

Project Description Summary: Dementia Friendly Hospital Initiative  
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**Background:** The Alzheimer's Association – St. Louis, is one of 77 chapters in the National Association. It serves a 38 county region of southeastern Missouri and southwestern Illinois. There are 71 hospitals in the chapter's territory. The goal of the **Dementia-Friendly Hospital Initiative** is to improve patient care for elders with dementia in selected acute care settings by instituting a replicable dementia specific training protocol.

**The Problem:** Hospital systems are designed for cognitively intact persons despite the substantial increases in recent years of hospitalized persons with dementia. These patients are at higher risk for delirium, falls, fractures, elopement, incidents, incontinence, dehydration, untreated pain, aggressive behaviors, physical restraint, pressure sores, functional decline, and weight loss, thereby increasing the likelihood of re-hospitalization or nursing home placement.

Hospital staff reports that they are inadequately trained to recognize and deal with this population. Medicare denies reimbursement for preventable negative inpatient outcomes.

**Proposal:** Over the last two years, the St. Louis Chapter has piloted a dementia care training program for hospital staff. Data has been collected to determine its effectiveness as a tool that prompts staff to address "unfriendly" hospital practices used with persons with dementia such as nocturnal waking, inappropriate medication and restraints. The PCF grant will serve to:

1. Enhance and finalize an adaptable curriculum vetted past national experts.
2. Conduct and evaluate two pilots in larger university affiliated hospitals in Saint Louis serving diverse populations. Four pilots have been conducted in smaller regional facilities.
3. Partner with the National Alzheimer's Association to disseminate the findings and program design for replication by the other 77 chapters across the United States.

**Expected Outcomes:**

1. Evidence of improved patient care outcomes that encourages hospitals to utilize best dementia care resources and educational practices.
2. A national educational program delivery system that more closely links the expertise of the Alzheimer's Association to needs of local hospitals caring for persons with dementia.

Please [email Jan](#) with any questions or comments regarding this project.