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Alzheimer's Association Offers Guidance to Long-Term and Community-Based Care Settings to Ensure High-Quality Dementia Care Continues During COVID-19 Crisis

*- Document outlines evidence-based strategies to address key care concerns –
- More than 30 long-term and community-based care provider groups supporting effort -*

CHICAGO, March 30, 2020 – The Alzheimer's Association is offering new guidance to help ensure the delivery of high-quality care for people living with Alzheimer's and all dementia in long-term care and community-based settings during the current COVID-19 crisis.

The [document](#) released today is in collaboration with 34 long-term care and community-based care providers and affiliated associations. It identifies important care considerations and incorporates evidence-based strategies from the [Alzheimer's Association Dementia Care Recommendations](#) to assist staff in long-term and community-based care settings during emergency situations. Many of the groups supporting the guidance document participate in the Alzheimer's Association Dementia Care Provider Roundtable (AAD CPR), a consortium of thought leaders from the dementia care provider industry including nursing homes, assisted living, and home and community-based services.

“The COVID-19 pandemic threatens the health of millions, but it presents unique challenges for the more than 5 million America's living with Alzheimer's, especially those in long-term and community-based care, who are often the most frail and vulnerable,” said Doug Pace, NHA, director, mission partnerships, Alzheimer's Association. “This document is aimed at helping providers who may face staffing shortages deliver high-quality dementia care during an emergency situation.”

The new document provides care tips and guidance in several key areas, including:

- Preventing illness
- Providing person-centered care
- Helping families and friends stay connected
- Monitoring and responding to dementia-related issues, including assistance with eating and drinking, mobility and observing and responding to dementia-related behaviors

“In emergency situations, long-term and community-based care providers may experience staffing shortages or have to use non-clinical staff to assist with care,” Pace said. “This document can be used to focus staff very quickly on the most important considerations in caring for persons with dementia. It emphasizes person-centered care, which is the essential starting point for delivering optimal care. Individuals living with dementia thrive best with a consistent routine and with person-centered approaches. During emergency situations these practices are even more important.”

Thought leaders and organizations representing nursing homes, assisted living, and home and community-based services are supporting the guidance document and will be sharing it with their staff and employees across the country.

“The document outlines the most important dementia care considerations in the current environment,” said Letitia Jackson, senior vice president, Senior Star and chair, AADCPR. “Person-centered care is something the Roundtable members strive for to support those living with dementia every day. This document serves as an important reminder that this remains the goal even during a crisis.”

According to the 2020 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts and Figures report, 48% percent of nursing home residents are living with Alzheimer’s or other dementias. Among older adults in residential facilities, including assisted living, 42% or more have some form of Alzheimer’s or other dementias. In addition, many individuals with Alzheimer’s or other dementias receive community-based services, including 32% of individuals using home health services and 31% using adult day services.

“The COVID-19 crisis is creating anxiety and disruption for all Americans,” said Patrick Doyle, Ph.D., Regional Vice President of Operations, Brightview Senior Living, and vice-chair, AADCPR. “People living with dementia are especially vulnerable because they cannot adapt easily to the current realities. Providing guidance to help care and support people living with dementia during this challenging time is really beneficial.”

“The Alzheimer’s Association is very appreciative of all of the organizations that have collaborated with us and are supporting this important guidance,” Pace said. “Having consensus on these important care considerations will help in the delivery of high-quality dementia care even during this uncertain time.”

About the Alzheimer’s Association

The Alzheimer’s Association leads the way to end Alzheimer’s and all other dementia – by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia. Visit alz.org or call 800.272.3900.