

THE GUIDED LIGHT

LA CROSSE COUNTY'S DEMENTIA NEWSLETTER
FOR HOPE, SUPPORT, AND RESOURCES

Person-Centered Care



Care for persons living with dementia and cognitive impairment can be complex, sensitive, and require the coordination of many other people (such as caregivers, loved ones, families, and providers). A person-centered care approach prioritizes an individual's unique needs and preferences, ensuring they are actively involved in decision-making. This approach enhances health outcomes and fosters a sense of dignity and empowerment for people with dementia.

Defining Person-Centered Care

Person-centered care occurs when decisions about a person's care are always made keeping the focus centered on the individual, their values, preferences, and goals for both their health and overall quality of life.

Care that is person-centered requires an ongoing relationship between the individual, others who are important to them, and all relevant providers, or the **care team**.



Re-Imagining Care Teams

Traditionally, care teams are thought of as being composed of medical professionals that serve as sole decision-makers for patient care plans. However, as many of us know, care plans can look quite different for persons living with dementia.

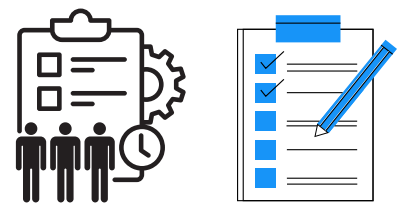
Therefore, **care plans for persons living with dementia** have been recently re-defined to include all professionals and non-professionals involved in the coordination of services and resources for this population and/or their caregivers.

Keep reading to gain tips on how to ensure the care plan for the person in your life living with dementia is person-centered.

Did you know...

The term "person-centered" care is used now as opposed to "patient-centered" care? This helps remind us that our loved one living with dementia is much more than a patient. They are a person with a rich life history that we can learn about to provide the best care possible for them.

Important Elements of Care Plans for Persons Living with Dementia



Personal Liberties

Independence and Choice

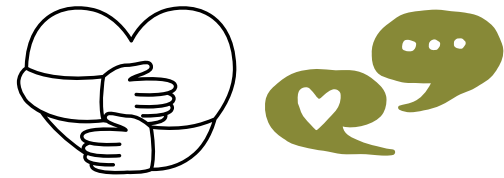
Individualized Care and Services

Meaningful Activities

Environment and Living Space

Communication Through Behaviors

How-To Make Care Plans Person-Centered



Personal Liberties - Despite their level of memory loss or cognitive impairment, persons living with dementia deserve both dignity and respect. Even when they cannot fully understand the conversation, use your body language and facial cues to engage them in decision-making regarding changes to medication, driving, and other elements of treatment.

Independence and Choice - Allow your loved one living with dementia to communicate their preferences, natural supports, routines, and helpful relationships in order to develop and target the care plan. Consider unique forms of communication such as talking mats, digital assistance, and writing when applicable.

Individualized Care and Services - There is no “one size fits all” for long-term care for persons living with dementia. Work diligently and patiently with your loved one, health care providers, and all other relevant assistance to develop a care plan that empowers the individual. This includes targeting the care plan around the the cultural and historical medical experiences and preferences of the person living with dementia.

Meaningful Activities - Consider enrolling your loved one in local programs that increase their stimulation and social interaction. Great examples of such services are highlighted later in this issue. Just as the medical elements of care plans can be tailored to the person’s cultural and historical preferences, so can the therapeutic elements! You may want to perform a “social assessment” for your loved one living with dementia to discover more about their culture, experiences, and overall life story, and how this may impact incorporating activities into the care plan.

Environment and Living Space - Create an environment that limits fall risk, negates distractions, and promotes easy, accessible daily functioning for persons living with dementia. For situations where there will be less control of the environment, such as while traveling, grocery shopping, or in waiting rooms, prepare a plan with your loved one to help them communicate their needs and limit triggers.

Communication Through Behaviors - Persons living with dementia may communicate their needs in ways that we cannot understand yet. Sometimes, this may present as behavioral and psychological symptoms (which over 90% of persons living with dementia experience) that are challenging for caregivers. Try to learn what your loved one may be trying to communicate about their comfort level, their hunger, or triggers in their surrounding environment. This can assist with more quick redirecting and ensuring the care plan is back on track.

Benefits of Person-Centered Care



For the person...

- improved quality of life
 - medical interventions
 - therapeutic interventions
- improvement/maintenance of cognitive function
- engagement with fun activities
 - reminiscence
 - music therapy
 - cognitive therapy
 - multisensory stimulation
- reduction of behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia, such as:
 - depression
 - agitation
 - neurological/psychiatric symptoms

For the care team...

Person-centered care can limit the burden faced by caregivers in managing the symptoms that are very common among persons living with dementia. Know that if you are still working to understand your care partner, that patience and connection is exactly what they are needing at this time. Be patient with yourself and your care partner as you work to overcome these challenges and center their care plans around their needs and preferences!

Symptoms of dementia that over 90% of persons living with experience...

- aggression
- anxiety
- apathy
- sleep disruption
- vocally disruptive behaviors
- wandering
- out-of-character behaviors





MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

April - May - June 2025

Don't Miss These Programs/Events This Quarter

- Giving Hearts Choir Performance **Fri. April 4th @ 11:00am** at North Presbyterian Church
- Savvy Caregiver Education **Mondays April 7-May 19, 9:00am-11:30am** @First Free Church (123 Mason St.) Onalaska. Gain knowledge to manage daily care, skills to adjust approach and confidence to set and achieve caregiving goals. Register 608-785-5700
- Dementia Live - **April 14, Session all day** at Mayo Clinic Health System- La Crosse (Marycrest Room) Register for 1 hour session, Call 608-785-5700 or online <https://tinyurl.com/y547njkp>
- Spring Memory Camp **Tuesdays April 29-June 3 10:30a-1:30p** at The Nature Place. Details and to register, call Oasis 608-780-0471
- Learn & Connect **Thursdays May 1-22, 2-3pm** at GHS East Building, 3rd Floor Neurology. Cognitive & Memory Loss Education for new diagnosis, early-stage caregiving. Register: 608-785-5700
- Giving Hearts Choir Performance **Friday, May 2nd @ 11:30am** at St. Mary's Church in Onalaska

- Healthy Living with Mild Cognitive Impairment Education Series **Friday June Date 13, 9:00-11:30am**, Black River Beach Neighborhood. Register: Call 608-785-5700
- Levity on a Sunday **May 18th 11am - 1pm** at The Nature Place Myrick Park - La Crosse



Save the Date!

2nd Annual Conference:
Bringing Hope & Light to the Dementia Journey

Keynote Speaker: Jolene Brackey
Author of Creating Moments of Joy

On site respite available

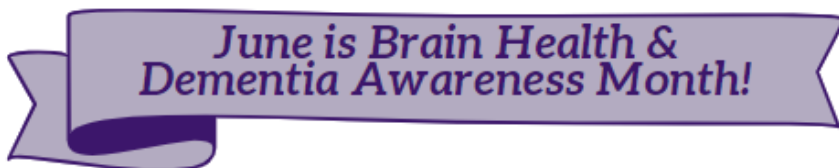
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|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Date: August 13, 2025 | Time: 8:30a.m.-3:30p.m. |
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Location:

First Free Church
123 Mason St.
Onalaska, WI 54650

Registration information coming soon!

**FOR MORE ONGOING dementia programs, resources, social activities, caregiver support groups, and more...
Stop by or Call ADRC 608-785-5700**



- **June 5th Brain Checks, Dementia Live, Education on Latest Alzheimer's Research**
Wafer Food Pantry, Call 608-785-5700 for 30-minute Brain check and Live session.
- **June 11th Meet & Greet with Local Author Sharon Lukert *Until My Memory Fails Me.***
Mooney Library at Gundersen Health System La Crosse Hospital. No registration.
- **June 14th 1:30-3pm Book Release Party with Author Sharon Lukert.**
The Nature Place La Crosse. No registration, see you there!
- **June 16th Nourish Your Mind Retreat: Essential Health Practices for Your Brain.**
The La Crosse Family Dahl YMCA. Register, Call 608-519-5473
- **June 18th ENDALZ Fest!** Casino Style fundraiser. Tickets online: endalzfest.com/
- **June 23rd Wine, Women and Dementia Documentary Screening and Alzheimer's Association Walk Kick Off Celebration**
The Weber Center for Performing Arts, La Crosse. Registration preferred, 608-785-5700
- **June 26th 12:30pm Awareness & Misperceptions of Hospice-the Basics**
Holmen Area Community Center. No registration, we will see you there!



For Full Details, Scan or Call 608-785-5700