



Dealing with Dementia: Resources for Smaller Assisted Living Facilities

It is likely that some residents in your facility have some of the symptoms of dementia and/or psychiatric illness. ALF staff must be prepared, even if there has not been a formal diagnosis.

Recent studies have shown that **as many as three-quarters of the residents in assisted living facilities have some form of cognitive problem**. ALF operators will be interested to know that a major ongoing research effort in this area is the [Maryland Assisted Living Study](#). Of particular interest is the finding that caregivers and family members often failed to recognize the symptoms of dementia. In addition, many residents with these problems were able to live in ALFs without special "dementia programs" because the residents did not exhibit behavior problems. Also see the [easy-to-read presentation notes](#) on this [study plus a short technical overview](#) from the lead researcher.

The **special requirements for an Alzheimer unit or program at an ALF** are detailed in [COMAR 10.07.14.06 E](#) and include a description of the specialized care and environment that you will provide. These criteria must be met at the time you apply for license renewal. A written description of a special Alzheimer unit or program must be given to:

- DHMH at the time you apply for or renew your license, and
- anyone who asks for it. (MD Code, [Health - General, § 20-109](#))

Also see **Maryland regulations on training on dementia care** – [COMAR 10.07.02.07-1](#)

Finding Resources

On-line Resource Center - A useful place to start to locate tips and tools to help you care for residents with dementia is the [Alzheimer's Resource Room](#) on the Department of Health and Human Services website. It has a special section for professionals and includes dementia assessment tools. Also see:

- The Alzheimer's Association has published [28 page report of recommendations](#) for the care of persons with dementia at the end of life while living in assisted living or nursing homes.
- Guidelines for caring for residents with [dementia during a disaster](#)
- A 3 page set of tips for professionals from the nonprofit [American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging \(AAHSA\)](#), together with several aging-services and consumer organizations, recently developed guidelines you can use to provide care to individuals with dementias during and in the aftermath of a disaster.

24 Hour Helpline - The Alzheimer's Association also operates a 24/7 telephone helpline, available 365 days a year, that serves people with memory loss, caregivers, health care professionals, and the public. To contact them anytime call: 1-800-272-3900.

On-line chat room for health care professionals – The Alzheimer's Association operates message boards and chat rooms that provide an online communication forum. Topic titles include "[Health Care Professionals](#)".

An [overview of the basics of Alzheimer's Disease](#) - (one form of dementia) from the publishers of the Physician's Desk Reference. The language is fairly technical, and the most useful section is the table describing the symptoms of the various stages of the disease.

End of Life Care Recommendations - The Alzheimer's Association has published [28 page report of recommendations](#) for the care of persons with dementia at the end of life while living in assisted living or nursing homes.

The **National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners** - a professional association whose website includes a useful [calendar of training events](#) (some in Maryland).

Publications – The following resources were collected as part of the Federal Administration on Aging's Alzheimer's Demonstration Program. The listing was excerpted from the [AoA Directory of Publications](#)

[EI Portal: Latino Alzheimer's Project Replication Manual](#)

[Guide for Caregivers](#)

[Guidelines for Alzheimer's Disease Management](#)

[Home Is Where I Remember Things: A Curriculum for Home and Community Alzheimer Care \(Revised\)](#)

[Information Fact Sheets](#)

[Teleconference Info-Pack: Special Issues in Dementia Care \(Medication, Mobility and Physical Safety\)](#)

- **EI Portal: Latino Alzheimer's Project Replication Manual**

Description:

A comprehensive manual on meeting the needs of Latinos suffering from Alzheimer's disease based on the Demonstration in California. Includes sections on outreach, community involvement, and sensitivity to cultural values. This manual includes findings based on data available from the demonstration. It highlights project activities which creatively served to empower caregivers and integrate services into the community. To receive your copy, visit the [Los Angeles Alzheimer's Association's](#) website.

Format: Manual

Purpose: Specialized education

Targeted Cultural Group: Spanish speaking population

Author/Producer: California Demonstration Project staff

Contact Source: Los Angeles Alzheimer's Association

Phone numbers: (323) 938-3379

Audience: Service providers

Reference #: 23

- **Home Is Where I Remember Things: A Curriculum for Home and Community Alzheimer Care (Revised)**

Description:

This booklet incorporates much of the material in the previous book's contents and handouts and broadens the audience to include adult day service personnel and family members. Similar to the first booklet, sample families are presented representing the early, middle, and late stages of Alzheimer's disease. For your copy, you can visit the [Duke Family Support Program](#) website or call them at (919) 684-3748. The cost is \$15.00.

Format: Training Manual

Purpose: Training care providers

Targeted Cultural Group: General

Author/Producer: Lisa Gwyther, MSW and Edna Ballard, MSW

Contact Source: Marian Sigmon

Phone numbers: (919) 733-0440

Audience: Families, persons caring for individuals with Alzheimer's disease in adult day services, or in-home service or assisted living staff

Reference #: 29

The following publications were found to have been out of print as of October 2007. However, you can contact the [Federal Administration on Aging](#) to request a copy.

- **Guide for Caregivers**

Description:

A general guide for professional and family caregivers, this booklet covers care planning, communication issues, activity and behavior management, problems and approaches for difficult behaviors, and a bibliography.

Format: Guide

Purpose: Education

Targeted Cultural Group: General

Author/Producer: Alzheimer's Care Center, Gardiner, Maine

Contact Source: Alzheimer's Care Center

Phone numbers: (207) 626-1770

Audience: General

Reference #: 26

- **Guidelines for Alzheimer's Disease Management**

Description:

This clinical practice guideline represents core care recommendations for Alzheimer's disease management that are clear, measurable, practical, and based on scientific evidence, as available. The intended audience for this guideline is primary care practitioners including physicians, nurses, and social workers.

Format: Guidelines

Purpose: Promote a standard of care in treatment of Alzheimer's disease

Targeted Cultural Group: General

Author/Producer: California Workgroup on Alzheimer's Disease Management

Contact Source: Elizabeth Heck, LCSW

Phone numbers: (312) 335-9602

Audience: Primary care providers

Reference #: 27

- **Information Fact Sheets**

Description:

A collection of fact sheets on memory loss, maintaining intimacy, sexuality, challenging behaviors, and depression in association with Alzheimer's disease.

Format: Pamphlets

Purpose: Specialized education

Targeted Cultural Group: General

Author/Producer: Project Cope, South Carolina

Contact Source: Barbara Kelley

Phone numbers: (803) 737-7500

Audience: Caregivers and families

Reference #: 32

- **Teleconference Info-Pack: Special Issues in Dementia Care (Medication, Mobility and Physical Safety)**

Description:

This information packet provides literature designed to educate professionals and families about medication, mobility, and safety precautions for those with dementia.

Created: 1996

Format: Handbook

Purpose: Training

Targeted Cultural Group: General

Author/Producer: University of Michigan Older Americans Independence Center and Alzheimer's Disease Research Center

Contact Source: Irene Kazieczko, Department of Community Health

Phone numbers: (517) 373-2845

Audience: Health professionals, service providers, and families

Reference #: 40

Source: Legal Aid Bureau's [Maryland Legal Assistance Network](#), in partnership with the [Senior Legal Helpline](#), and the [Assisted Living Project](#) the under a grant from the [Maryland Department on Aging](#) to the [Legal Aid Bureau](#).

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