

Dementia Friendly Massachusetts



Dementia Friendly Massachusetts (DFM)

Dementia Friendly Massachusetts is a state-wide, grassroots movement comprised of organizations, individuals, and municipalities growing dementia friendly communities to become more inclusive and supportive of those living with dementia, their families, and care partners. Dementia Friendly Massachusetts is a member of Dementia Friendly America and is generously supported by Tufts Health Plan Foundation.





DFM – Sharing a Dementia Language

"Words are very powerful – they can build you up or put you down. When you are speaking about dementia remember this."

- Agnes Houston, person with dementia

- Language changes needed:
 - Not "suffering" from dementia but living with challenges
 - Not "patients" when living in the community
 - Not "demented" but living with dementia



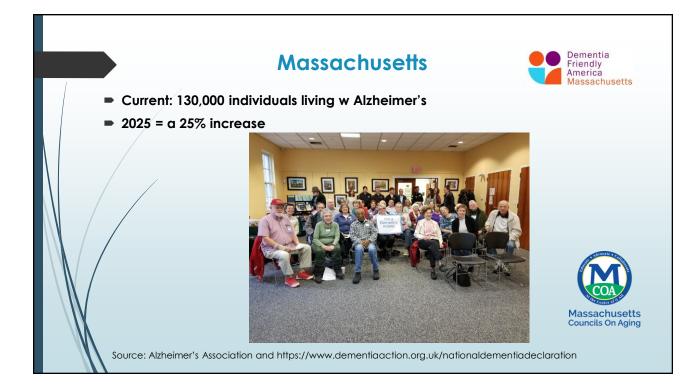


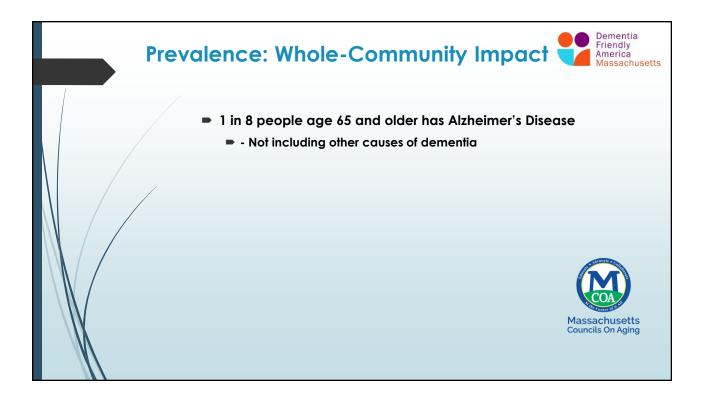
Dementia is...

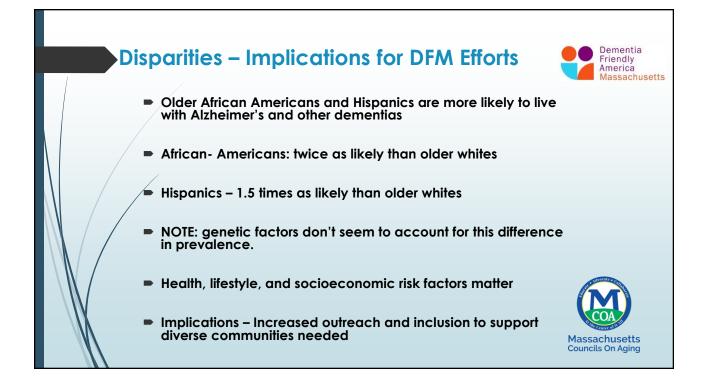
- Dementia is NOT a specific disease
- Dementia is a general term for a decline in mental ability severe enough to interfere with daily life
- Memory loss is an example
- Alzheimer's is the most common type of dementia
- Some conditions creating dementia are reversible thyroid problems and vitamin deficiencies













Defining Dementia-Friendly

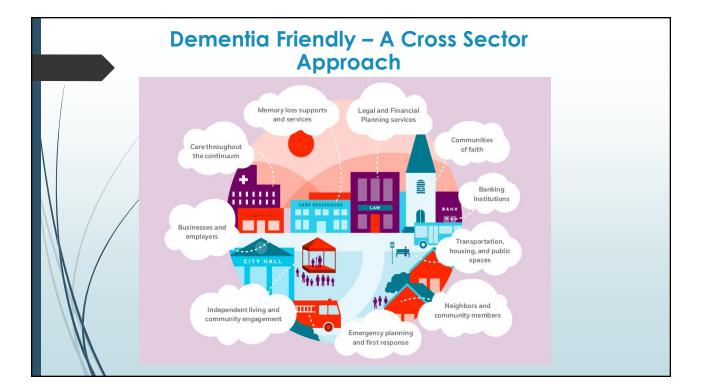
Dementia-friendly communities

- Help people with dementia feel included and supported in the places they work, live and play.
- Focus on stigma reduction and the inclusion of people with dementia.
- Ensure that people living with dementia feel supported by their community members whether they are at post offices, retail outlets, using transportation or enjoying hobbies out in the community.
- "Community" can mean a location like a neighborhood or city, but can also include groups of people with shared interests or features, such as professional groups, religious organizations or businesses....even your book club, a faith group or your business, a local coffee shop or grocery store.

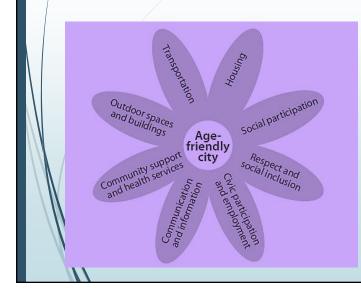
Source: http://www.alzheimer.ca/en/bc/About-dementia/Dementiafriendly%20communities/What%20is%20a%20dementia-friendly%20community







Simplified "Better Together" Strategy



Dementia

Friendly America Massachusetts

Age-Friendly Community efforts should...

- Include people living with Dementia, caregivers, and service/support providers on task force
- Include a Dementia Friendly advisory group that can focus on raising awareness and working through sectors/domains in coordination with Age-Friendly

Environmental Considerations

- 2 Parts to Access and Inclusion
 - Physical environmental design
 - Cultural education and awareness programming

Environmental Design: Is your Housing Community Dementia Friendly?

Goal: To design familiar features and spaces that prompt decision making, reduce agitation, encourage meaningful activity and social interaction, reduce risks, and maintain abilities.

Environmental Design Considerations

- Signage: Use essential signs and symbols for orientation and wayfinding.
- Flooring and other design features: choose contrasting color schemes
- Use materials and surfaces that support independence and cannot be mistaken as barriers.
- Create Pathways:
 - provide interesting, safe indoor and outdoor pathways with smooth surfaces for walking and to encourage mobility.

Environmental Design Considerations

Use technology to promote independence :

e.g., motion sensors that trigger lights to reduce falls, electronic tracking devices, communication devices, alarms triggered by water level in bath or sink in private homes, talking labels/touch screens.

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For More Information

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