

Facts about Alzheimer's disease & other dementias



Did you know?

- Together, Alzheimer's disease and other dementias make up the third leading cause of death in the state of Washington, and the fifth leading cause of death in the nation.
- Pain and symptom management are often under-treated at the end of life for these patients.
- Access to quality palliative and end-of-life care is under-utilized for many reasons. These include:
 - Lack of advanced care planning
 - Family guilt in worrying if "enough" is being done
 - A medical profession with increasingly complex and sophisticated procedures which can prolong dying, while eroding the quality of life.

Become informed

The Alzheimer's Disease Plan for Washington state was presented to the state legislature in February 2016 in recognition of the ongoing complexities and reach of this disease. We encourage everyone to educate themselves about this disease and the impact it has on the families living with it every day. Know the resources that are available in the community. The Alzheimer's Association, www.alz.org is a comprehensive resource for education, outreach and resource groups.

Start the conversation

Initiatives are springing up across the United States to encourage early conversations about what your wishes might be if you were faced with a life-limiting illness and were no longer able to make your own decisions. The [Conversation Project](#) and [Honoring Choices](#) are two initiatives gaining momentum. Download your free [conversation starter kit](#) today.

Talk early and often

Discuss advanced care planning for your health as often as you discuss your financial planning. Recognize that as you age, your plans may change. Let those who love you the most know your wishes, so that they can advocate for the care you would want at the end of life. If you are unclear on how to get started, ask your health care provider for support and paperwork. Not sure how to bring this up with your doctor? The Conversation Project offers a free printable guide, [How to Talk to Your Doctor](#).

Don't wait. It always seems too early...until it's too late.