommendation retirements and to be fit in their objectives. These include;

- Objective 1: Help direct persons living with dementia to resources.
- Objective 2: Optimize healthcare for persons living with dementia.
- Objective 3: Formalized protections & rights for persons living with dementia.
- Objective 4: Structured, competent, and comprehensive dementia education

Monitoring and Surveillance of the State Plan:

Ongoing Assessment of TFAD State Plan Recommendations

Each recommendation included in this State Plan notes specific indicators that will be monitored to document progress. TFAD will monitor these indicators on a regular basis during its meetings throughout the timeframe for this plan (2025 – 2026). This monitoring will occur through TFAD invitations to state agencies, key partners, organizations and programs to present on their work relative to specific recommendations and the needs in the state, at least once each biennium. This may also include a survey sent out to inform TFAD of the recommendations efforts.

The goal of these presentations is to keep TFAD informed of relevant information on related effort, collaborations, and needs across Nevada, as well as to offer TFAD members the opportunity to stay engaged with relevant partners. During these partner presentations, TFAD members will ask clarifying questions and participate in dialogue to offer their insights to the partners.

Healthy People 2030

It is one of the goals of TFAD to raise awareness of issues related to dementia and to promote brain health, as well as to highlight the importance of getting an early and accurate diagnosis. The impact of dementia may be overwhelming for the people living with a diagnosis, as well as for their care partners and families. Therefore, dementia awareness efforts, supports, services and policies need to be elevated as a public health priority, as encouraged by the CDC Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map, and as included as a specific goal in Healthy People 2030.

Since 1980, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion has set measurable goals and objectives for the health and well-being of people nationwide. The initiative, called Healthy People, is in its fifth iteration, Healthy People 2030 (HP 2030). This initiative builds on knowledge and research gained over the preceding four decades and addresses the nation's most pressing public health challenges.

All HP 2030 objectives meet several criteria, including having baseline data, a direct impact on health, and an evidence base. These criteria address the goals related to health, function, and quality of life. The HP 2030 framework sets important public health priorities for the nation over the current decade and will measure progress towards meeting those objectives.

By 2060, almost a quarter of the U.S. population will be age 65 or older. Older adults are at a higher risk of chronic health problems including diabetes, osteoporosis, as well as Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. As previously noted, an estimated 6.5 million people in the United States have dementia, and that number will increase as the population ages. As such, a goal of HP 2030 is to "Improve health and quality of life for people with dementia, including Alzheimer's disease."

HP 2030 includes three objectives related to this goal. These include the following:

1. Increase the proportion of older adults with dementia, or their caregivers, who know they have the disease;
2. Reduce the proportion of preventable hospitalizations in older adults with dementia; and
3. Increase the proportion of adults with subjective cognitive decline (SCD) who have discussed their confusion or memory loss with a health care professional.

While there is no cure for Alzheimer's disease or many other forms of dementia at this time, early diagnosis and supportive care can improve quality of life. Equally important, getting an early and accurate diagnosis can allow the person in the early stages of the disease to be a full participant in planning for their care, including advanced directives, legal and financial affairs, and arranging for future care. Making it possible for adults with symptoms of cognitive decline, including memory loss, to obtain an early diagnosis is a public health priority and is a key focus of TFAD, as noted throughout the State Plan.

The HP 2030 objectives for dementia provide a framework for improving health and health equity across the nation by monitoring improvements in early diagnosis for those reporting subjective cognitive decline. To monitor and assess progress toward HP 2030, TFAD strongly encourages the continued collection of the BRFSS module on Cognitive Decline, using any resources available from the Department of Health and Human Services to do so.

Bridging the CDC Healthy Brain Initiative and the Nevada State Plan

As previously noted, the Nevada State Plan is directly aligned with the goals and priorities of the CDC Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map, as well as the BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act (amending the Public Health Service Act, Section 398A; 42 U.S.C. 280c-3-4), including increasing early detection and diagnosis, risk reduction, prevention of avoidable hospitalizations, and supporting dementia caregiving. Specific efforts were made to incorporate these priorities throughout the relevant recommendations of Nevada's State Plan. Thus, throughout the recommendations is a particular interest in ensuring a strong presence of elements related to

promoting brain health (i.e., risk reduction), early detection, effective and efficient healthcare services, as well as supportive services for caregivers and care partners of people living with dementia.

To offer additional detail on the importance of incorporating these priorities, it is important to understand the CDC Health Brain Initiative and the tools it offers. The Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map is a series created by the Alzheimer's Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The series was initially published in 2007. The latest edition, published in 2023, is the *Healthy Brain Initiative: State and Local Road Map for Public Health, 2023-2027*. As described in the document, the Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map “outlines how state and local public health agencies and their partners can continue to promote cognitive health, address cognitive impairment for people living in the community, and help meet the needs of those who care for people living with dementia, or care partners.” Promoting brain health and supporting people living with dementia and their care partners throughout the life course should be viewed as a central part of public health practice and constitutes the focus of the Healthy Brain Initiative.

The Road Map describes 24 actionable agenda items that follow the *Essential Services of Public Health*: educate and empower, develop policies and mobilize partnerships, assure a competent workforce, and monitor/evaluate.

Following the actions listed in the Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map, public health community partnerships can:

- Accelerate risk reduction, calling attention to traumatic brain injury, smoking, diet, physical activity, cardiovascular risk, and other modifiable risk factors;
- Advance early detection and diagnosis by ensuring healthcare professionals have the best available evidence on dementia and dementia caregiving; and
- Ensure safety and quality of care by offering information, guidance, and supportive resources to caregivers, and assuring healthcare professionals use evidence-based guidelines and have sufficient training.

Scientific evidence has indicated that the same healthy behaviors that have been shown to prevent cancers, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease may also reduce the risk of cognitive decline. By leveraging the Healthy Brain Initiative Road Map to revise and create recommendations for the State Plan, TFAD encourages state and local partners to incorporate collaborative efforts to promote cognitive health into practice. This effort will promote the reframing of dementia from a disease of old age to a condition developed, in part, through the accumulation of dementia risk factors over the life course. Ultimately, these tools provide a resource for ameliorating the impact of cognitive impairment and dementia in states and communities, as well as enhancing overall quality of life and well-being of the population.