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Dementia Friendly Libraries in Wisconsin: A Best Practice Guide

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Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH



Dementia Friendly Libraries in Wisconsin: A Best Practice Guide

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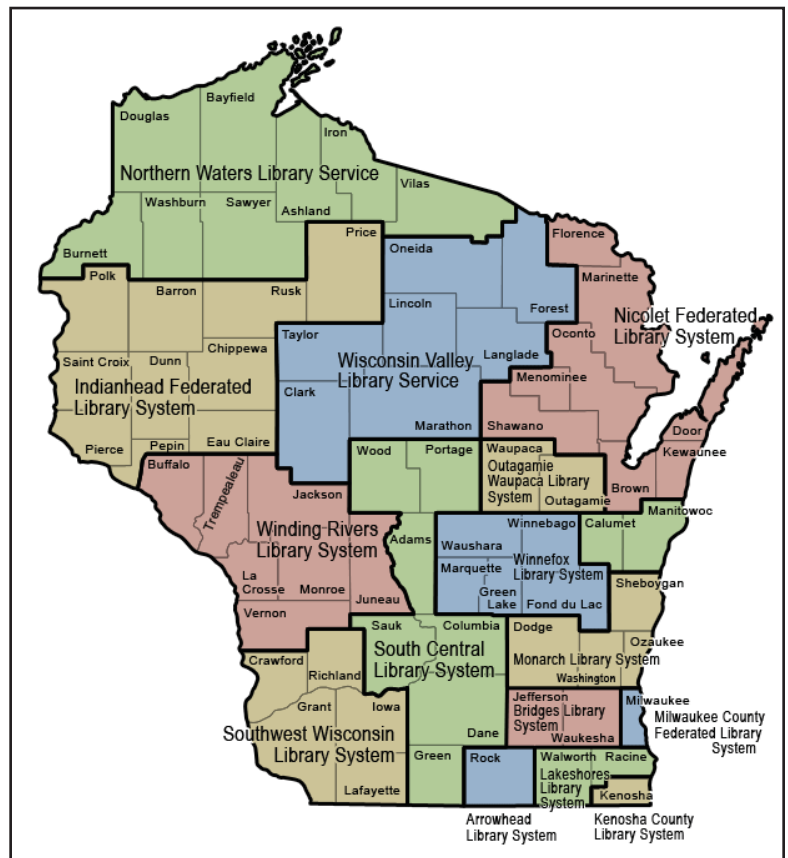
INTRODUCTION

Vision

Libraries have long been a significant part of the social fabric of Wisconsin communities, large and small. The 16 public library systems in Wisconsin offer a wide range of programs, services, information, and resources around a myriad of issues that affect individuals, families, and communities. Within the last several years, the role libraries are playing in serving the approximately 115,000 Wisconsin residents living with dementia, their care partners, and other interested parties has blossomed as more and more communities are working towards becoming dementia friendly and dementia capable. The specific role libraries play are as varied as the communities they serve. The purpose of this Best Practice Guide is to provide a number of guiding principles and examples of how libraries can support those impacted by dementia in Wisconsin. The ideas shared here are by no means exhaustive, but represent the breadth of ways in which libraries are engaging with community partners to improve the lives of those living with dementia and their care partners.

Background

In September 2016, the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute hosted a meeting of the Wisconsin Dementia Resource Network (WDRN), a group of Wisconsin stakeholders who come together twice each year to discuss best practices in dementia programs and services. This meeting of the WDRN focused on the ways in which libraries across Wisconsin are serving as access points for programs, services, information, and resources for those living with, caring for, or interested in memory loss or dementia. The meeting featured several presenters who highlighted the ways in which libraries in their communities are part of dementia friendly community efforts, and are otherwise serving their local populations around the issue of dementia. The meeting generated a great deal of discussion and interest from people across Wisconsin, which led to the idea to develop this Dementia Friendly Libraries Best Practice Guide.



Wisconsin's 16 public library systems.



Best Practices

The ideas shared in this guide are based upon interviews conducted by the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute during the early part of 2017. The discussions involved a rich mix of stakeholders including librarians, library staff and volunteers, Dementia Care Specialists and staff from Aging and Disability Resource Centers, the Alzheimer's Association, Alzheimer's and Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin, technical colleges, the Department of Health Services, the Music and Memory Program, the United Community Center, and the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute. All contributors were extremely generous with their expertise, innovative ideas, challenges, and suggestions.

The information is also drawn from a number of published resources regarding Dementia Friendly Libraries in the United States and elsewhere. As the number of individual libraries and library systems interested in hosting programs, or otherwise becoming Dementia Friendly, increases, the need for guidance and suggestions will also increase. While there is no "one size fits all" approach to this effort, best practice guidelines can certainly be helpful.

Definitions and Terminology

Best Practice: This refers to a procedure or process that has been shown by experience and/or research to produce optimal results and that is established or proposed as a standard suitable for widespread adoption.

Care Partners/Caregivers: Anyone who provides care to a person with dementia is considered a care partner or caregiver. This may be a spouse, adult child, other family member, friend, or paid care provider.

Dementia: Dementia is a general term used to describe a group of symptoms affecting memory, cognitive function, thinking and processing skills, and social abilities which are significant enough to interfere with daily function. There are different types of dementia, with the most prevalent being Alzheimer's Disease.

Dementia Friendly Communities: Communities where businesses, public services, and other entities have been trained to understand the needs of people living with dementia in order to be truly welcoming and inclusive. These communities create systems that support the dignity of all individuals and reduce stigma by educating its citizens and businesses to compassionately interact with those living with dementia.

Dementia Care Specialist (DCS): The State of Wisconsin employs a team of Dementia Care Specialists in a number of county Aging and Disability Resource Centers, Departments on Aging, and tribes who provide education, outreach, information, and resources to the communities they serve.

Dementia Leads: In counties that do not have a Dementia Care Specialist, a staff member from the county's Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) has been designated to provide services, information, and resources to community members impacted by dementia.

Memory Screening: A simple and safe evaluation tool administered by a trained professional to assess memory and other cognitive skills. Memory screenings are in-person brief evaluations that include a short series of questions and tasks. This non-threatening tool can help determine whether a more in-depth assessment might be of benefit to an individual.



Patrons: Library staff often use the term “patron” to refer to those who use the library. When referring to people who attend a dementia-focused program, other terms may be used depending on the type of program. For example, for those attending Memory Cafes or participating in educational programs, the terms “guest,” “attendee,” or “participant” may be used. Those meeting with a Dementia Care Specialist or staff member from an organization providing services may be called a “client.” These are all relatively neutral, non-stigmatizing terms that can be applied to anyone and are preferable to more stigmatizing references such as “dementia patient.”

Purple Angel Training: Dementia training provided by the county Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), Alzheimer’s and Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin, or Alzheimer’s Association Chapter to businesses and public service entities to increase understanding of and sensitivity to the needs of people living with dementia. Upon completion, these entities are awarded a purple angel window sticker by the trainer indicating they are dementia friendly.

CREATING A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY LIBRARY

The People Served

Those benefitting from libraries offering dementia-focused programs, events, information, and services include individuals living with memory loss, care partners, professionals, and community members interested in the issue of dementia. Just as libraries generally serve a broad constituency, the population interested in dementia-related programs is equally wide-ranging. Part of what makes libraries an ideal setting for dementia programming is that they represent and serve a spectrum of individuals and groups. There is no requirement that those attending library-based programs have a dementia diagnosis. Rather, anyone impacted by dementia, either personally, as a family member, a professional, or as a community member, may participate.



Types of Programs and Services

Just as communities are unique and varied, the ways in which libraries serve them are unique and varied, as well. This is certainly true as it relates to how libraries are engaging with communities around the issue of dementia. It is both natural and necessary that library engagement and activities around memory concerns will be different in each community. It is important and helpful that the activities reflect the unique needs, resources, and populations of the communities they serve. This section will illustrate some ways in which libraries may choose to engage with communities to serve those impacted by dementia.



Dementia Friendly (Purple Angel) Training: Library staff within many Wisconsin communities are receiving training as part of dementia friendly community initiatives. The training may be completed by a Dementia Care Specialist, or staff members from the local Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), Alzheimer's Association chapter, or Alzheimer's and Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin office. The training typically includes information on the signs and symptoms of dementia, effective communication strategies for people with memory loss, and how to create a safe and welcoming environment for people with cognitive issues and their care partners. Ideally, training will involve the full library team, including leadership, staff, and volunteers. Once the library has received the dementia friendly designation, most provide ongoing training to existing staff and volunteers, as well as to new team members.

Dementia Information and Resources: As the Dementia Friendly Community movement continues to spread, and as libraries increasingly become engaged in these initiatives, many library directors and staff are making a concerted effort to obtain current books and materials regarding dementia that allow patrons to access the most timely and up-to-date information available. In addition to traditional books, there are audiobooks, CD's, DVD's, and other materials. These resources are not limited to books and materials that provide information about dementia, but also items that may help to enhance cognitive stimulation, reminiscence, or conversation with a person experiencing memory issues. In addition to offering information in the form of books and materials, libraries are also a useful place for consumers to obtain information regarding community-based resources in the form of brochures, fliers, posters, and notices. Many libraries have displays, bulletin boards, and kiosks where such information is readily available. Examples of the types of resources made available include, but are not limited to:

- Memory Café information
- Care partner support group information
- Educational program information
- Dementia Care Specialist library-based office hours dates and times
- Memory screening dates and times
- Music and Memory program information

Memory Connection Centers: Memory Connection Centers take the provision of information and resources to the next level by training library staff to serve as “navigators” in order to direct patrons to specific and appropriate resources. Library staff receive in-depth training from key community partners regarding warning signs of dementia, the types and stages of dementia, communication strategies, cultural sensitivity, transportation, and caregiver concerns. They also receive training regarding the resources available to assist families, and how to access them. The goal is for the library to serve as an initial point of access for information and resources. This can be tremendously helpful since some people may be hesitant to go to the Aging and Disability Resource Center for information, whereas the library is viewed as a neutral, non-stigmatizing, and inviting source. Memory Connection Centers are likely to be developed within the context of a Dementia Friendly Community initiative, so multiple partners will be involved. Key partners may include the Dementia Care Specialist or ADRC Dementia Lead, a county public health representative, Alzheimer's Association or Alzheimer's and Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin staff, the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute, arts organizations, or other



partners unique to the community. Library staff work closely with the community partners to ensure that the most accurate and highest quality information is provided.

Memory Cafés: Memory Cafés are structured, informal gatherings for people with memory concerns and their care partners for the purpose of social engagement, enjoyment, and cognitive stimulation. Facilitated by a trained professional, library staff member, or volunteer, Memory Cafés provide a warm and welcoming venue for social connectedness and information sharing. Cafés can be held in a variety of community settings, including libraries. Since libraries are a natural and familiar setting for most citizens, they are in many ways an ideal location for a Memory Café. More and more libraries within Wisconsin are embracing the opportunity to serve as a Memory Café site, which is a welcome development for these communities. Given the substantial and diverse resources available within libraries, they are able to offer a rich variety of options for interactive Memory Café programming. Everything from music to poetry to history to travel are just a few possible topic areas, and all make for interesting, fun, and dynamic activities.

Please visit the Wisconsin Memory Café Programs: A Best Practice Guide on the WAI website (wai.wisc.edu) for more information regarding program ideas and operational considerations for Memory Cafés.

Care Partner Support Groups: As with Memory Cafés, libraries are often an ideal venue for hosting support groups for care partners of individuals living with dementia. As a familiar community-based setting, libraries can provide a warm and friendly atmosphere for care partners to come together to share their experiences with caregiving and to receive support.

Memory or Cognitive Learning Kits: Developed specifically for people with dementia, memory or cognitive learning kits are intended to stimulate conversation or reminiscence with a person with cognitive issues. Kits can take a variety of forms, but typically include a collection of focused items that fit a specific theme or time period, and which allow users an opportunity to engage in conversation about their life experiences with the items. The contents of the kits typically reflect the era of the users and include instructions, guidelines, or suggestions regarding how the materials might be used. In some cases, the kits include items that stimulate the 5 senses, while in others, the kits are simply a collection of fun items to be used as an enjoyable activity with a care partner. Either way, memory kits will contain any number of pieces, depending on the theme. For example, a baking-themed kit might include cookbooks, an apron, baking pans, rolling pin, measuring spoons, cookie scented candle, along with ideas for accessing the sense of taste in one's current living environment. There are many themes that can be explored through this enjoyable, creative, and easy activity.



Memory Café participants enjoy a pumpkin painting activity. (Bridges Library System Library Memory Project)



Educational Programs: Since libraries are typically in a convenient and easily accessible location within communities, they are in many ways an ideal location for hosting educational programs related to dementia or brain health. This might include an education series intended for a small group of learners, or a larger single-session presentation for a broader audience. Either way, as long as the library has adequate space to accommodate the anticipated number of attendees, libraries can be a perfect setting for any number of dementia-focused educational programs for individuals living with dementia, their caregivers, or the community at large.

Dementia Care Specialist or Dementia Lead “Office Hours”: Just as with educational programs, the comfort and accessibility of libraries make them an advantageous location for Dementia Care Specialists, or others, to meet with individuals and families, provide memory screens, and offer information and resources. Most libraries have small meeting or study rooms that can be used for this purpose. Rather than going to a county building, which may be difficult for individuals struggling with the perceived stigma around seeking assistance, going to the local library may be a more comfortable and relaxed environment in which to receive information and assistance.

Memory Screenings: As mentioned earlier, memory screenings are in-person brief evaluations conducted by an individual trained to administer a short series of questions and tasks designed to assess memory and cognitive function. Memory screenings are often a first step in determining whether a person may benefit from a more extensive medical evaluation. Memory screenings are typically conducted by Dementia Care Specialists, Aging and Disability Resource Center dementia leads, nurses, social workers, or paraprofessionals trained to administer the tools. Some communities are finding that libraries are a convenient and non-threatening setting in which to hold memory screenings. Often, the screening takes place as part of a broader program or event, or as part of a Dementia Care Specialist’s “library office hours.” When conducting memory screenings within a library setting, it is important to take privacy and confidentiality into account by assuring that a separate room or office is made available. It is also important to limit noise and distractions to ensure the person being screened is able to concentrate on the questions and tasks.

Music and Memory: Through both statewide and national programs, Music and Memory assists individuals with dementia through the power of music. Professional or family caregivers, therapists, or volunteers are trained to create personalized music playlists that are uploaded to digital music devices with music that is meaningful to the recipient. The music is intended both to bring intrinsic enjoyment, as well as to tap memories that may instigate liveliness or conversation, or bring comfort and calm. While Music and Memory in Wisconsin started in nursing homes through funding from the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services, the program is now being adopted at the community level, with a number of libraries serving as hosts. In the case of libraries, staff receive extensive training regarding all aspects of the program, including staffing, volunteers, engaging care partners, on-site logistics, creating playlists, using music therapeutically in day-to-day life, and implementing the program for optimal use.

Tribal Library Connections: Libraries within tribal communities play a critical role in the lives of tribal members. For tribal elders, libraries can be a welcoming and non-threatening place in which to learn about resources, programs, and services pertaining to living with or caring for someone with dementia. Staffed by fellow tribal members, tribal libraries offer programs and resources uniquely suited to the population they serve,



thus helping to improve the quality of life and promote the well-being of its citizens. Three Wisconsin tribes, Menominee, Oneida, and St. Croix Chippewa, have Dementia Care Specialists (DCS's) working to address the unique needs of these communities. The libraries within these tribes work closely with the DCS's to improve the quality of life for tribal members impacted by dementia.

Suggestions for Getting Started

One of the first steps in getting started is to convene a group of key community stakeholders or partners. This group should include the library director or designated staff member, the Dementia Care Specialist or ADRC Dementia Lead, along with other interested parties. Issues to address include the following:

- Assessment of the library's interest in and capacity to serve as a resource for those impacted by dementia in the community.
- Key partners.
- Identify who is best suited to lead the program.
- What types of programs or services would be most beneficial to the community?
- What funding is needed to support the proposed activities?
- Potential sources of funding.
- Is there an existing dementia coalition already meeting in the community that can be a resource? If so, is the local library a member?
- Is the community involved in a dementia friendly initiative? If so, has the library been involved?
- What, if any, dementia training has already taken place?

It is essential to have a library champion, along with community champions, committed to working together to help the proposed activities move forward. Projects with committed and dedicated people behind them, whether professionals or volunteers, are most likely to succeed.

The sections that follow offer additional issues to consider when planning library-based programs or services.

Engaging Partners: As is true with most dementia-related initiatives, it takes a village to create successful and enduring library-based programs and services. The saying, "the more, the merrier" also applies. In addition to the libraries themselves, some combination of persons living with dementia, family caregivers, Aging and Disability Resource Centers, Alzheimer's Association Chapters, the Alzheimer's and Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin, public health departments, senior living facilities, arts organizations, community volunteers, colleges and universities, and others are critical to the success of these programs. It is helpful to engage as many partners as practical during the planning process to create maximum impact.

Staffing: Most programs are coordinated and facilitated by library staff, Dementia Care Specialists, Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) dementia leads, Alzheimer's support organizations, Music and Memory staff, or volunteers. When planning library-based programs, activities, and services, it is important to consider who is best suited to lead the particular effort. It may not always be library staff, though it is important to have the blessing and support of the library Director. This typically is not an issue as most library Directors are excited



to expand their offerings to include dementia-related issues. Depending on the nature of the program, it may be appropriate for non-library staff to lead, facilitate, or coordinate the program. For example, a staff member from the Alzheimer's Association or the Alzheimer's and Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin might facilitate a library-based caregiver support group. Or, a Dementia Care Specialist may coordinate an educational event that will take place in the library.

Costs and Funding: Other than personnel-related costs, the expenses associated with library-based programs are relatively modest. Still, it is important to take them into account as programs are being considered to ensure that funds are available to adequately operate the activities. Depending on the nature of the program and/or service, expenses may include:

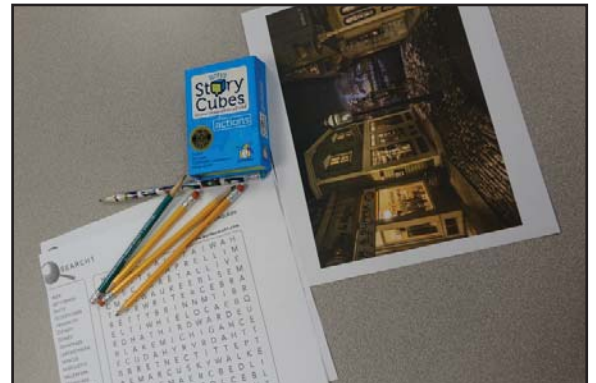
- Refreshments such as bottled water, juice, coffee, tea, snacks, cookies
- Paper products, including paper plates, napkins, cups
- Art or craft supplies for projects
- Games or puzzles for small group activities
- Music supplies, including CD's, iPods, sheet music, instruments
- Advertising, including flyers, posters, brochures, website development
- Honoraria or fees paid to guest presenters, speakers, or performers
- Binders, dividers, and printing
- Costs of dementia-focused books and materials for loan to patrons

Most of the afore-mentioned costs may be covered by the host library or by the sponsoring community organization. Libraries may choose to dedicate specific donations to a special fund to be used solely for dementia-oriented programming. Often times, Friends of the Library groups will provide funding for special programs. Grant funding may also be an option, either through state grants, private foundations, community foundations, or religious organizations. Third party fundraising may be yet another approach, where a service group or organization may opt to hold a fundraising event on behalf of a library or community organization with the express goal to raise funds for dementia friendly programming.

Spreading the Word: One of the challenges faced by those involved with dementia-focused library programs is how best to bring awareness to potential users. Of course, word of mouth is a powerful mechanism for promoting many types of programs, but given the stigma around Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, additional strategies will likely be needed. A low cost and first-line approach would be a poster prominently



Volunteers provide valuable assistance to the Memory Café. (Bridges Library System Library Memory Project)





placed in a highly visible section of the library. Many libraries have large entrance displays that would be ideal for this purpose. Other options include website postings on the library's site, as well as those of other community organizations (ie: Chamber of Commerce, churches, museums, Rotary, etc.), as well as flyers, posters, and notices in community newspapers. Library's may consider issuing press releases to newspapers, and radio and TV stations, which could lead to newspaper articles or promotional interviews on radio and television. Presentations to local community groups or service organizations, and postings on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram may also be effective. In addition, it will be helpful to get the word out to the local Aging and Disability Resource Center, Alzheimer's Association chapter, Alzheimer's and Dementia Alliance, medical groups, assisted living facilities, and others serving people with dementia. The more people are aware of the programs, the faster word will spread. Some library programs have developed websites specifically focused on their memory-related programs with unique branding and logos to help market their programs. The logos can then be used on give-away items like pens, notepads, stress balls, t-shirts and the like to help advertise the programs. Whatever method is chosen, it is important to remember that marketing is an ongoing process as members will flow in and out of the programs over time.



Marketing the Bridges Library System Library Memory Project.

Creating a Conducive Physical Space: As plans proceed, take a look around the physical space of the library to determine if it is dementia friendly. If not, even minor changes can produce a positive impact. ACT on Alzheimer's suggests the following when creating dementia friendly library spaces (www.ACTonALZ.org):

- Entrances should be clearly visible and understood as an entrance. Make sure that glass doors are clearly marked.
- Signage for finding your way around should be clear, should use bold type, and should have contrast between the words and the background.
- Lighting at entrances should be high powered and include natural light when possible. Avoid pools of bright light and deep shadows.
- Flooring should be plain, not shiny, and not slippery. Pathways should be wide and free of clutter.
- A family/unisex restroom will allow someone to be assisted without causing embarrassment to them or another user.

Creating a Culturally Inclusive Environment: The importance of creating a safe, culturally inclusive environment that allows participants from all communities and walks of life to fully participate cannot be overstated when developing library-based dementia resources, programs, and services. The planning phase is the best time to begin thinking about how to include the broadest possible range of participants from a cultural, geographic, and demographic perspective. Once that is determined, it will be important to consider how the programming will meet the needs of the various populations being served. Be sure to include representatives from all segments of your community during planning efforts to ensure that all voices have the opportunity to share their views.

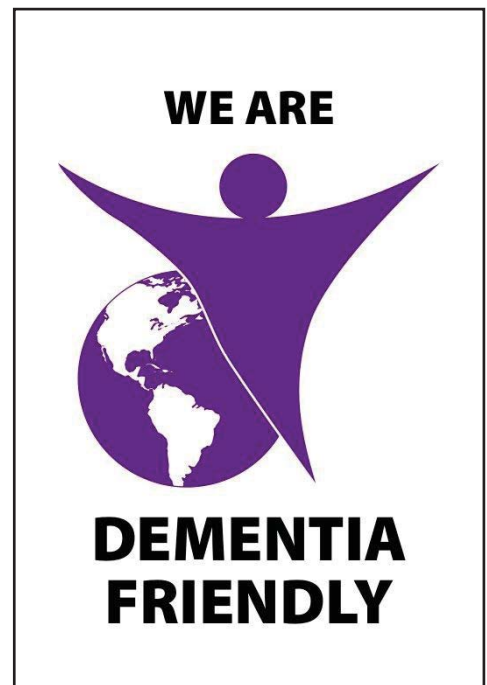


Potential Challenges: One of the biggest challenges libraries involved with dementia-related programs and services face is staff turnover. This is particularly concerning if the staff member has been a champion for dementia-related activities. As stated earlier, when planning for library-based dementia programs, it is important to include a team of stakeholders so that losing one person will not sidetrack the entire endeavor. The potential for staff turnover also requires that training be ongoing so that all involved feel competent and confident in their interactions with individuals with dementia and their families. Other challenges to address during planning may include concerns about staff time, recruiting volunteers, costs of materials, funding, ongoing training, marketing, maintaining momentum, and losing ongoing participants to cognitive decline or death. There are no single answers to any of these challenges, but they are important to address proactively.

PROGRAM EXAMPLES

Dementia Friendly Training: *Northern Waters Library Service*

There are 30 libraries within the Northern Waters Library Service, of which 21 have received training to become dementia friendly. The training was provided by the Dementia Care Specialist who is part of the Aging and Disability Resource Center of the North. The training involved full-day sessions focused on normal aging vs. non-normal aging, brain changes associated with dementia, behavioral symptoms of dementia, communication strategies, and resources. Upon completion, the libraries proudly display the Purple Angel decal, indicating that library staff and volunteers participated in training to learn how best to create a positive environment for, and how to interact with patrons living with dementia. In addition to receiving training, several of the libraries serve as locations for Memory Cafés, offer educational programs, and are rich resources for books and information for people living with dementia and their care partners.



Dementia Information and Resources: *Dodgeville Public Library*

The Dodgeville Public Library is one of 29 libraries within the Southwest Wisconsin Library System. The library is part of Dodgeville's dementia friendly initiative, and serves as a valuable source for dementia-related information and resources. The library also has a significant number of interactive book sets available that can be used to spark conversations or reminiscences with individuals with memory issues. E-books are also available for those interested in recorded materials, along with a variety of electronic brain games for those looking to remain cognitively active. To help educate children and young adults about dementia, the library has children's books and graphic novels available. The library director makes frequent book deliveries to local skilled nursing facilities, assisted living communities, senior apartments, and homebound individuals, many of whom live with cognitive decline. These books and resources can be obtained by talking with a library staff member,



all of whom have received dementia-friendly training. Alternatively, a number of the items are displayed on a special table located prominently in the library.

Memory Connection Centers: *Greendale Public Library and City of Milwaukee Libraries*

The idea for a library-based Memory Connection Center first emerged in the Village of Greendale in conjunction with their dementia friendly and dementia capable community effort. An extensive planning process took place that included the Milwaukee County Department on Aging, the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute Milwaukee Regional Office, the Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, the Greendale Public Library, and Greendale Health Department. A unique feature of the Greendale Public Library is that it is housed in the same building as the Greendale Health Department. Since these two organizations reside under one roof, they have developed a strong partnership. This existing connection has been of great benefit to the development of the library-based Memory Connection Center, as it enhanced the involvement of the Health Department. Nursing staff from the Greendale Health Department and library staff from the Greendale Public Library participated in extensive training provided by the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute, the Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, and the Milwaukee County Department on Aging Dementia Care Specialists. The result of the planning and training is that this library-based Memory Connection Center is equipped to serve as a "Hub" for one-stop access to information about dementia services, resources, and memory clinics. In addition, the librarians are able to serve as "Navigators" for patrons seeking information. The ultimate goal is to empower individuals with dementia and their caregivers with the knowledge and resources needed to navigate living with dementia. In addition to training library and public health staff, these same organizations provided no-cost training sessions for the public, which were held in a meeting room within the joint library/health department building. Training topics included recognizing the signs of dementia, understanding and dealing with dementia related behaviors, progression of dementia, appreciating the person beyond the diagnosis, explanation of resources and services, and financial and legal planning for people with dementia.

In addition to the Greendale Public Library Memory Connection Center, the 15 libraries that comprise the City of Milwaukee Public Library System have received approval to develop Memory Connection Centers at each location. The Dementia Care Specialists with the Milwaukee County Department on Aging are currently working closely with the library director to facilitate the development of the Centers. The goal is to have Memory Connection Centers within all 19 municipalities in Milwaukee County. Most of these centers will be located in libraries, although some may be placed in more culturally appropriate settings to meet the unique needs of specific communities.

Memory Cafés: *Neenah Public Library and Bridges Library System*

The Neenah Public Library hosted its first Memory Café in 2013 after library staff learned about the Fox Valley Memory Project, and committed to becoming involved. The Fox Valley Memory Project is a comprehensive effort to help the Fox Valley area of Wisconsin become dementia friendly. As library staff considered the ways they might become involved, they determined that hosting Memory Cafés was a perfect way for them to contribute



to the broader dementia friendly community initiative. In taking this step, the Neenah Public Library became the first library in Wisconsin to host Memory Cafés. They also became an inspiration to other libraries in Wisconsin who in years to come would become hosts to Memory Cafés. Currently, the Neenah Public Library offers Memory Cafés on a monthly basis. 2017 program topics include: Creative Storytelling, Tales and Travels in Peru, Ageless Grace, Drum Circle, Tales and Travels in Cuba, Fishing, Tour de Roma, and Flower Arranging. The 90-minute Cafés are held on the 3rd Mondays of the month, and are coordinated and facilitated by library staff in partnership with staff from the Visiting Nurses Association. The Fox Valley Memory Project is instrumental in marketing the Cafés, as are other partners. The result is that Café attendance averages between 20-50 patrons, depending on the program topic.



Memory Café participants enjoy a butterfly activity. (Bridges Library System Library Memory Project)

Library staff from the Bridges Library System, which serves Waukesha and Jefferson counties, became inspired to explore the idea of Memory Cafés after attending a presentation by a group involved with the Fox Valley Memory Project. The librarian from the Neenah Public Library met with a group of Bridges Library System staff to share the Neenah experience and to assess interest among library staff. The Delafield, Hartland, Pewaukee, and Town Hall (North Lake) Public Libraries expressed interest, and subsequently established the Lake Country Libraries Memory Project. In January 2015, the group held their kick-off event at the Pewaukee Public Library, which drew over 70 attendees. In January 2016, two additional Waukesha County libraries that border Milwaukee County partnered with 2 Milwaukee County libraries to form the Four Points Library Memory Project. The four libraries include: Franklin (Milwaukee), Hales Corners (Milwaukee), Muskego (Waukesha), and New Berlin (Waukesha). Together, the Lake Country Memory Project and the Four Corners Memory Project form The Library Memory Project (www.librarymemoryproject.org), and each host one Memory Café per month, rotating between the participating locations. Each café involves a different theme, with a goal of making each as interactive as possible. Popular programs have included drumming, a paper-marbling project with artists from the Kohler Art Center, adult coloring pages, and an intergenerational program with kindergartners from a local elementary school. The Alzheimer's Association of Southeastern Wisconsin and the Waukesha County Aging and Disability Resource Center have been critical partners by providing staff training and attending the Memory Cafés on a regular basis to offer information and assistance.

Care Partner Support Groups: *Dodgeville Public Library*

In addition to participating in Dementia Friendly training and serving as the venue for other dementia-related programs and activities, the Dodgeville Public Library hosts the monthly “Mug Club” for caregivers in collaboration with the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Southwest Wisconsin and the Alzheimer's and Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin (ADAW). The meetings are co-facilitated by staff from the ADRC and the ADAW, and provide support to care partners of individuals living with dementia. Participants appreciate the relaxed and inviting atmosphere the library provides for their meetings.



Memory or Cognitive Learning Kits: *Northern Waters Library System and Hedberg Public Library*

The Northern Waters Library System implemented Memory Kits in collaboration with the Aging and Disability Resource Center of the North and the Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College Gerontology Program. The memory kit project was funded as part of a larger Library Services and Technology Act grant obtained by the library system to offer dementia-related resources. Following extensive brainstorming with key partners, eleven themed kits were developed. Kits include all materials, guidelines for use, and resource suggestions. There were eight sets of each kit created and distributed across the various libraries within the Northern Waters Library System.

The most popular kits to date have been music, birthdays, and knitting. Other themes include: babies, baking, beaches, Christmas, gardening, military, travel-Canada, and travel-Mexico. All are specifically developed for people with dementia. Each piece within the kits have been catalogued, and kits are available for check out. Typically, a caregiver will check out the items to use in interaction with a person with dementia. They are also available for inter-library loan.



Another library offering Memory Kits is the Hedberg Public Library in Janesville, which is part of the Arrowhead Library System. In collaboration with the Rock County Council on Aging and the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Rock County, the library created 21 kits, with each including 4-7 items. The kits include items such as: robotic cats, memory card games, blocks and color matching games, fishing items, puzzles, abacus, DVD's, and various books and games. Each item is individually catalogued, and the kits are available throughout the Arrowhead Library System via inter-library loan. State caregiver respite grant funds in the amount of \$2,500 were obtained to purchase the kit items. The Rock County Council on Aging and the ADRC of Rock County are key partners in helping the library reach potential users of the kits.

Educational Programs: *Beloit Public Library*

The Dementia Care Specialist of Rock County partners with the Beloit Public Library to offer an annual community education program each April. This no-cost day-long event draws approximately 75-80 attendees to learn about a range of topics. The 2017 program featured sessions on caregiver issues, reminiscing, arthritis, and the Retiree Rebels. Community partners include the library, Aging and Disability Resource Center, Beloit Senior Center, and the Alzheimer's Association of South Central Wisconsin. In addition to this large annual event, other smaller, single topic educational programs drawing 10-25 attendees are held throughout the year at the library.



Dementia Care Specialist “Out-and-About (Office) Hours”: *Orfordville and Edgerton Libraries*

The Dementia Care Specialist (DCS) for Rock County holds “out-and-about hours” on-site at the Orfordville and Edgerton libraries on a monthly basis. During these hours, the DCS provides information, memory screens, and resources to families impacted by memory loss. These out-and-about” hours provide convenient and non-threatening access for families who might not otherwise seek out assistance.

Memory Screenings: *Dane County Library Service*

The Dane County Library Service consists of 28 libraries within the South Central Library System. Memory screens are offered at various library locations throughout Dane County, and are conducted by the Dementia Care Specialist and/or an Information and Assistance Specialist from the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Dane County. The ADRC staff find that libraries offer a comfortable and non-threatening venue for memory screens, especially in conjunction with broader Dementia Friendly Community initiatives many of the libraries are actively engaged with.

Music and Memory: *La Crosse Public Library*

The La Crosse Public Library has partnered with the Aging and Disability Resource Center of La Crosse County to offer the Music and Memory program at the library. Three librarians have received extensive training to deliver Music and Memory. Families interested in participating in the Music and Memory program are referred by the ADRC as part of their efforts to provide programming and services aimed at improving the quality of life and preventing stressful or crisis situations in individuals living with dementia. Music and Memory is offered in tandem with other information and resources provided by the ADRC. Families meet with teams of two librarians, at which time they are interviewed along with the person with dementia to understand the individual’s musical preferences and create a personalized playlist to be used by the family at home. The librarians download music onto an iPod shuffle, and provide families with instruction on using the iPod and how best to implement it at home. According to the ADRC, response from users and their family care partners has been tremendous since the kick-off event was held in April of 2017. The program is funded through crisis grant funds from the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

Tribal Library Connections: *Oneida Nation*

The Oneida Nation includes 2 library branches that serve the reservation, one in downtown Oneida, and the other further out. Both libraries have received Purple Angel training by the tribal Dementia Care Specialist, indicating that staff are equipped to create a welcoming environment for individuals living with dementia and their care partners. The libraries have been the most enthusiastic champions thus far in the Oneida Nation’s effort to become dementia friendly. As part of that effort, the libraries are an important source of dementia-related information and resources. In addition, one of the libraries offered to host an existing memory café, making it convenient for the memory café leaders to access library resources for use with programming. The memory cafés tend to be very social in nature, allowing participants time to talk about topics of interest,



including the reservation, people they know, and family. Cafés often include other activities such as games, puzzles, art projects, and shared snacks.

SUMMARY

Included here are just a handful of examples of the significant ways that Wisconsin libraries are serving their citizens impacted dementia. Of course, there are many more. To learn more, or to share an example from your community, please contact Kate Kowalski, Education Resource Manager, Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute, at 608-265-3885 or kmkowalski@wisc.edu.

For libraries interested in engaging in any of the programs or activities described here, but not yet able to do so, please consider participating in your local dementia coalition to keep updated on dementia-friendly activities taking place in your community. Your local coalition may be able to help support library-based initiatives and activities.

RESOURCES

ACT on Alzheimers, Dementia Friendly Libraries

www.actonalz.org/sites/default/files/documents/ACT-SectorGuide-Libraries.pdf

Alzheimer's Society

www.alzheimers.org.uk

The American Library Association, The Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies, Alzheimer's and Related Dementias Interest Group

www.ala.org/ascla/interestgroups/igard

Dementia Friendly America, Dementia Friendly Libraries

nzdementia.org/uploads/contributions/1751482968.pdf

Designing Libraries: Wakefield's Dementia-Friendly Library

www.Designinglibraries.org.uk/index.asp?PageID=57

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions - IFLA Public Libraries Section Blog: Is your library dementia-friendly?

blogs.ifla.org/public-libraries/2016/09/07/is-your-library-dementia-friendly/

Wisconsin Healthy Brain Initiative: A Toolkit for Building Dementia-Friendly Communities

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p01000.pdf

Wisconsin Public Library Consortium - Map of Library Systems

www.wplc.info/about/members/map-html



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