

# THE ARIZONA GWEP MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2024



## ABOUT

The mission of the Arizona Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (AZ-GWEP) is to provide the best possible care through an interprofessional approach to individual, system, community and population level education, training and models of care innovations.

The AZ-GWEP Newsletter is an important forum to share AZ-GWEP activities and highlight your valuable work. Please use this form by the 10th of each month to be featured in the next issue:

[SUBMIT INFO FOR  
OUR NEXT ISSUE](#)



November is Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month, a time to heighten awareness about Alzheimer's disease and show support for the more than 6.2 million Americans living with it.

This month we also recognize National Family Caregivers Month which shines a light on resources for self-care, advocacy, and de-stressing for family caregivers. The month is dedicated to supporting caregivers as they care for others. This year's theme is "Caregiving Around the Clock."

See [Page 4](#) for 8 ways to support an Alzheimer's caregiver.

See [Pages 5-6](#) to learn more about how Alzheimer's disease is a public health issue.

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## PARTNER HIGHLIGHTS

### MEET KATHY, OUR PARTNER FROM ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

[KATHERINE KENNY, DNP, RN, ANP-BC, FAANP, FAAN](#)

Dr. Katherine (Kathy) Kenny, DNP, RN, ANP-BC is the Associate Dean of the Academic Enterprise at Arizona State University Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation where she holds the rank of Clinical Professor. She is a Board-Certified Adult Nurse Practitioner. Past leadership positions include Chief of Advanced Practice Nursing, Nurse Executive of Medical Services, and Director of Nursing at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center, Phoenix. Her research interests include end-of-life and palliative care, clinical and academic education, leadership, interprofessional practice with a specific interest in mentoring relationships, and innovative approaches to healthcare delivery. She is published in peer-reviewed journals, book chapters, and is an invited presenter at regional, national, and international conferences. She has received Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) funding for Nurse Practitioner education (\$1.4 Million) and recent HRSA Arizona Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (AZ-GWEP) subaward. She serves on a number of local and national Boards. She was inducted as a Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners in 2013 and as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing in 2015.



Dr. Kenny is an Iowa native, moving to Arizona in 1984 to “explore novel treatment of cardiovascular health conditions” planning to remain in Arizona for 5-8 years. Arizona proved to be a good personal and professional move, and she and her family have remained in Arizona. Dr. Kenny is a proud “Triple Devil” earning her BSN, MS Nursing, and Doctor of Nursing Practice from Arizona State University.

She is proud and grateful to have the privilege to impact the next generation of nurses through education, practice, and research. ASU Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation is proud to partner with the University of Arizona in the AZ-GWEP award to impact care of geriatric patients.

**LinkedIn**

Connect with our  
**AZ-GWEP Community**  
Group Page on LinkedIn

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS



### ADVANCES IN AGING LECTURE SERIES

NOVEMBER 12th  
12 - 1 pm (MST)

**Mentation: Dementia, Depression, Anxiety, and Delirium**  
Dr. Meenakshi Dagar

[JOIN LIVESTREAM](#)

View archived presentations [here](#)

Download the event flyer



**ADVANCES IN AGING LECTURE SERIES**

**Mentation: Dementia, Depression, Anxiety, and Delirium**

**LIVESTREAM**

November 12th, 2024  
12-1 pm (MST)

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- Recognize the signs and symptoms of and differentiate between dementia, delirium, and depression in older adults.
- Utilize evidence-based screening tools to identify and diagnose dementia, delirium, and depression.
- Implement individualized management strategies for dementia, delirium, and depression.
- Integrate mentation into comprehensive care plans, ensuring that interventions align with patient goals, minimize harm, and enhance quality of life.

**VIEW ARCHIVED PRESENTATIONS**

<https://streaming.bloom.arizona.edu/streaming/30772/event>

**Accreditation Statement:**  
The University of Arizona College of Medicine - Tucson is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

**Disclosures Statement:**  
All faculty, staff, planning committee members, and the CME office members have declared that they have no financial relationships with commercial entities that could conflict with their content or the CME activity.

Arizona Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program



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## PARTNER HIGHLIGHTS

### ARIZONA HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION

[WWW.AZHCA.ORG](http://WWW.AZHCA.ORG)



The Arizona Health Care Association's (AHCA) mission is to improve the lives of Arizona's vulnerable elders and to deliver solutions to skilled nursing and assisted living providers throughout the state. AHCA is committed to the development of quality-driven, innovative, and efficient health care systems that meet the needs and preferences of those residents in our member's care. AHCA has served facility members for 71 years through advocacy, education, consultation on regulatory, reimbursement and workforce issues impacting the profession. AHCA strives to ensure that high quality care is provided to all residents that are served in our member facilities. In addition, AHCA is dedicated to strengthening professionalism and ethical behavior in all aspects of long-term care.

A significant part of our work over the past 3 years has been in the area of workforce development as evidenced by AHCA WORKS (Workforce, Outreach & Retention are Keys to Success). Between May 2022 and June 2024, AHCA received a \$6.5 million grant from the Arizona Governor's office utilizing ARP dollars to address the compelling workforce shortage in long term care. Our goal was to recruit, train and retain frontline workers, with a focus on Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) in skilled nursing and certified Caregivers in assisted living centers. Our primary strategy was to create partnerships with Arizona long-term care providers to support the development of onsite training programs. We also actively partnered with external education programs to provide additional training resources and opportunities. Direct funding was provided to providers and educational partners to ensure the viability of their programs. Our main objective was to introduce 1,500 new frontline team members into Arizona's long-term care workforce to strengthen the capable and compassionate delivery of care.

AHCA WORKS was beyond successful and exceeded our grant "deliverable" by adding 2,217 new CNAs and Caregivers to the long-term care workforce! In addition, the retention results were high – over two-thirds of those entering the program retained their employment position at 120 days. We learned many lessons along the way about organizational best practices and the value of strong provider partnerships with educational programs. The essential funding provided to our partners was a driving force in program development and implementation.

In addition, with the participation of the Arizona Refugee Resettlement Program, Arizona State University's Arizona Refugee Career Pathways Program, Covenant Health Network, Maricopa County Public Health, and the Maricopa County Workforce Development Board, AHCA planned and implemented a pilot program to train refugee clients to become CNAs.

AHCA WORKS collaborated and helped fund two cohorts of refugee students, recruited appropriate long-term care training sites, and provided strategic guidance during the pilot. South Mountain Post Acute and Tempe Post Acute took the leap to serve as training sites for the students.

The pilot offered refugee students various supports during their educational journey. This included (but was not limited to):

- concurrent English language training
- a paid wage during training
- transportation assistance, and
- course materials, like textbooks and scrubs.

The students represented multiple countries of origin, including Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ukraine, and Syria. When interviewed, many students saw CNA training as a first step in entering the healthcare workforce in the United States; many had goals of going to nursing school or working in the nursing field. Some students also saw CNA training as an opportunity to learn skills that they could use within their own homes and communities, such as to care for elderly family members or neighbors.

We have appreciated the support from all of the stakeholders and allies in this exciting endeavor and our success was only possible through these valuable partnerships. We learned that so much is possible with additional funding, community collaboration and commitment across the board to the important cause of workforce development.

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## 8 WAYS TO SUPPORT AN ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVER

November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month and Family Caregivers Month. To mark these events, the Alzheimer's Association Desert Southwest Chapter is encouraging people to lend a helping hand to thousands of Arizona family members and friends serving as Alzheimer's caregivers.

Providing help and support to caregivers can be easier than most people think. Even little acts can make a big difference. The Alzheimer's Association Desert Southwest Chapter offers these suggestions:

- 1. Learn:** Educate yourself about Alzheimer's disease – its symptoms, its progression and the common challenges facing caregivers. The more you know, the easier it will be to find ways to help.
- 2. Build a Team:** Organize family and friends who want to help with caregiving. The Alzheimer's Association offers links to several free, online care calendar resources that families can use to build their care team, share takes and coordinate helpers.
- 3. Give Caregivers a Break:** Make a standing appointment to give the caregiver a break. Spend time with the person living with dementia and allow the caregiver a chance to run errands, go to their own doctor's appointment, participate in a support group or engage in an activity that helps them recharge. Even one hour could make a big difference in providing the caregiver with some relief.
- 4. Check In:** Many Alzheimer's and dementia caregivers report feeling isolated or alone. So, start the conversation – a phone call to check in, sending a note, or stopping by for a visit can make a big difference in a caregiver's day and help them feel supported.
- 5. Tackle the To-Do List:** Ask for a list of errands that need to be run – such as picking up groceries or prescriptions. Offer to do yard work or other household chores. It can be hard for a caregiver to find time to complete these simple tasks that we often take for granted.
- 6. Be Specific and Be Flexible:** Open-ended offers of support ("call me if you need anything" or "let me know if I can help") may be well-intended but are often dismissed. Be specific in your offer ("I'm going to the store, what do you need?"). Continue to let the caregiver know that you are there and ready to help.
- 7. Help for the Holidays:** Holiday celebrations are often joyous occasions, but they can be challenging and stressful for families facing Alzheimer's. Help caregivers around the holidays by offering to help with cooking, cleaning or gift shopping. If a caregiver has traditionally hosted family celebrations, offer your home instead.
- 8. Join the Fight:** Honor a person living with the disease and their caregivers by joining the fight against Alzheimer's. You can volunteer with your local Alzheimer's Association chapter, participate in fundraising events such as [Walk to End Alzheimer's](#) and [The Longest Day](#), advocate for more research funding, or sign up to participate in a clinical study through the Alzheimer's Association's [TrialMatch](#).



To learn more about Alzheimer's disease and ways you can support families and people living with the disease, visit [www.alz.org/dsw](http://www.alz.org/dsw)

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ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

For more information:  
[alz.org/publichealth](https://alz.org/publichealth)

## ALZHEIMER'S: A PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE



Public health works on a  
**POPULATION LEVEL**  
to protect and improve  
the health and well-being  
of entire communities



BY CENTERING  
HEALTH EQUITY

PUBLIC HEALTH CAN  
REACH ALL PEOPLE  
TO ADDRESS  
HEALTH PROBLEMS

### WHAT MAKES A HEALTH PROBLEM A POPULATION HEALTH ISSUE?

THE PREVALENCE & COSTS ARE  
**SUBSTANTIAL**



THE IMPACTS ARE  
**SERIOUS**



THERE ARE PUBLIC HEALTH  
**SOLUTIONS**



### • PUBLIC HEALTH ADDRESSES ALZHEIMER'S BY •



PROMOTING  
BRAIN HEALTH



INCREASING ACCESS  
TO EARLY DETECTION  
AND DIAGNOSIS



SUPPORTING PEOPLE  
LIVING WITH DEMENTIA  
AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

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## THE PREVALENCE AND COSTS OF ALZHEIMER'S ARE **SUBSTANTIAL**:

- ! Nearly 7 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's. By 2050, this number is projected to rise to nearly 13 million.
- ! Ten percent of adults aged 45 and older report subjective cognitive decline, one of the earliest warning signs of Alzheimer's disease.
- ! Annual costs exceed a quarter of a trillion dollars and costs are expected to rise to nearly \$1 trillion in 2050.



## THE IMPACTS OF ALZHEIMER'S ARE **SERIOUS**:

- ! More than 95% of people living with dementia also have at least one other chronic condition.
- ! More than 11 million caregivers provide over 18 billion hours of care valued at over \$346.6 billion.
- ! Medicare and Medicaid bear two-thirds of the health and long term care costs of those living with Alzheimer's.



## THERE ARE PUBLIC HEALTH **SOLUTIONS**:

### PROMOTE BRAIN HEALTH

Two-thirds of adults have one or more of the five major risk factors for dementia (physical inactivity, hypertension, diabetes, obesity and/or smoking).

Using public health approaches can help communities find ways to increase healthy behaviors.

### INCREASE ACCESS TO EARLY DETECTION AND DIAGNOSIS

Over half of adults reporting subjective cognitive decline have not consulted a health care professional.

As disease modifying treatments and new diagnostic tests become available, public health approaches can increase health care access and improve patient-physician communication to address this gap.

### SUPPORT PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

An estimated 65% of older adults facing dementia live at home or in the community, and more than a third of dementia caregivers report worsening health as a result of their caregiving duties.

Increasing community-clinical linkages through public health approaches can ensure caregivers are identified and have access to supports and services to care for themselves and their care partner.

ALZHEIMER'S  ASSOCIATION®



For more information:  
[alz.org/publichealth](https://alz.org/publichealth)

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