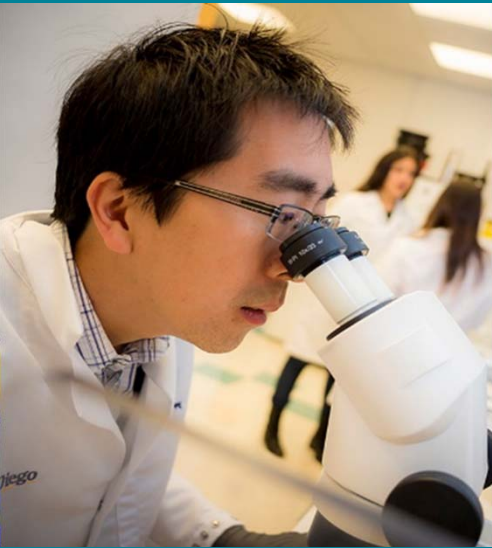




ALZHEIMER'S Project

San Diego unites for a cure and care



ANNUAL REPORT ■ APRIL 2019







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COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Five years ago, San Diego County set out to tackle an emerging public health crisis – the rise in Alzheimer’s disease and other types of dementia.

The Board of Supervisors established The Alzheimer’s Project, an ambitious initiative that is rallying the region around the search for a cure, while also helping families, doctors and others who are on the front lines of this epidemic.

The Project has accomplished a lot over its first five years, but the local challenges posed by Alzheimer’s have only deepened. In just over a decade, the number of San Diegans with Alzheimer’s is expected to exceed 115,000, while the lifetime cost of caring for them will hit an estimated \$52 billion.

This annual report details how far we’ve come since the creation of the initiative, believed to be the only one of its scope and size in the nation. And it outlines what’s ahead.

A special thanks to all those who have joined us in leading The Project, including San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer, philanthropist Darlene Shiley, Dr. Michael Lobatz with Scripps Health, along with the region’s world-class brain researchers and non-profits like Alzheimer’s San Diego.

We’re in this fight for the long haul, knowing that San Diego families are counting on us to do all we can to ease and, hopefully, end this crisis.

Handwritten signature of Dianne Jacob in black ink.

Dianne Jacob
Chairwoman, 2nd District

Handwritten signature of Kristin Gaspar in black ink.

Kristin Gaspar
Supervisor, 3rd District

About The Alzheimer's Project

The Alzheimer's Project aims to address the devastating toll of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias in San Diego County. It brings together teams of experts and decision-makers that include members of our region's top political leadership, research institutions, public universities, health care systems, caregiver groups, and other community organizations. Each of these teams convene to discuss recommendations in four key focus areas of the initiative:



Collaboration4Cure unites scientists and experts to identify strategies to support local Alzheimer's research efforts towards finding a cure.



The **Clinical Roundtable** brings together healthcare providers to discuss strategies to equip practitioners with the knowledge and resources necessary to improve medical care for those with dementia.



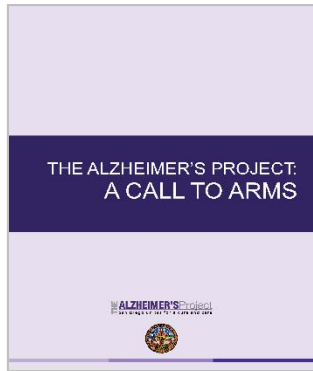
The **Care Roundtable** calls together Alzheimer's caregivers and senior care organizations to explore ways to improve the impact and delivery of services.



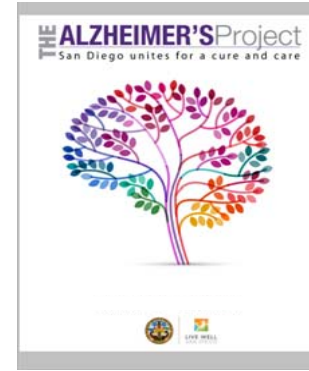
Public Awareness & Education focuses on providing comprehensive, dementia-related information to all San Diegans through various communication channels to increase community knowledge of the disease and its impact on our region.

The Alzheimer's Project aligns with the Building Better Health and Living Safely components of the County of San Diego's (County) 2019-2024 Strategic Plan, as well as the County's *Live Well San Diego* vision of a region that is Building Better Health, Living Safely, and Thriving. Efforts of The Alzheimer's Project are also enhanced by components of Age Well San Diego, the County's initiative to create age-friendly and dementia-friendly communities. Headway has been made on multiple fronts since the project launched; however, the number of people affected by this disease is projected to rise significantly.

Project Milestones



March 2015
San Diego County Board of Supervisors approve regional strategy recommended by roundtable groups



July 2017
The Clinical Roundtable launches AlzDxRx, a mobile app for AD/DR that practitioners can use at point of care

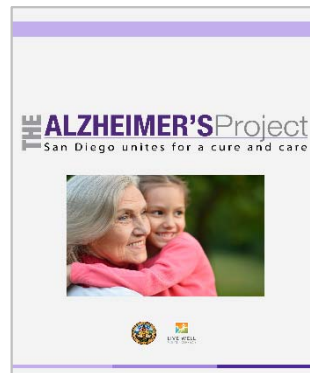
2014

2015

2016

2017

May 2014
San Diego County Board of Supervisors unanimously vote to launch The Alzheimer's Project



THE ALZHEIMER'S Project
San Diego unites for a cure and care

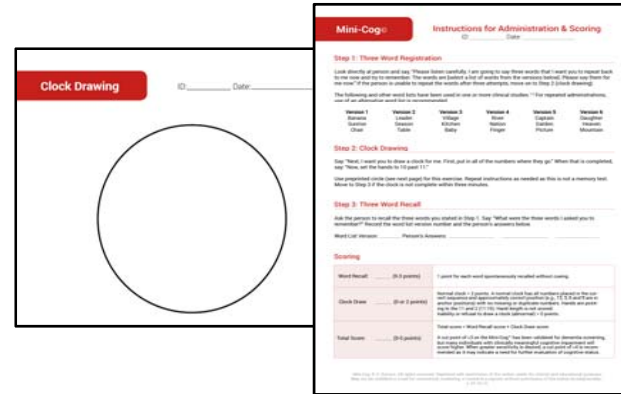
March 2016
San Diego County kicks off 5-year Age Well San Diego journey to promote age-friendly, dementia-friendly communities





June 2018

Alzheimer's Response Team (ART) pilot project launches to address needs of seniors in crisis



October 2018

FIRST project begins services for clients with dementia, including screenings to promote early diagnosis

2018

April 2018

\$1.3M NIH grant awarded to Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute, a Collaboration4Cure partner



National Institutes of Health

July 2018

Clinical Roundtable ramps up physician education efforts throughout the county



December 2018

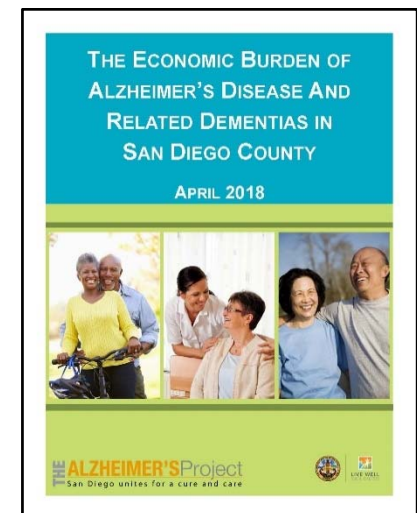
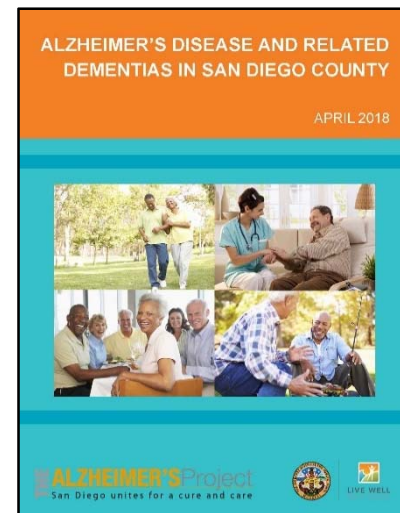
Enrollment in Take Me Home Program surpasses 2,300; over 1,000 registrants identified as people living with dementia



Alzheimer's Disease in San Diego County

Since 2015, Alzheimer's disease has been recognized as the third leading cause of death among San Diego County residents.¹ An estimated 84,405 adults age 55 and older are living with some form of dementia and this number is projected to increase to more than 115,000 by 2030.^{2,3} The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency released two reports in April 2018 detailing the latest information on Alzheimer's disease in San Diego County. These documents provide information on dementia, prevalence estimates, the number of caregivers, and caregiving costs.

One report delves into the economic burden associated with dementia. It is now said that Alzheimer's disease is the most expensive disease in the nation, with associated costs higher than those of both cancer and heart disease. Some of the costs described in the report include long-term care costs, caregiver healthcare costs, and hospitalization charges. The impact that Alzheimer's disease has on San Diego health systems and the local economy is also discussed. Researchers estimate that between informal caregiving, out-of-pocket costs, and Medicaid and Medicare expenditures, the lifetime cost for a person living with dementia is over \$320,000.⁴ Both reports may be found online and downloaded for free at SDHealthStatistics.com.




Promising Research Points to Prevention

While no known cure, cause, or effective treatment for Alzheimer's disease exists, recent research suggests that a third of dementia cases may be delayed or prevented. Many experts agree that the majority of dementia cases develop as a result of complex interactions among multiple factors. These factors may include age, environment, genetics, and other medical conditions, as well as life circumstances and behaviors.

Local public health experts synthesized recent research findings and developed a framework that may help people to conceptualize their risk. The framework highlights five factors and five conditions that have been linked to dementia. The five factors include low education, physical inactivity, poor diet, smoking, and social isolation. The five conditions include depression, diabetes, hypertension, obesity, and untreated hearing loss. This "5-5-35" concept suggests that by addressing these factors and conditions, a person may be able to prevent or reduce their risk of developing dementia up to 35%.^{5,6}

While not all of the factors or conditions identified can be modified or prevented, the prevention of dementia may be approached similarly to the prevention of chronic diseases. Healthy habits such as eating well or engaging in physical activity, which are known to help combat diseases such as diabetes and heart disease, may also help reduce one's risk of developing dementia given the associations between dementia and hypertension, as well as dementia and obesity. Keeping one's mind alert through interacting with others was also recommended by researchers to help prevent dementia. Ultimately, activities that are known to help increase overall health and wellness, may also be essential in maintaining cognitive health.

What if we could prevent
1 in 3 
cases of Alzheimer's Disease
and Related Dementias?

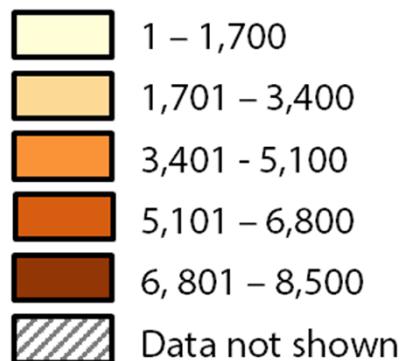


Alzheimer's Disease Increases Countywide

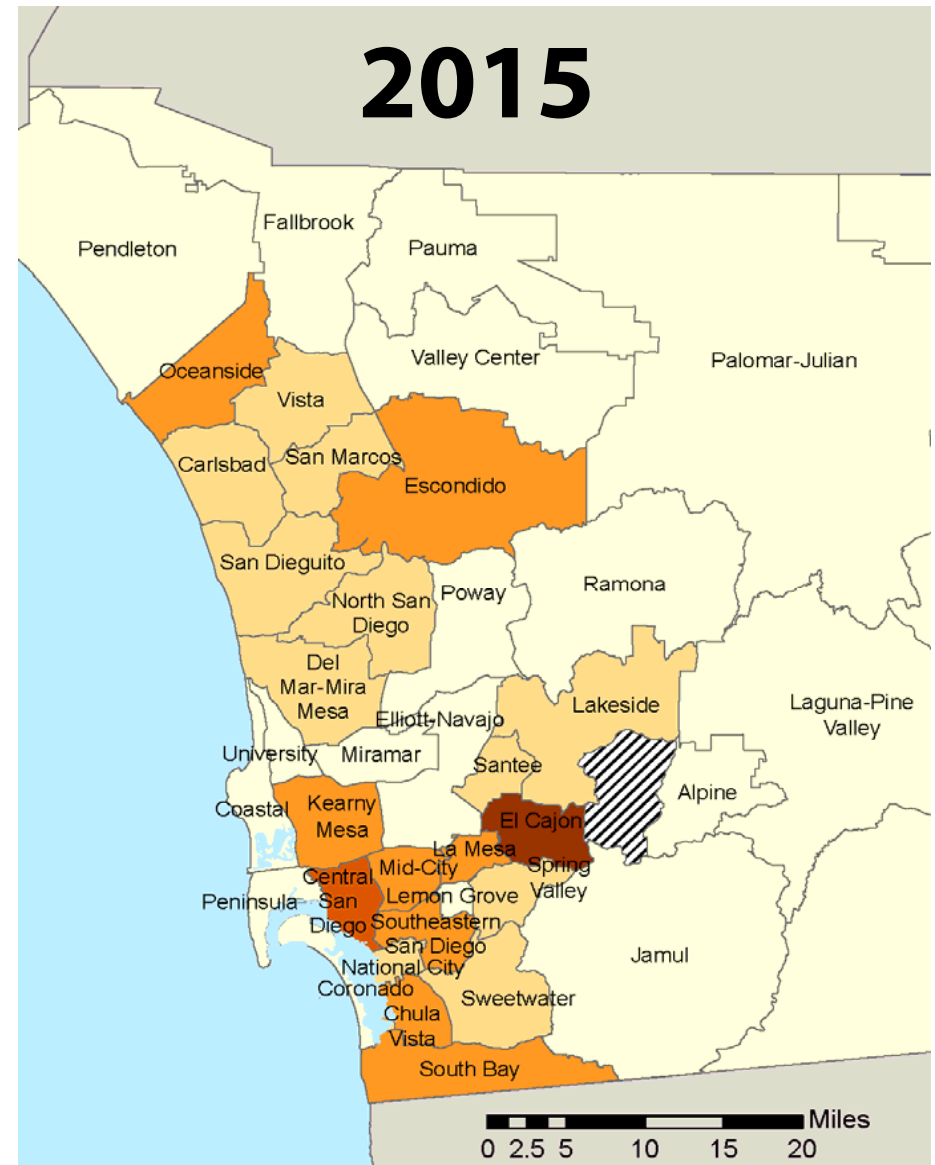
Assuming current data trends continue, the number of people living with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia in San Diego County is projected to increase over 36% by 2030 to an estimated 115,000.^{2,3}

The following maps illustrate the projected increase from 2015 to 2030. Each map shows the number of residents 55 and older estimated to be living with dementia. The darker the color, the higher the concentration of persons living with Alzheimer's disease in that area.

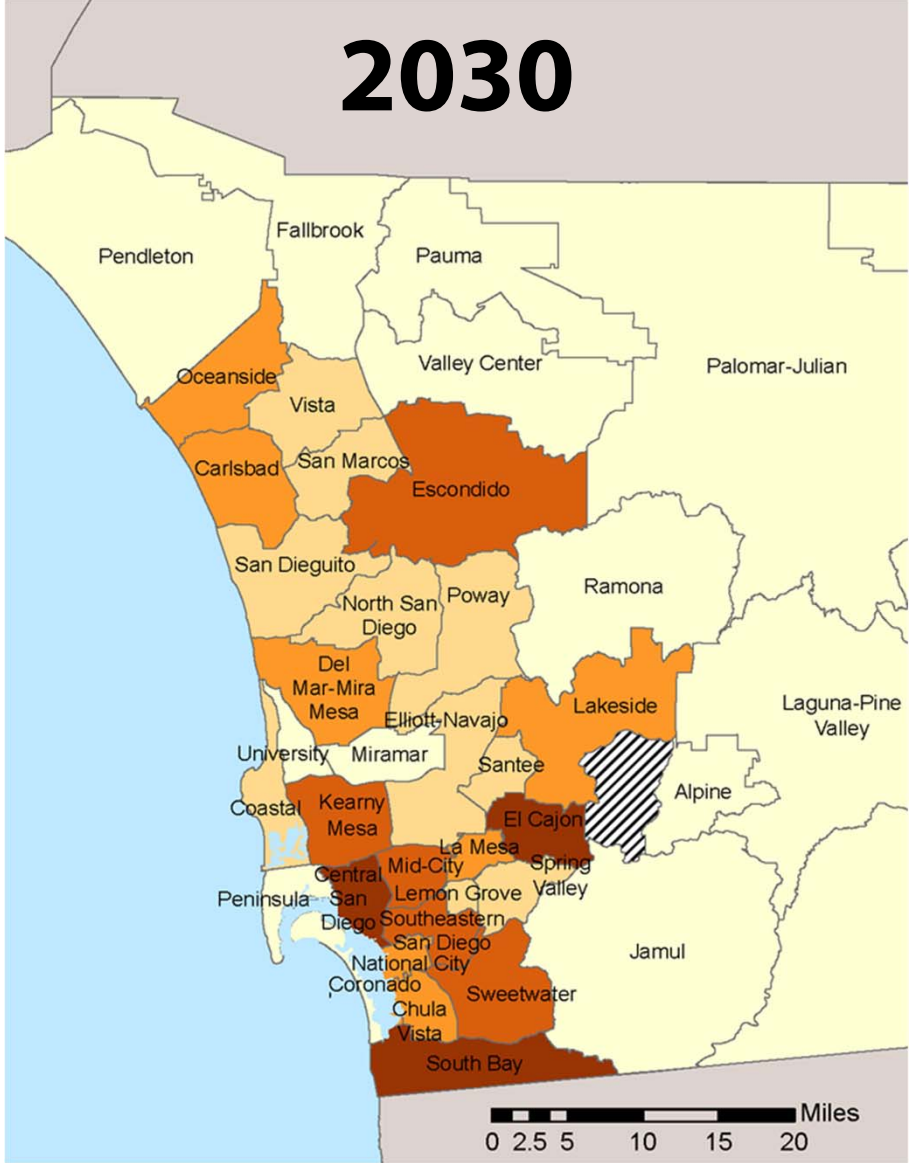
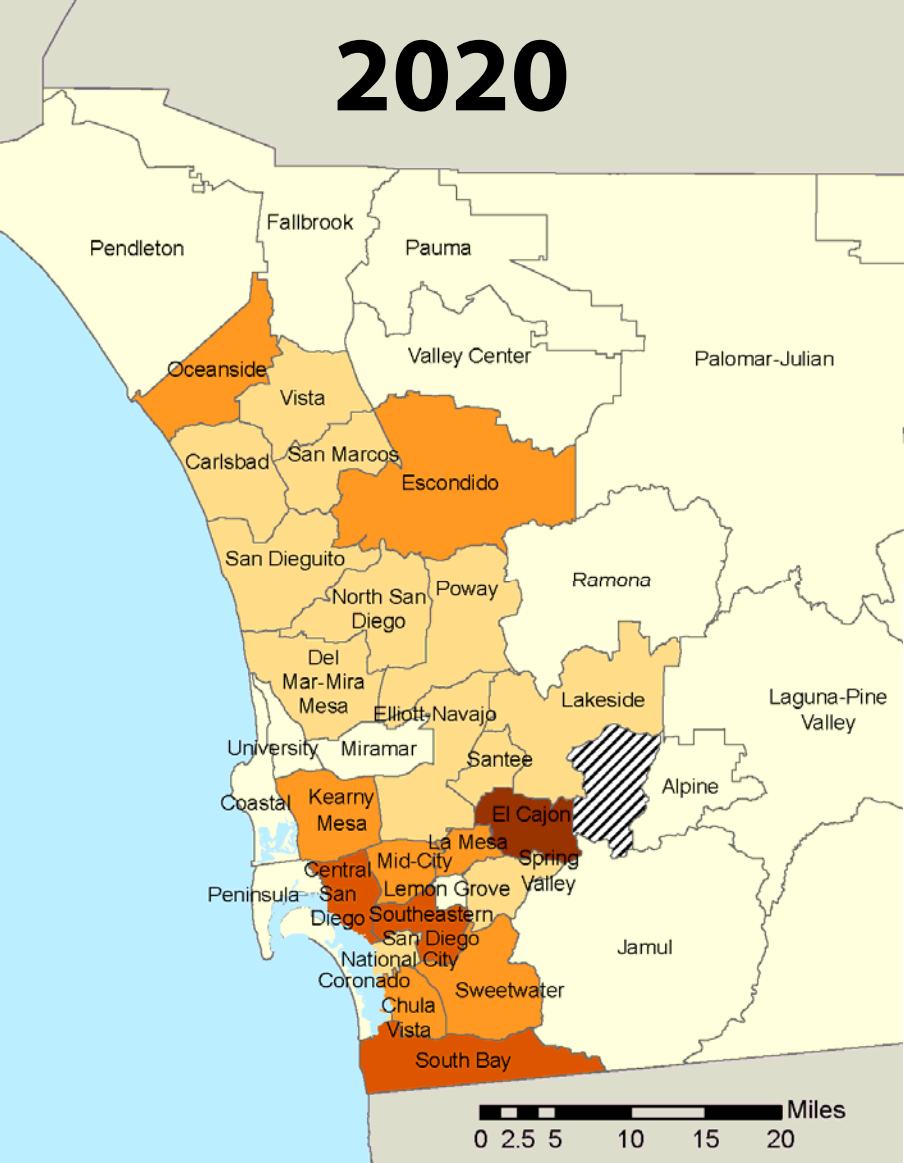
Number of Residents Ages 55+ with ADRD



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By 2030, over 115,000 residents 55 and older are projected to be living with some form of dementia, a 36.5% increase from 2015.^{2,3}



Collaboration4Cure

Collaboration4Cure (C4C) represents a gathering of “the best and brightest” Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias researchers, physicians, and biotechnology representatives based within the San Diego County region.

The group is charged with establishing and managing a regional fund to harvest promising local research ideas and put them on a path towards identifying effective therapies for the disease. C4C is led by Alzheimer’s San Diego, in partnership with the County of San Diego and City of San Diego, and five of San Diego’s premier research institutes: The Salk Institute; Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute; Scripps Research Institute; University of California, San Diego; and the J. Craig Venter Institute.



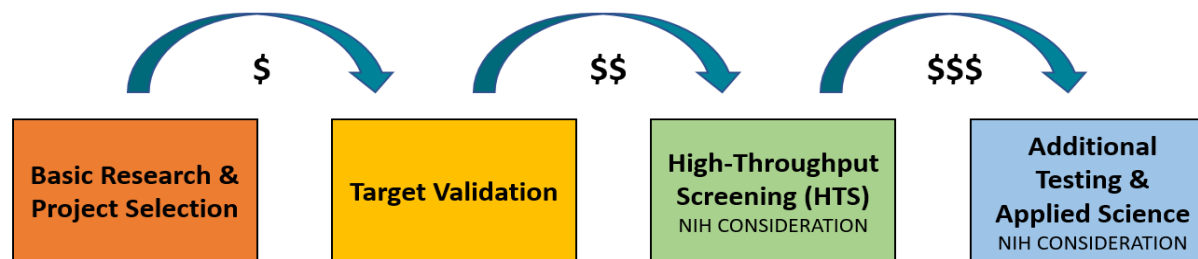
Leveraging Resources through the C4C Model



Collaboration4Cure (C4C) bridges the gap between academic research and drug development by creating a pipeline for drug discovery projects in San Diego County, and establishing a mechanism for evaluating and funding local dementia research. The program supports projects conceived by San Diego-based researchers and helps propel basic research toward drug discovery. C4C funding increases as selected projects achieve key research milestones and advance projects to more expensive drug discovery stages.

The C4C program is unique in that projects selected for funding are awarded in the form of access to facilities at either Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute (SBP Discovery) or Scripps Research Institute (Scripps). These institutions house the specialized equipment necessary to conduct neuroimaging, robotic drug screening, and other high-level procedures for drug discovery. In particular, C4C projects gain access to technology for high-throughput screening (HTS), a scientific method in which thousands of experimental samples may be subjected to simultaneous testing under given conditions - a method that expedites scientific testing.

An annual Call for Proposals is issued each year to identify projects for C4C's pipeline. Scientists must have completed basic research to identify a target associated with dementia prior to applying. Selected projects move on to leverage the equipment at SBP or Scripps to perform tests to validate project hypotheses. Projects that complete target validation receive larger C4C support and move on to additional testing and HTS screening to refine findings. Projects reaching this point are considered for drug development and require additional resources to conduct the applied science necessary to develop a drug. The most promising C4C projects are submitted to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as Research Project Grant proposals. Federal grants of this nature provide support for health-related research and development, including efforts to identify a cure for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Since 2015, C4C has selected twelve projects, five of which remain active and are advancing toward NIH grant applications.



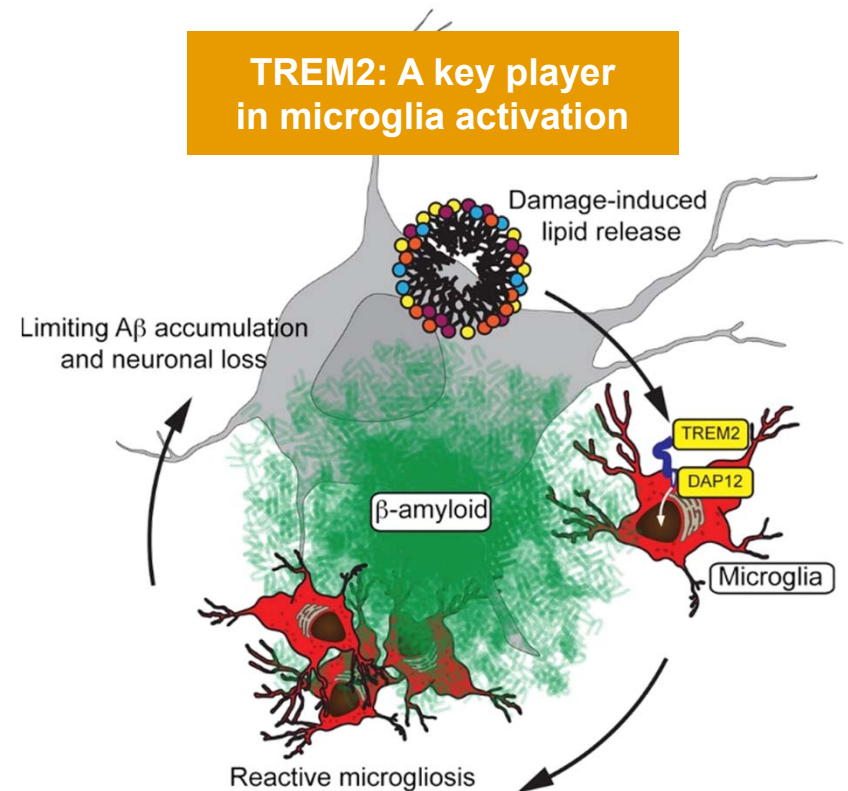


Federal Grant Bolsters San Diego Research on Gene Associated with Late-Onset Alzheimer's Disease (LOAD)

This past year, Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute (SBP Discovery) received \$1.3 million from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to fund three years of critical Alzheimer's disease research. SBP Discovery is one of five research institutions participating in Collaboration4Cure.

The goal of the project is to help identify prototype drugs that can bind with and help moderate the activity of a specific gene called TREM2 (Triggering Receptor Expressed on Myeloid Cells 2) that is prevalent in cases of Late-Onset Alzheimer's disease (LOAD). LOAD is the most common form of Alzheimer's and accounts for the majority of dementia cases in adults 65 and older. Researchers have recently identified that mutations of the TREM2 gene correlate with a significantly increased risk of developing this form of dementia.

In the brain, TREM2 may be found in certain brain cells called microglia. TREM2 helps to regulate the production of inflammatory proteins involved with cell communication. It is also associated with cell survival and brain cell phagocytosis, the process by which a cell may engulf or destroy foreign particles or microorganisms like bacteria. Recently, a variant of TREM2 was found to increase the risk of Alzheimer's disease 3-fold through abnormal activation of microglia. Researches are currently seeking drugs that restore TREM2 activation of microglia to normal levels.



COLLABORATION4CURE
END ALZHEIMER'S

SBP Sanford Burnham Prebys
MEDICAL DISCOVERY INSTITUTE

The NIH funding comes as a three-year grant to help support continued testing of more than a million chemical compounds that may affect the expression of the TREM2 gene. The research team aims to increase understanding of both the biology of the gene, and its role in the pathology of the disease, to advance the long-term goal of developing a disease-modifying treatment.



National Support for Alzheimer's Disease Research

The NIH leads research efforts to prevent and treat dementia. Since 2015, congressional legislation has required that the NIH prepare a professional judgement budget to estimate additional funding needed each year to help achieve goals outlined in the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease, created in 2012. The National Plan, created under the National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA), established five goals to both prevent future cases of dementia, and to better meet the needs of the millions of families affected by the disease. The ultimate goal of the National Plan is to prevent and effectively treat Alzheimer's disease and related dementias by 2025.

Last March, Congress completed its spending plan for fiscal year 2018, and included funding increases for both Alzheimer's disease and brain research. The approved NIH budget includes a \$414 million increase in new funding for Alzheimer's research efforts and \$140 million for Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies, a national initiative aimed at revolutionizing our understanding of the human brain.

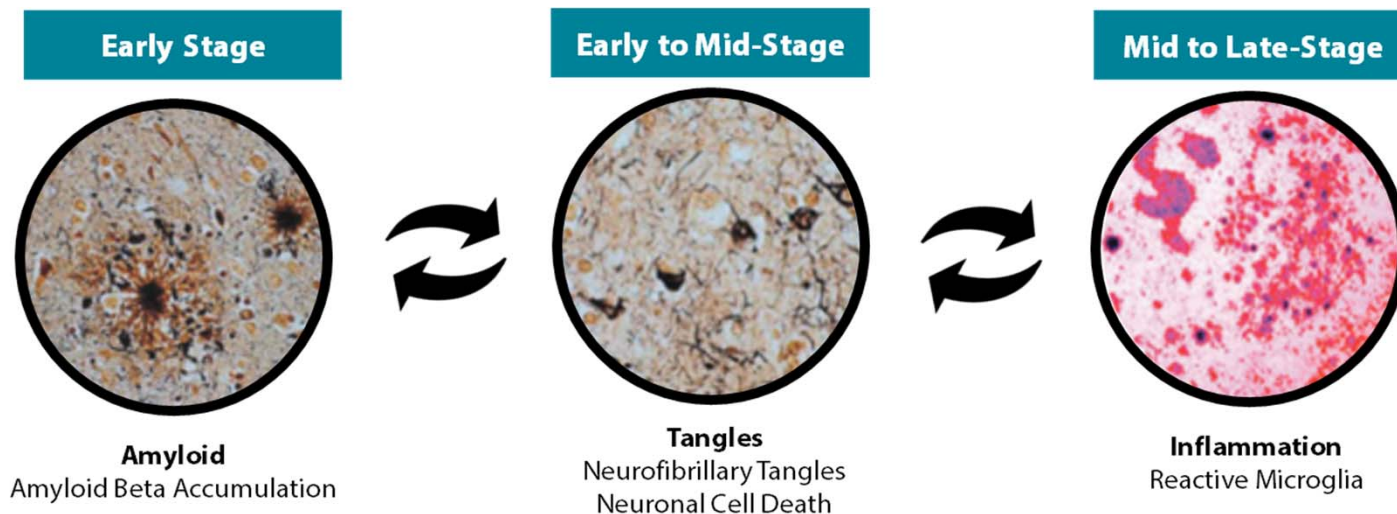


Research Projects Target Dementia Pathways & Disease Stages

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive condition with symptoms that worsen over time. Disease progression is characterized by the development of amyloid plaques and tau tangles resulting in the loss of memory, confusion, and impaired judgement. Treatment of dementia requires unique targets, dependent on the stage of the disease.

- At the early stage, research aims to develop treatments that block or clear beta-amyloid proteins, or “plaques,” and reduce plaque accumulation.
- At the early to mid stage, research aims to develop treatments that block tau proteins, or “tangles,” from forming, in order to protect neurons from stress.
- At the later stages of dementia, research aims to develop treatments that fight inflammation and slow or stop the disease process.

Each stage can interact with the others via continuous feedback loops. For example, late stage inflammation can trigger a new cycle of early stage amyloid deposition or neurofibrillary tangles.



ADAPTED FROM GRAPHIC PROVIDED BY
THE CURE ALZHEIMER'S FUND



Progress Continues on Local Research

After three years, the Collaboration4Cure coalition has funded a total of twelve drug discovery projects led by local researchers. Of the twelve projects funded, five remain currently active. Each active project seeks to target a different dementia pathway or stage. Two projects target amyloid beta accumulation (EphA4 and CRF-R1); one projects targets tangles (MAPT/Tau-RD); and two projects target inflammation (CD33 and TREM2).

Researchers hope to create more opportunities to identify prototype drugs that can aid in the development of disease-modifying therapies. Of the projects progressing, one has received more than one million dollars of grant funding; one is being reviewed for potential grant funding; and the remaining three projects are being used to develop preliminary data for future grant proposals.



Looking Ahead: Collaboration4Cure

On October 26, 2018, C4C announced their 4th Call for Proposals. Full applications for C4C funding were submitted in March 2019. Each proposal is undergoing a rigorous and thorough review process by a panel of esteemed scientists and doctors. Projects of interest will be those that leverage collaboration and can benefit from the drug discovery capabilities and services of the Conrad Prebys Center for Chemical Genomics at Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute. The announcement of selected drug discovery projects to be awarded C4C funding is anticipated for Spring 2019.

Clinical Roundtable

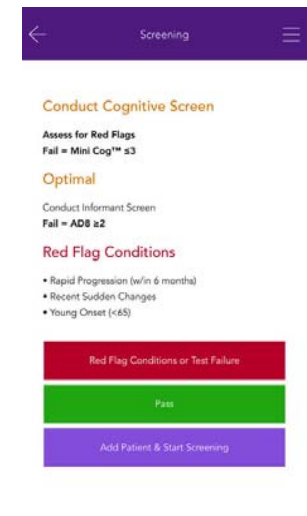
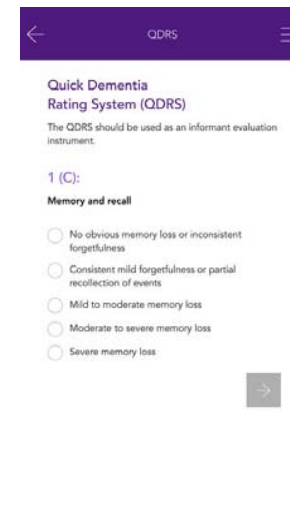
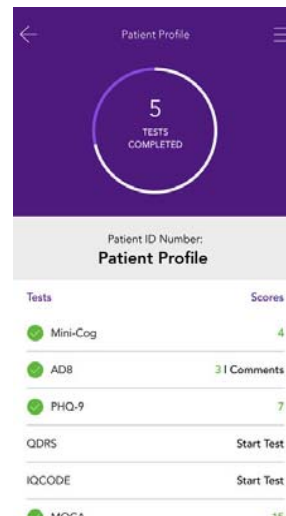
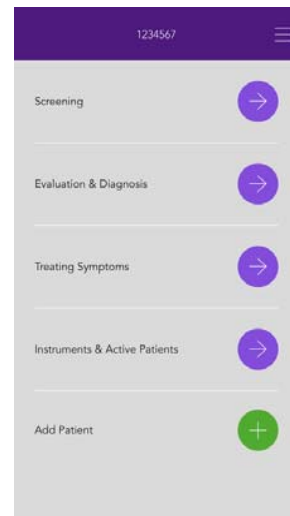
Facilitated by Champions for Health, the Clinical Roundtable brings together neurologists, psychiatrists, geriatricians, and other members of the clinical community to provide expertise regarding the medical care for those living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. The group promotes best practices among primary care physicians who often find themselves on the front lines for screening, evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment of the disease. By helping to identify resources, promote standards and guidelines, and provide tools for effective communication, the Clinical Roundtable increases the capacity of primary care providers to effectively care for people living with Alzheimer's and their families and caregivers.





Updates Made to Physician Guidelines

The first *Physician Guidelines for the Screening, Evaluation, and Disease Management of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (Physician Guidelines)* were developed and published in late 2016. Since then, the Clinical Roundtable continues to review progress in the field and suggestions from those who rely on the guidelines. In December 2018, the Clinical Roundtable published the second edition of the *Physician Guidelines*. Guideline updates take into consideration changes in tools, medications and practices standards, as well as ongoing progress made in evaluation, treatment, and management of dementias. The process of updating the guidelines is expected to occur bi-annually to ensure they remain relevant and useful to practitioners providing care for San Diegans with dementia. The *Physician Guidelines* are available online and may be downloaded for free at www.ChampionsForHealth.org/Alzheimers.



Mobile Application Continues to Gain Popularity

The AlzDxRx mobile app was named by iMedicalApps to be among the top 10 Medical applications of 2017. The app allows providers to easily access and utilize the algorithms and instruments from the *Physician Guidelines* developed in 2016. Since its launch, the app continues to gain users. In 2018, 234 new providers downloaded the app to their mobile device. Use has been consistent, with a spike in downloads shortly after the announcement by iMedicalApps. As the *Physician Guidelines* continue to gain acceptance among the regions' healthcare systems, even greater usage is anticipated.



Physician Education Efforts Ramp Up Countywide

In-person presentations continue to be an important tool to educate physicians on dementia screening, evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment. During 2018, the Clinical Roundtable participated in several large conferences with workshops on dementia. One of these conferences, the Alzheimer's Care Conference hosted in February 2018 by Scripps Health, educated physicians on a spectrum of topics ranging from dementia screening to behavior management. Another conference, San Diego Academy of Family Physicians' Annual Symposium, held in June 2018, included presentations and workshops by the Clinical Roundtable that informed physicians with practices throughout Southern California. Kaiser Permanente also requested presentations for primary care providers both at their San Diego family practice conference and at their regional conference. Through these in-person presentations, the Clinical Roundtable trained a total of 1,121 physicians in 2018 and 1,645 physicians to date.

On-demand webinars have been another important component of physician education. The Clinical Roundtable produced two new webinars in 2018 in partnership with The Doctors Company, which hosts the webinars and is an accredited continuing medical education (CME) provider. Webinar topics included efficacy and prescribing recommendations of pharmacotherapy, as well as pharmacological interventions for management of behavioral issues that often occur with dementia. A total of 185 physicians and eight other health professionals attended online webinars in 2018.



Hospital Units Designed for Older Adults



In 2015, more than 35,000 San Diegans 55 and older were discharged from the emergency department or hospital with a mention of Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia in their diagnoses.⁷ An increase in older adults visiting emergency departments each year has resulted in greater demand for specialized psychiatric and emergency services. Specialized geriatric units are being developed in more medical institutions to better serve the unique health needs of older adults, including those with dementia. Units are designed with older adults in mind and incorporate building features such as natural lighting, non-slip flooring, enclosed plumbing, covered fixtures, and high-contrast colors on walls and furniture.

Alvarado Hospital Medical Center's Senior Care Specialty Services Department obtained clearance to open a geriatric psychiatric unit after completing a comprehensive survey by the California Department of Public Health in 2017. This 30-bed unit, which began accepting patients in November 2018, is staffed with geriatricians, nurses, and therapists trained to provide cognitive, emotional, and behavioral care to adults 65 and older in a secure, 24 hour/7 inpatient setting.



Additionally, UC San Diego Health opened the region's first geriatric emergency department in 2016. The Gary and Mary West Emergency Department at UC San Diego Health is one of eight emergency departments in the nation to be accredited as a geriatric emergency department by the American College of Emergency Physicians. Through this accreditation, the facility is recognized for its superior quality and standards of emergency care for older patients.

Looking Ahead: Clinical Roundtable

In 2019, the Clinical Roundtable will focus on incorporating the *Physician Guidelines'* screening and evaluation instrument into the electronic health records in two local healthcare systems. In addition, the Roundtable is working with these healthcare systems to design a preliminary pilot study. Study results may lead to a large-scale study on the usage of the *Physician Guidelines*, costs and benefits, and patient outcomes. The pilot study is scheduled to be completed during the first half of 2019.

Care Roundtable

The focus of the Care Roundtable is to strengthen the local network of services available to people living with dementia, their families, and caregivers. Providers, experts in dementia, family caregivers, residential and day care providers, public safety representatives, and community organizations collaborate and discuss strategies to help improve the system of care for people living with dementia and their caregivers. The majority of people living with Alzheimer's are cared for at home by family members.



Caregiver Expo Draws Thousands

More than 4,000 people attended the inaugural Caregiver San Diego Expo on June 9, 2018. The event was sponsored by the San Diego Union-Tribune and promoted with help from the Caregiver Coalition of San Diego. The Expo was geared specifically to family caregivers, and attendees had the opportunity to learn about caregiving topics such as hiring help, finding residential facilities, coping with dementia, and how to handle the stress of caregiving. Staff from the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency were present to highlight County efforts and initiatives in support of family caregivers, including The Alzheimer's Project. The event also served to launch the new San Diego Union-Tribune website, www.CaregiverSD.com. The Expo and website are part of a new initiative by the San Diego Union-Tribune to help connect family members with the resources and support they need to manage the challenges of caregiving.



Information, resources & support for
caregivers across Southern California

Spanish-Speaking Families Increase Caregiver Knowledge



Spanish-speaking caregivers of loved ones with dementia are getting the information and support they need thanks to the efforts of Southern Caregiver Resource Center (SCRC). REACH (Resources for Enhancing Alzheimer's Caregivers' Health) is a free, evidence-based, educational program offered to family caregivers of those with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. SCRC, in partnership with San Ysidro Health Center and North County Health Services offers an adaptation of the REACH program, called CALMA, to Spanish-speaking caregivers. This culturally and linguistically tailored program teaches family caregivers about memory loss, Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, and how to find helpful resources available in the community. It also helps them to better cope with their caregiving situation by teaching stress management techniques, effective family communication skills, and how to better care for themselves and their loved one. In the past year, SCRC graduated 273 Spanish-speaking caregivers from the CALMA program.

In addition to the CALMA program, SCRC offers community education, hosts resource fairs, conducts outreach and disseminates information. Through these efforts, SCRC has reached over 93,000 San Diegans.



Crisis Response Pilot Underway in East County

Sometimes in crisis situations involving someone with dementia, the person is taken to a hospital or to jail when diversion may be the best course of action. Following approval from the San Diego County Board of Supervisors in December 2017, the Alzheimer’s Response Team (ART) pilot project was launched to provide an alternative pathway, with a specialized level of care, for people with Alzheimer’s disease or related dementias experiencing crisis situations.

The ART pilot project was developed through a public/private partnership between the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, San Diego County Sheriff’s Department, Alzheimer’s San Diego, Sharp Grossmont Hospital, and the Grossmont Healthcare District and is being conducted in the areas served by the Santee Sheriff’s Station.

The ART pilot project accepts phone referrals from first responders, such as law enforcement or paramedics, and community organizations. Calls are triaged by trained County Adult Protective Services (APS) staff and referrals are made to an APS social worker on the ART-Crisis Response Team. This team performs an initial visit within three business days of the call to address the person and his/her caregiver’s immediate needs at the scene of the crisis and helps stabilize the situation. If requested by a first responder, the Crisis Response Team may deploy within one hour of a call.

Following this initial response, all families are referred to the ART-Support Team, which consists of an APS social worker and a dementia specialist from Alzheimer’s San Diego. If desired by the family, the Support Team may provide comprehensive case management and longer term assistance for up to six months.





The ART pilot project began accepting referrals on June 4, 2018. Crises referred to the Alzheimer's Response Team have included situations involving aggression due to disorientation, health and safety hazards, abuse or neglect, and wandering. Calls have also come in regarding instances in which the primary caregiver, rather than the person living with dementia, was momentarily incapacitated and there was concern care would not be available for a loved one. From launch through March 2019, over 70 calls have been received and the Crisis Response Team has performed 60 initial visits (three visits within one hour of a call). The Support Team has opened over 25 cases and provided families with additional assistance and support, including referrals to additional resources and services provided by community-based organizations. Resources and connections provided to families by ART have included referrals for respite care, legal services, in-home care, transportation, housing, caregiver skills training, adult day health care, and behavioral health, among others. Potential clients for the pilot project must have a dementia diagnosis or have symptoms of dementia, be experiencing a crisis related to their dementia symptoms, and live within the current pilot area. The pilot project will continue through the summer of 2019.

Elder Abuse and Alzheimer's Disease Highlighted by District Attorney

Seniors with dementia are at greater risk of abuse and neglect than those in the general older adult population. This issue was addressed at the San Diego County Summit on Elder Abuse & Neglect, held on March 1, 2018, with more than 200 people in attendance. Sponsored by the County of San Diego District Attorney's Office, the Summit was held in partnership with Supervisor Dianne Jacob, San Diego County Sheriff Bill Gore, San Diego City Attorney Mara Elliott, the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, and law enforcement agencies. During the Summit, County officials unveiled the Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Blueprint. Speakers presented on several different topics, including a talk on "Understanding the Link Between Dementia and Financial Crimes."

In addition to the cognitive changes that make people living with dementia more susceptible to abuse, they may also suffer abuse or neglect by those caring for them. Unfortunately, this is a common issue. Educating and supporting caregivers is one important approach to reducing elder abuse. By teaching caregivers how to better manage the difficult behaviors that can accompany dementia, and providing them with increased access to respite care, the County and community partners are helping to reduce the risk of elder abuse, and also are improving the quality of life for both caregivers and care recipients.





FIRST: Prioritizing the Needs of Caregivers and People with Dementia

Older adults with moderate to severe dementia, those who live alone, and caregivers of a loved one with dementia have additional support and resources thanks to the FIRST (First Identify and Refer, then Serve and Track) project led by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services (AIS). Funded by the federal Administration for Community Living, the goals of this project are to increase dementia screening, create a new case management program, and support caregivers of people with dementia by providing them with training and connecting them to respite care. Lessons learned from the FIRST project will be used to increase the overall “dementia-capability” of local agencies by ensuring that staff have the tools needed to allow them to better serve caregivers and clients with dementia.

Significant progress has been made on several components of the FIRST project. AIS staff were trained on two cognitive screening tools, the Mini-Cog and AD-8, and screenings within AIS programs began in 2018. The goal of the screening is to identify clients who may be showing signs of dementia and encourage those clients to speak to their physicians regarding further assessment.

AIS social workers have also been trained by Alzheimer’s San Diego dementia experts on IDEA (Identify, Educate, and Adapt). IDEA is a method for caregivers to modify the behavioral symptoms of dementia that can be challenging, such as resistance to bathing and agitation.

IDEA provides a method for caregivers to log behaviors, identify triggers, brainstorm solutions to address triggers, and then modify the environment or their own behaviors. Social workers have begun teaching IDEA to caregivers while conducting home visits.

In addition to embedding cognitive screening and IDEA in existing AIS programs, FIRST also includes a new AIS case management program for dementia clients. Through the program, clients have access to a variety of helpful services, including homemaker assistance, personal care, money management, and assisted transportation. Caregivers in the program are provided free respite care and receive instruction on IDEA to help them better manage their loved one’s behaviors.

Also, more San Diego caregivers are now getting the break they need, thanks to the FIRST grant. As part of FIRST, the County of San Diego contracted with Alzheimer’s San Diego to create a new respite voucher program called ReCharge that not only gives caregivers a break, but allows them to choose the type of respite care that works best for their family, at no cost. Through the ReCharge program, caregivers may select in-home care, adult day care, or occasional overnight care. The ReCharge program has been praised by the Administration for Community Living as a model, and they have shared the program guide with other communities so it can be replicated.

Enrollment Rises for Take Me Home Program



Since 2010, the San Diego County Sheriff's Department has managed the Take Me Home Program, a regional, photo-based information system designed to assist law enforcement during contacts with community members who have a disability or other limiting condition, such as dementia. Upon enrolling someone in the program, a caregiver can input demographic information about their care recipient, add emergency contact details, and upload a photograph. This information may aid law enforcement when communicating with, locating a residence for, or handling an emergency involving a person with a special need. Additionally, if a person is located and cannot communicate, a photograph of the person can be taken in the field and matched to those in the Take Me Home Program registry.

The Take Me Home Program can be especially useful for law enforcement when encountering someone with dementia. Six in ten people with dementia will wander during the course of their illness, and if not found within 24 hours, as many as half of those will suffer serious injury or death.^{8,9} The Take Me Home Program aims to address this concern by equipping law enforcement with necessary information to facilitate a quicker recovery in the event that a person with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia goes missing.

To date, there are 2,379 persons enrolled in the registry, and approximately 1,009 have been identified as having dementia. AIS is also in the process of launching an educational campaign to disseminate information about wandering and the Take Me Home Program, to further increase enrollment and promote the safety of those living with dementia.



Looking Ahead: Care Roundtable

In 2019, the Care Roundtable will provide new caregiver education opportunities. Members of the Roundtable will work with the Caregiver Coalition of San Diego to reach more families countywide. Also, the upcoming Vital Aging 2019 conference hosted by AIS will feature activities and presentations tailored for San Diego caregivers.

Public Awareness & Education

County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services (AIS), Outreach & Education staff in partnership with other community partners, lead the charge to educate the public and provide comprehensive information about Alzheimer's disease and related dementias to the community. The purpose of this group is to inform San Diegans of dementia and its impact, and to raise awareness of community resources that can help. Countywide efforts include face-to-face presentations at numerous community venues; TV, print and social media campaigns; electronic announcements and newsletters; and the development and distribution of various online resources. Topics include the warning signs of dementia, early diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, specific supports for caregivers, and strategies for working with people living with dementia.



Dementia-Friendly Workgroup Contributes Expertise to Implementation of Age Well San Diego

Age Well San Diego (Age Well) is the County's five-year initiative to create livable communities for all ages, including older adults, those with cognitive impairment, and caregivers. Age Well consists of five priority focus areas, including a theme on Dementia-Friendly, which is woven throughout the Age Well Action Plan that was approved by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors in May 2018.

Dementia-Friendly communities are villages, towns, cities, and counties where more people understand dementia, there is less fear and avoidance of those with the disease, and people living with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia are included and feel supported to live independently for longer.

Following approval of the Age Well Action Plan, workgroups, or "theme teams," were created to help accomplish the plan's goals. The Dementia-Friendly (DF) theme team is made up of County staff, community members, and representatives from more than ten organizations with expertise in dementia.

Theme Team goals focus on training community organizations and businesses on dementia-friendly practices, expansion of dementia-friendly recreational programming, and teaching community members how to communicate with, and be supportive of, those living with dementia.

4 Ways to Be Dementia-Friendly



Recognize:

Recognize common signs so when you encounter someone with dementia, you can respond compassionately. Signs include: memory loss, difficulty with familiar tasks, confusion with time or place, trouble with visual perception, not recognizing family or friends.



Communicate Effectively:

Smile and make eye contact. Speak clearly and calmly. Use simple sentences. Ask one question at a time. Allow time for the person to process and respond. Seek to understand the person's reality and feelings.



Design Supportive Environments & Materials

Visual and spatial perception are often impacted by dementia. Families, businesses, and organizations can use dementia-friendly design principles such as high-contrast colors, clear signage, and quiet zones with less stimulation.



Learn More & Educate Others:

Together, we can reduce the stigma and isolation of dementia. Individuals can become Dementia Friends and organizations can train staff to adopt dementia-friendly practices. Visit DementiaFriendsUSA.org and DFAmerica.org.



Federal Grant Extension Supports Dementia Partners' Efforts

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant awarded to the San Diego/Imperial Geriatric Education Center (SDIGEC) in July 2015 received a Year 4 extension in 2018. This grant supports not only Public Awareness & Education, but also the Care and Clinical Roundtables. Led by San Diego State University's Academy of Professional Excellence, the center provides workforce training to healthcare professionals, social workers, and family caregivers as part of HRSA's Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP). It also awards stipends to graduate students, medical residents, and fellows interested in Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and provides funding to several partners in the region, helping extend San Diego County's collaborative efforts to combat dementia.

In 2018, twelve stipend recipients graduated and an additional eleven students were awarded stipends. Five fellows, one medical resident, and seven medical students were able to attend conferences and trainings in Geriatrics.

Funding provided by the center enabled various GWEP partner organizations to continue their respective efforts to educate San Diegans about Alzheimer's disease last year. Alzheimer's San Diego produced nearly 40 different advertisements across television, print, and radio channels as part of their ongoing "Local Famous Faces" public awareness campaign. They also held over 100 trainings in 2018, including an 8-week series on early memory loss. Southern Caregiver Resource Center provided thirteen family caregiver trainings and provided a Spanish Caregiver Conference in October 2018. Champions for Health provided online trainings on the *Physician Guidelines* to 185 providers, and 500 clinicians were given a hardcopy of the handbook. George G. Glenner Alzheimer's Family Centers, Inc. also created a free, online training on dementia specifically tailored for residential caregivers.

"SDIGEC has created opportunities to strengthen relationships and collaboration with other partners. Through these partnerships, we prevent duplication of efforts and are maximizing the services we can offer to those impacted by dementia."

-Mindy K. Baker, Ph.D., Director of Education, George G. Glenner Alzheimer's Family Centers, Inc.

"This partnership has enabled us to provide training/mentorship to MSW interns from SDSU and develop future professionals highly skilled in working with family caregivers. All our MSW interns from SDIGEC have been offered positions with us after their internships."

-Roberto Velasquez, Executive Director, Southern Caregiver Resource Center

"We have been able to see a strong increase in knowledge among providers thanks to funding from SDIGEC and the County. Practitioners trained on the Physician Guidelines are much more comfortable with providing treatment with this additional knowledge."

-Barbara Mandel, Alzheimer's Project Clinical Roundtable Facilitator, Champions for Health

CDC Showcases San Diego Efforts to Address Alzheimer's Disease on National Stage



The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) has led the way in addressing cognitive health as a central public health issue. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) took notice and invited HHS to participate in a national webinar in October 2018 titled *"Mission Possible! Changing the Course of Dementia, A Growing Public Health Crisis"*. Hosted by the CDC, Alzheimer's Association, and National Association of Counties (NACo), the webinar focused on creating a better future for communities impacted by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ARD) through the Healthy Brain Initiative.

Launched by the CDC, the Healthy Brain Initiative provides a roadmap for state and local public health agencies to advance cognitive health as a core focus of public health practice. HHS was featured on the webinar for its work to educate the community, develop policies, mobilize partnerships, and assure a workforce competent to address the challenges brought on by Alzheimer's disease. HHS Director, Nick Macchione, and AIS Assistant Director, Jennifer Bransford-Koons, presented on the webinar and showcased County initiatives, such as Age Well San Diego and The Alzheimer's Project. Preliminary data from the County's Alzheimer's Response Team pilot project were also shared with webinar participants. These regional initiatives and projects were recognized as examples of dementia-focused public health action in practice that can be used as guides for other communities looking to do similar work.





Live Well San Diego Partners Highlight Alzheimer's Disease

Every year HHSA holds a large event for *Live Well San Diego* partners to come together and highlight work they've done to advance the *Live Well San Diego* vision of Building Better Health, Living Safely, and Thriving. At the 2018 event, four partners hosted interactive displays showcasing their efforts to address Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. In collaboration with Aging & Independence Services, each partner featured resources on dementia-friendly best practices and tips for designing environments supportive for those with dementia. Each partner's display featured unique content: The Alzheimer's Association-San Diego/Imperial Chapter featured an interactive brain tour from which attendees could learn about the intricacies of the brain through web-based resources on the Alzheimer's Association's website. George G. Glenner Alzheimer's Family Centers, Inc. created a dementia-friendly dining display depicting ways restaurant staff or caregivers can set a table to make a dining experience less overwhelming for someone with dementia. The set up included an example of a table setting that was cluttered, distracting, and all the same color, making it difficult for those with dementia to distinguish each item. Next to this was a dementia-friendly table setting that was simple and less overwhelming, with strategic use of contrasting colors. Southern Caregiver Resource Center hosted an aging kit activity where participants could try on several accessories simulating some of the physical changes that can accompany aging and/or dementia. Dementia-friendly partner Jewish Family Service of San Diego was present to consult with attendees about the wide variety of services they offer.



Dementia Presentations Featured at San Diego Conferences

The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services (AIS) increased awareness of local efforts to address Alzheimer's disease and related dementias by participating in several conferences held in San Diego County during 2018.

On June 15, 2018, AIS partnered with Champions for Health and the San Diego/Imperial Geriatric Education Center (SDIGEC) to present at the 3rd Annual Palliative Care Conference at California State University San Marcos. The joint presentation featured web-based tools that support the safety of older adults living with dementia: Dementia Respond, a mobile app for law enforcement officials developed by SDIGEC; Take Me Home, the San Diego County Sheriff's photo-based registry system; and AlzDxRx, the mobile app for physicians created by The Alzheimer's Project Clinical Roundtable.

Over 2,500 people attended the 2018 Aging Summit, “Age Well in Action,” on June 28, 2018. The summit featured the County’s Age Well San Diego initiative and included tracks for each of the five priority focus areas, including Dementia-Friendly. Presentations in the Dementia-Friendly track emphasized ways community members can support those living with dementia and promote dignity and connection. Meredith Hanley, national lead for Dementia Friendly America, presented on how communities across the nation are joining the dementia-friendly movement.

County staff also shared information on local dementia efforts at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Conference in November 2018, which hosted more than 12,000 public health professionals from around the world. AIS’ resource booth showcased how San Diego is addressing increasing rates of dementia through regional initiatives and outlined ways attendees can implement dementia-friendly efforts in their own communities.



Looking Ahead: Public Awareness and Education

In 2018, the Dementia-Friendly Theme Team encouraged community members to complete the short, online Dementia Friends training at www.DementiaFriendsUSA.org. In 2019, the Team will offer in-person Dementia Friends trainings for community members and organizations. The in-person trainings will provide a more comprehensive understanding of dementia, including how it affects those living with it, the associated stigma, and how each of us can be more compassionate and supportive to those with the disease who we may encounter.

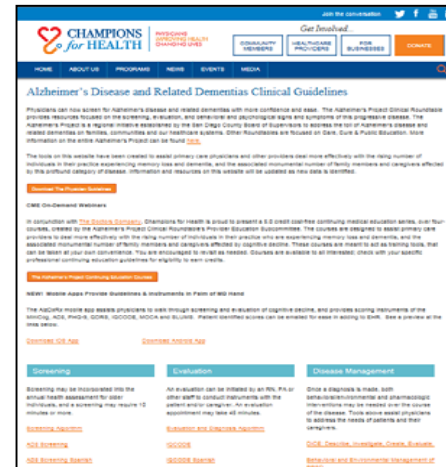
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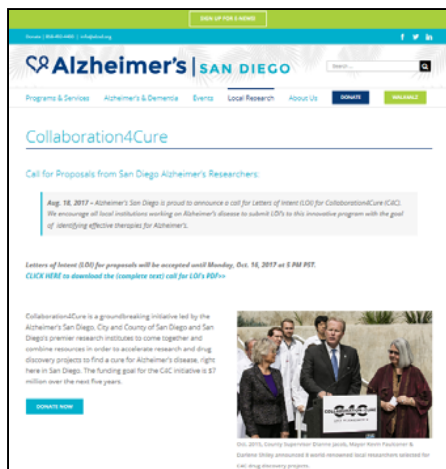
Get Connected – Learn More About The Alzheimer’s Project



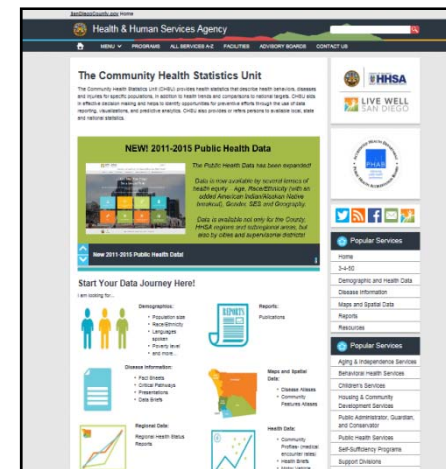
The Alzheimer’s Project
www.sdalzheimersproject.org



Clinical Roundtable
www.championsforhealth.org/alzheimers-project/



Collaboration4Cure
www.alzsd.org/resources/san-diego-research/collaboration4cure/



Data on Alzheimer's in San Diego County
www.sdhealthstatistics.com

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Acknowledgements

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