



SUMMARY REPORT: Community Engagement Forum

SPOKANE AREA DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community (DFC) is an official member of the Dementia Friendly America (DFA) network (<https://www.dfamerica.org/>). Aging & Long Term Care partnered with the Washington State Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and Providence Health & Services (including Providence ElderPlace Adult Day Health, Providence Holy Family Hospital, and Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center) to become a member. Additional community partners and family care partners supporting people living with dementia strengthen this community-based effort.

A dementia friendly community is a town, city, or county that is respectful toward and informed about individuals with the disease, their families, and their caregivers, and offers support that fosters quality of life. Joining DFA means a community is engaging in a process to become more dementia friendly. As it is predicted that the number of Washingtonians living with Alzheimer's disease will continue to increase, our community needs to collaborate to make Spokane County a better place for people living with dementia.

SPOKANE AREA DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORUM SUMMARY REPORT

This report is a summary of the recent Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community Engagement Forums. These were planned to share the results of the Community Needs Assessment Executive Summary completed in autumn of 2020. This is the first part of the Dementia Friendly America Community Toolkit, Phase 4, "Share the Results and involve the Community." Sharing the results and receiving community feedback will help the writing of a first 36-Month Community Action Plan to make the Spokane Area more Dementia Friendly.

One afternoon session and one evening session of the forum were held to accommodate varying schedules on April 21 and 22, 2021 via Zoom. These results included strengths and weaknesses within the Spokane Community. Three priority areas were identified in the Executive Summary and shared during the meetings. These included: **(1) Increase community member's knowledge about the warning signs of dementia;** **(2) Increase the community's awareness of resources and organizations that can help support people living with dementia and their families;** **(3) Increase community member's skills for interacting with people living with dementia.** The meeting split participants into three Breakout Rooms (groups) based upon these priority areas. Within each Breakout Room, a facilitator discussed the community's current available resources for that priority area. The facilitator then asked for any new resources or ideas that may be added to the list, or how to improve the current resources. Upon returning to the main room meeting, each facilitator presented the new ideas to the group as a whole. Each idea was noted and added to a list for future consideration. A resource list was created with contact information and web addresses for each currently-available resource, where applicable. This updated resource list is accessible on the Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community (DFC) web page. It is located under the "Dementia



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Resources” section. <https://www.altcew.org/about-who-we-are/spokane-area-dementia-friendly-community/>

As the forum progressed, several common themes surfaced from each of the three priority areas. One of these themes was the **need for a collective place of resources and information**. This will improve how information is disseminated. A landing page was suggested as an online source. The Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community (DFC) web page will operate as the landing page, as discussed in the community meetings. The landing page can be found at <https://www.altcew.org/about-who-we-are/spokane-area-dementia-friendly-community/>.

The updated resource list can be found under the “Dementia Resources” section. Providers and community members alike can access the current resource list online. This resource list will be updated periodically as needed.

A second common theme was to **increase skills of physicians**. The current status of local physician’s education on dementia is variable. There is no current baseline or hard copy of resources for providers to hand out to patients as they are diagnosed with dementia. It was made known in the forum that a physician should be the first resource a person comes in contact with upon diagnosis. Providing medical facilities with a local dementia road map would allow physicians to hand out the resource list to newly diagnosed patients.

A third common theme was **how to collaborate with community members to disseminate information and resources to people living with dementia (PLWD) and their caregivers**. It was suggested in the community forum to produce a local road map that can be distributed to not only medical offices, but to community organizations and buildings that elderly people may frequent. These are not limited to, but include libraries, senior centers, volunteer programs, Meals on Wheels, banks, grocery stores, and casinos.

Additional outreach and work are needed prior to writing the 36-Month Community Action Plan. Physicians, PLWD, and family caregivers were underrepresented in the Community Engagement Meetings. Further outreach to these populations will allow us to fill in any gaps that may still be present in the priority areas. Once this outreach is completed, the collected information, along with the information from the Community Engagement Forum will be used to write the Community Action Plan.