

Tip Sheet: Applying Promising Practices to Advance Care for Individuals Dually Eligible for Medicare and Medicaid with Dementia

The care of individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other related dementias (ADRD) presents challenges across health care settings. As of 2013, 23 percent of dually eligible individuals over the age of 65 had ADRD.¹ This tip sheet highlights promising practices for health plans, health systems, and provider groups caring for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. These practices align with the following indicators of dementia capable systems:



- **Better detection and documentation of dementia**
- **Better partnerships between health systems and caregivers**
- **Better partnerships with community-based organizations**

Better Detection and Documentation of Dementia

Diagnosis and documentation in the health record are the first steps in supporting people with dementia. Many people with ADRD go undiagnosed because of the following reasons:

- Many Health Risk Assessments (HRAs) do not include questions to screen cognitive impairment.
- People mistake ADRD symptoms as normal signs of aging.
- People and their families are reluctant to seek care because of related stigmas.

Health plans and partners can improve diagnosis and documentation by adopting an HRA which includes cognitive impairment screening questions. They should also develop a follow up protocol for when screening shows signs of dementia. The follow up protocol can include items such as connecting individuals to care management and scheduling an appointment for additional evaluation for dementia. See the resource box to the right for example screening tools.

Dementia Screening Tools

- Alzheimer's Greater Los Angeles: [Sample HRA cognitive impairment trigger questions](#)
- Alzheimer's Disease Research Center: [AD8 Dementia Screening Interview](#)
- [Saint Louis University Mental Status \(SLUMS\) Examination](#)

Better Partnerships between Health Systems and Caregivers

Families and friends who serve as caregivers play an important role in supporting people with dementia. When medical providers do not have standardized protocols for identifying, documenting, and engaging caregivers, it can result in poor management of co-morbid conditions and medications. Dually eligible individuals are especially at risk due to a higher occurrence of co-morbid conditions. Health plans and

¹ Medicare Payment Advisory Commission and the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission. (2018). Data Book. Beneficiaries Dually Eligible for Medicare and Medicaid. Retrieved from: http://medpac.gov/docs/default-source/data-book/jan18_medpac_macpac_dualsdatabook_sec.pdf?sfvrsn=0.

providers can take steps to recognize and collaborate with caregivers. Consider the list and resource box that follow as a starting point.

1. Identify caregivers and document them in the electronic medical record or care management medical record.
2. As appropriate, ask individuals with ADRD for permission to share information about their health care, services, and supports with their caregivers.
3. Assess and document the needs of caregivers.
4. Connect caregivers to appropriate resources such as training materials and support groups.

Caregiver Partnership Resources

- American Medical Association: [Caregiver Self-Assessment](#)
- University of South Carolina: [Dementia Dialogues Training® and Videos](#)
- Resources for Integrated Care: [Managing Behaviors Associated With Dementia: Resource Guides](#)
- Alzheimer's Association: [Support Group Lookup Tool](#)

Alzheimer's Greater Los Angeles

- [Caregiver Identification Tool](#)
- [Care Needs Assessment Tool](#)
- [IDEA! Strategy for Managing Challenging Behaviors](#)
- [Plain Language Fact Sheets \(English and Spanish\)](#)
- [Dementia Care Management Toolkit](#) including caregiver assessment and support strategies

Better Partnerships with Community-Based Organizations

Individuals with dementia and their caregivers can benefit from the services of community-based organizations (CBOs) like local Alzheimer's organizations, but they may not know where to start. Partnerships between health plans and CBOs can facilitate connections to CBOs for caregivers and the people they support. To better connect caregivers to resources that CBOs offer, health plans and providers can adopt a tool like the [Alz Direct Connect Referral Form](#) to share information with local CBOs. The CBO staff will use the information to contact the family and offer their services. CBOs may also provide training appropriate for health plan staff, care managers, caregivers, and other stakeholders.

Partnering health plans and CBOs will need to invest time in order to understand one another's approaches and services to create effective relationships. For example, CBOs may not have capacity for large quantities of referrals. Additionally, health plans will need to coordinate carefully to ensure CBOs meet privacy and security requirements. Partners can work together to protect individuals' information and provide realistic timelines to families. By proactively identifying individuals with dementia and collaborating with the caregivers and CBOs who support them, health plans can lead the development of dementia-capable systems of care.

This tip sheet supplements the 2017 Geriatric-Competent Care webinar, Applying Promising Practices to Advance Care for Medicare-Medicaid Enrollees with Dementia. Find the recording, transcript, and slides here: https://www.resourcesforintegratedcare.com/GeriatricCompetentCare/2017_GCC_Webinar_Series/Applying_Promising_Practices. This document sources information from the webinar. Thank you to the presenters: Debra Cherry, Executive Vice President, Alzheimer's Greater Los Angeles; Teeshla Curtis, Program Manager, Healthy Connections Prime, South Carolina Department of Human Services; Linda Wade-Bickel, Director of Care Management, Health Net, and Tracey Brown-Lindsey, Family Caregiver.

The Medicare-Medicaid Coordination Office (MMCO) in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) seeks to help beneficiaries dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid have access to seamless, high-quality health care that includes the full range of covered services in both programs. This tip sheet is intended to support health plans and providers in integrating and coordinating care for dually eligible beneficiaries. It does not convey current or anticipated health plan or provider requirements. For additional information, please go to <https://www.resourcesforintegratedcare.com/>.