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PRESS RELEASE:

Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community – Community Needs Assessment Survey Announcement

Dementia Friendly America recently recognized the Spokane area as a Dementia Friendly Community. This national network of communities, organizations and individuals seek to ensure communities across the country are equipped to support people living with dementia and their caregivers.

“My husband Alan was diagnosed at the age of 60 with Younger Onset Alzheimer’s. This was difficult to accept and wrap our heads around, what did the future hold for us? What would our retirement years look like? Alan is an “outdoorsy” individual, the dilemma was how could we provide him these outings while keeping him safe? We discovered that the City of Spokane’s Park and Recreation was the perfect fit... helpful, understanding and so supporting of Alan’s situation. Alan has participated in hiking, kayaking, snowshoeing outings and it has been so rewarding... We truly appreciate that for a few hours Alan can be released from Alzheimer’s.” – Janet Tarbutton

Becoming a Dementia Friendly Community means engaging in a process to become more dementia friendly, so individuals like Janet Tarbutton and her husband find the support they need. Since late 2018, a group of collaborative partners, called the Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community, have been meeting with the intention of creating opportunities for inclusion and improved quality of life for people living with dementia and their care partners. This team plans to advocate for the growing number of adults with dementia, educate the public, and expand on community-based activities.

The Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community benefits from the expertise of a strong action team committed to community engagement and education. Early planning partners include Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Washington, the Washington State Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association, and Providence Health Care (including Providence Adult Day Health, Providence Holy Family Hospital, and Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center).

As it’s predicted that the number of Washingtonians living with Alzheimer’s disease will continue to increase, the Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community is working to make our county a better place for the number of people living with dementia. As a group, our first goal is to conduct a county-wide community needs assessment survey to assess Spokane area’s strengths, gaps, and priorities regarding Alzheimer’s and other dementias. Specifically, this quick survey (about 15 minutes) will be anonymous and accessed through a link that recipients can fill out online.

The Spokane Are Dementia Friendly Community is looking for individuals to complete this survey and we could use your help. We are especially interested in the insight individuals who work in the following sectors can offer; Community-Based Services and Supports, Communities of Faith, Family Care Partners, Hospitals / Acute Care Settings, Local Government / Agencies, and Residential Care. We are also very interested in insight from community members living with dementia and their family members. If you do not belong in any of these groups but still want to respond to our survey, please do as we are looking for all insight.

To participate in our survey or share this with your network, please head to the following link: [Survey](#)
Individuals must complete the survey by October 9th, 2020. If you have any follow up questions including requesting paper copies, please reach out to our team at marketing@dshs.wa.gov.

This survey is an important first step for the Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community to take. The results of the survey will be tabulated and shared with the public in a final report. This report will then be used to initiate an area-wide plan. We greatly appreciate all who are willing to spend the time to participate and help us guide our plans.