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Subject: Public Health E-News: SPECIAL ISSUE: Diagnosis of Dementia Not Shared with Patients, Families

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## 2015 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures Released Today: Less Than Half of Seniors Diagnosed with Alzheimer's or Their Caregivers Are Aware of Diagnosis

Among seniors aged 65 and older who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or their caregivers, only 45 percent are aware of the diagnosis, according to the Alzheimer's Association's *2015 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures*, released today. And, among only those diagnosed with the disease, the percentage who know of their diagnosis drops to just 33 percent.

In contrast, 93 percent of people diagnosed with the four most common cancers (breast, colorectal, lung, and prostate) or their caregivers, are aware of the diagnosis. Similarly, 90 percent and 70 percent of individuals diagnosed with heart disease and diabetes, respectively, or their caregivers are aware of the diagnosis.

The need to increase awareness of a dementia diagnosis is a national objective of *Healthy People 2020* in the "Dementias, Including

### The Road Map

The CDC Healthy Aging Program and the Alzheimer's Association partnered to develop an updated Road Map for the public health community to address cognitive health, Alzheimer's disease, and the needs of caregivers through 35 actions.

### Public Health Agenda

The Alzheimer's Association has identified three key elements of an Alzheimer's public health agenda: surveillance, early detection, and promotion of brain health.

### The 10 Warning Signs

The Know the 10 Signs campaign is a national education effort to increase awareness of the warning signs of Alzheimer's disease and

*Alzheimer's Disease* topic area (objective DIA-1). And, the data released today are consistent with the official *Healthy People* **baseline measure** released last summer, which showed only 35 percent of seniors diagnosed with Alzheimer's or dementia or their caregivers were aware of the diagnosis.

The benefits of a prompt and clear explanation of an Alzheimer's or dementia diagnosis include better decision-making and planning, improved medical care (particularly in managing co-occurring chronic conditions), participation in clinical trials, and access to information and support services. State public health officials should integrate the issue of disclosing a dementia diagnosis into their own *Healthy People* efforts by engaging in public awareness efforts and by educating health care professionals about the importance of diagnosing dementia and disclosing that diagnosis to patients or their caregivers.

The annual Facts and Figures report also indicates:

- An estimated 5.3 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease currently, including 200,000 individuals under age 65 who have younger-onset Alzheimer's.
- One in nine seniors has Alzheimer's, with nearly one-third of people aged 85 and older living with the disease.
- By 2050, the number of people aged 65 and older with Alzheimer's is projected to reach 13.8 million and could be as many as 16 million.
- Alzheimer's is the sixth-leading cause of death in the United States and the fifth-leading among seniors.
- In 2015, an estimated 700,000 people aged 65 and older will die with the disease, meaning they developed the disease before they died.
- In 2014, 15.7 million Americans provided 17.9 billion hours of unpaid caregiving – worth an estimated \$217 billion – to loved ones with dementia.
- The cost of caring for those with Alzheimer's will be an estimated \$226 billion in 2015, with Medicare and Medicaid paying over two-thirds of the total.

To read the entire *2015 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures* report or for further information regarding Alzheimer's statistics for your own state, visit [alz.org/facts](http://alz.org/facts).

## Healthy Aging Summit Set for July 2015

The **Healthy Aging Summit**, cosponsored by the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion and the American College of Preventive Medicine, is scheduled for July 27-28, 2015, in Washington, DC. More than 1,000 decision makers from government, academia, public health, and health care will gather to discuss ways to

the benefits of early detection and diagnosis.

## Contact

For more information on the Healthy Brain Initiative, the public health agenda, or Alzheimer's disease in general, contact **Molly French** or check out [alz.org/publichealth](http://alz.org/publichealth).



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