

factsheet

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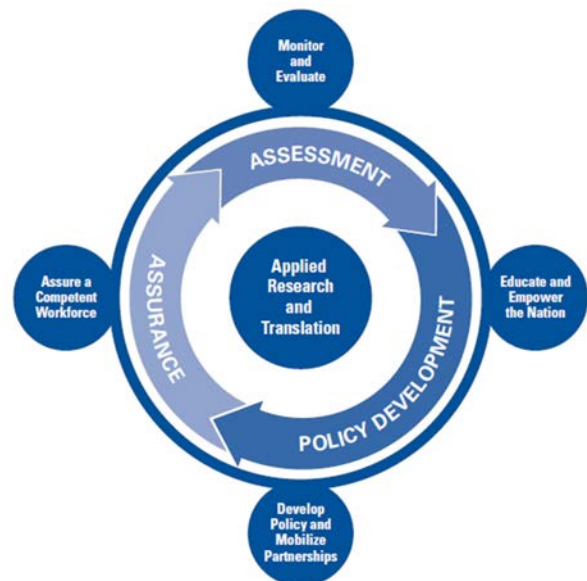
The Public Health Road Map

What is the *Public Health Road Map*?

- The Alzheimer's Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Healthy Aging Program have developed the second in a series of road maps – *The Healthy Brain Initiative: The Public Health Road Map for State and National Partnerships, 2013-2018* – to advance cognitive health as a vital, integral component of public health.
- The document, which was developed with input from more than 280 experts in the field, outlines how state and local public health agencies and their partners can promote cognitive functioning, address cognitive impairment, and help meet the needs of caregivers.

Why is the *Road Map* important?

- The *Road Map* provides a foundation for the public health community to address the growing Alzheimer's crisis through the traditional tools of public health.
- While the federal government plays a critical role in leading and funding efforts to address Alzheimer's disease, state and local agencies organize and provide public health services at the community level.
- By strengthening the capacity of public health agencies to address healthy aging and leveraging strong state and national partnerships, cognitive health can be incorporated into ongoing public health efforts.



What does the *Road Map* include?

- The *Road Map* contains 35 specific action items that public health agencies and their partners can do over the next five years to address cognitive health and to meet the needs of caregivers.
- These action items align with the Essential Services of Public Health: monitor and evaluate; develop policy and mobilize partnerships; assure a competent workforce; and educate and empower the nation.

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What are some *Monitor and Evaluate* action items that public health officials can undertake?

- Implement the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System's cognitive and caregiver modules – and use the data to inform public health programming.
- Support needs assessments to identify racial/ethnic; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender; socioeconomic; and geographic disparities related to cognitive health and impairment.
- Define the needs of caregivers and individuals with dementia, including Alzheimer's disease and those with younger-onset, as they relate to employment and employers.

What are some examples for *Develop Policies and Mobilize Partnerships*?

- Collaborate in the development, implementation and maintenance of state Alzheimer's plans.
- Integrate cognitive health and impairment into state and local government plans (such as aging, coordinated chronic disease, preparedness, falls and transportation plans).
- Integrate *Healthy People 2020* objectives on "Older Adults" and "Dementias, including Alzheimer's disease" into state-based plans.

What can public health agencies do to *Assure a Competent Workforce*?

- Support continuing education efforts that improve health care providers' ability to recognize early signs of dementia and to offer counseling to individuals and their care partners.
- Educate health care providers about validated cognitive assessment tools.

What are some ways to *Educate and Empower the Nation*?

- Identify and promote culturally-appropriate strategies designed to increase public awareness about dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, to reduce conflicting messages, decrease stigma and promote early diagnosis.
- Disseminate evidence-based messages about risk reduction for preserving cognitive health, particularly by integrating such messages into existing public health campaigns.
- Promote advance care planning and advance financial planning to care partners, families and individuals with dementia in the early stages before function declines.
- Develop strategies to promote the availability of services for people with younger-onset dementia, including Alzheimer's disease.

What must be done to successfully implement the *Road Map*?

- Effective implementation of the *Road Map* requires participation by, and partnerships between, private, non-profit and governmental partners at the national, state and local levels.
- State and local public health agencies must use the *Road Map* as a guide in incorporating cognitive health into their work; identify those action items that best fit their missions, needs, interests and capabilities; and leverage partnerships to implement those specific items.

For More Information

To read a copy of the complete *Road Map*, examine all 35 action items and find out how you can help implement the *Road Map*, visit alz.org/publichealth.