

Making Your Faith Based Community Dementia Friendly

There are many ways in which you may become dementia friendly.
Here are a some suggestions:

Member Considerations:

- Be aware of the 10 warning signs of dementia
- Provide participants with a friendly, relaxed greeting
- Make good eye contact, speak clearly and concisely.
- Avoid jargon words when possible
- Be patient and allow plenty of time for questions & answers
- Be tolerant of changes in behavior and communication
- If the member needs help, ask if there is someone you can call who might be able to assist
- Invite a person with dementia to provide feedback or suggestions for ways to make services and approaches more accommodating
- Be mindful of all ability levels when planning events, meetings and classes
- Offer shortened or simplified services
- Familiar prayer, hymns and practices may offer great comfort
- Provide a quiet area for use during services, events and other offerings
- Arrangements for transportation may be helpful for those no longer able to drive
- Consider developing a support group or memory café
- Volunteer visitors or assistance may be offered to those needing more support
- Consider recording services or providing home visits for those who are homebound or unable to attend regularly scheduled services
- Become aware of how spiritual beliefs connect to the individual's or family's understanding of dementia

Environmental Suggestions:

- Simple signs with clear, essential information
- Use universal symbols when possible (ex: arrows)
- Signage should be displayed at eye level whenever possible
- Glass doors clearly marked
- Font on documents, bulletins and signage is clear and large enough to read easily
- Doors clearly marked with simple signage / symbols
- Restrooms should be handicapped equipped with clear signage, grab bars, non-slip floors, temperature controlled faucets (100 degrees or less)

Communication Techniques:

- Speak to the person with dementia, not the care partner, whenever possible
- Speak clearly and slowly
- Pay attention to your body language, tone, volume, pace of speech
- Use shorter sentences
- Avoid using jargon or slang phrases
- Use closed-ended questions / offer simple choices for answers

- Make eye contact
- Stay calm and listen carefully
- Be patient and flexible
- Avoid arguing or correcting

Support Options:

- Promote awareness of the 10 Warning Signs
- Host a dementia family education program or volunteer training program
- Make it a priority to reach out to those with dementia and their family care partners
- Maintain a supply of dementia related reading materials / resources.
- Encourage those with concerns to call the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline 800.272.3900 for dementia support, resources and education

Resources:

Alzheimer's Association MA / NH Chapter: 24/7 Helpline (800) 272-3900

Dementia Friendly America www.dfamerica.org

Boston Alzheimer's Initiative (617) 635-3992

Dementia Friendly MA www.dfmassachusetts.org



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Dementia Resources

Alzheimer's Association: 24/7 Helpline 800.272.3900

Alzheimer's Association website: www.alz.org/manh

Alzheimer's Association caregiver Center: <https://www.alz.org/care/>

Alzheimer's Family Care Guide (request online or Helpline 800.272.3900)

Participation in Research: TrialMatch: <https://trialmatch.alz.org>

Community Resource Finder: <http://www.communityresourcefinder.org/>

Aging Services Access Points: www.800AGEINFO.com

Geriatric Care Managers: <https://www.aginglifecare.org/>

Memory Café's MA: <http://www.memorycafedirectory.com/memory-cafes-in-massachusetts/>



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