

Creating a Dementia Friendly Community Through Advocacy and Education

Abigail Muhlenkamp, OTDS

Huntington University Doctor of Occupational Therapy Program

Project Description & Sites

Area of Study: 1) Advocacy 2) Leadership

Population: People living with dementia, caregivers, and community members wanting to make a difference.

Topic: Productive Aging

Sites: Lifestream Services Inc. and partnered with Dementia Friends Indiana

Description: The focal point of this project was to successfully provide community education and advocacy about dementia, and in turn create a supportive environment in which people with dementia and their families can thrive. Throughout the capstone experience I advertised for and hosted Dementia Friend workshops in my community, worked as an intern for Lifestream Services Inc., and volunteered at various large scale events for productive aging.



Needs Assessment | Literature Review

Needs Assessment: Interviews with various professionals and community members.

“This type of education, especially when it includes those living with dementia, helps community members see those living with dementia as people.”
(T. Snow, personal communication, June 29, 2021)

Literature Review:

- A diagnosis of dementia may lead to a decrease in quality of life, greater risk of depression, and lack of social engagement for people with dementia, while caregivers may experience loneliness, depression, and increased stress (Bruvik et al., 2012; Kovaleva et al., 2018).
- Decreasing the stigma surrounding dementia through creation of dementia-friendly communities can improve social participation and promote relationship building among community members and people with dementia and their caregivers (Maki et al., 2020).

Christ | Scholarship | Service

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” 1 Peter 4:10

“Do not cast me off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength is spent.” Psalm 71:9

Project Completion and Outcomes

Outcome Measure #1: The student will demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the needs of individuals with dementia in Jay County, as evidenced by an evaluation of the gap in services currently provided.

Outcome Measure #2: The student will provide information sessions to community businesses and individuals to educate about dementia and how people with dementia can be supported.

Outcome Measure #3: The student will demonstrate leadership through organizing and providing at least one community activity to promote social engagement for individuals with dementia and their families.

Mission & Vision Statements

Project Mission Statement: To improve quality of life of persons with dementia and their families through incorporating education and advocacy initiatives throughout the community.

Project Vision Statement: To enhance social participation and engagement of persons with dementia by decreasing the stigma surrounding dementia and promoting community interaction through creation of a dementia-friendly community.

Deliverables

Deliverable #1: Note from SNF confirming shadowing experience

Deliverable #2: Interview transcripts

Deliverable #3: Excel document listing businesses to be contacted

Deliverable #4: Photographs from information sessions; handouts from sessions

Deliverable #5: Certification of completion for Dementia Friends training

Deliverable #6: One newspaper article

Deliverable #7: Evidence of community activity; contract of agreement

Deliverable #8: Marketing materials

Deliverable #9: Training materials

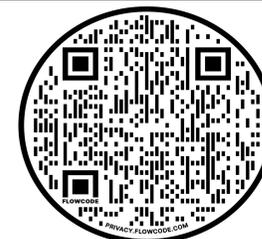


Sustainability & Future Implications

I will be continuing to work with Dementia Friends Indiana in my hometown.

- Various businesses, clubs, and individuals interested in workshops.
- Dementia Friends Champion Training
- Dementia Friends Location Training

Email Contact: amuhlenkamp13@gmail.com



KEY REFERENCES *Full reference list and image reference list available upon request

Bruvik, F. K., Ulstein, I. D., Ranhoff, A. H., & Engedal, K. (2012). The quality of life of people with dementia and their family carers. *Dementia and geriatric cognitive disorders*, 34(1), 7-14. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000341584>

Kovaleva, M., Spangler, S., Clevenger, C., & Hepburn, K. (2018). Chronic stress, social isolation, and perceived loneliness in dementia caregivers. *Journal of psychosocial nursing and mental health services*, 56(10), 36-43. <https://doi.org/10.3928/02793695-20180329-04>

Maki, Y., Takao, M., Hattori, H., & Suzuki, T. (2020). Promoting dementia-friendly communities to improve the well-being of individuals with and without dementia. *Geriatrics & gerontology international*, 20(6), 511-519. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ggi.13896>