

NEW MEXICO LHHS COMMITTEE MEETING: ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE & DEMENTIA TASK FORCE

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SANTA FE, NM | NOVEMBER 7, 2025

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Requests

- 1 Convene:**
DOH, ALTSD, NM Alzheimer's Association, other entities.
- 2 Use best available evidence-based research regarding brain health:**
Research studies, early detection, treatment programs.
- 3 Provider education and outreach:**
Risk factors, diagnosis, best standard of care, care planning, available treatments, validated assessment tools, planning and billing.
- 4 Increase public understanding and awareness:**
Campaigns, risk factors, availability of resources, outreach.
- 5 Caregiver access to resources:**
Available resources, supports, education and training.
- 6 Produce a report on the efforts and outcomes.**



PURPOSE

Convene state agencies and experts to increase awareness, integrate research, seek funding and resources to update and integrate efforts on Alzheimer's and Dementia programs and initiatives.

DEMENTIA TASK FORCE

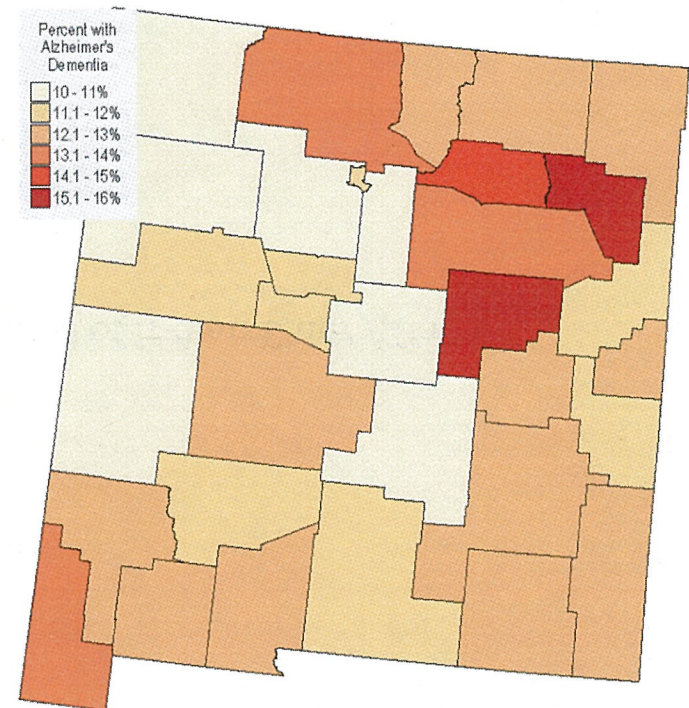
Members

- Representative Herndon
- AARP
- New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Service Department
- New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Service Department, Office of Indian Elder Affairs
- Alzheimer's Association
- Caregivers
- New Mexico Department of Health
- Family Caregiver Center of NM
- Hospital Association
- New Mexico Caregivers Coalition
- So'Tsoh Foundation
- University of New Mexico Health Sciences Memory and Aging Center

ALZHEIMER'S AND DEMENTIA LANDSCAPE

Growing population

- In 2024, there were **46,000** (11.8%) New Mexicans living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias (ADOD)²
- Estimated **426,000 caregivers in NM** (26% of adults); 46,000 caring for adults with ADOD and provide **119 million hours of unpaid care annually**¹
- Nearly half of all unpaid caregivers (**48%**) who provide care for older adults do so for an individual with ADOD²
- Nationally, older adults who have ADOD: non-Hispanic Black (19%), Hispanic (14%), and White (10%).³
- **Black older adults are about 2x as likely to have ADOD** as White older adults while **Hispanic older adults are about 1.5x as likely to have ADOD** as White older adults³
- Nationally, more than half (**54%**) of American Indian and Alaska Native people over the age of 70 experience cognitive impairment³
- Alzheimer's Disease is the **8th leading cause of death in New Mexico** in 2023, **6th leading cause in U.S.** in 2025⁴



Sources: 1) Caregiving in the US 2025 2) Alzheimer's & Dementia, 2024, 3) Dhana et al., Alzheimer's & Dementia, 2023 4) NM IBIS 2023

KEY PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED

**EDUCATION
AND
AWARENESS**

**CAREGIVER
SUPPORTS AND
SERVICES**

**ACCESS TO
SERVICES:
PROVIDERS,
DIAGNOSIS, CLINICAL
TRIALS, &
TREATMENTS**

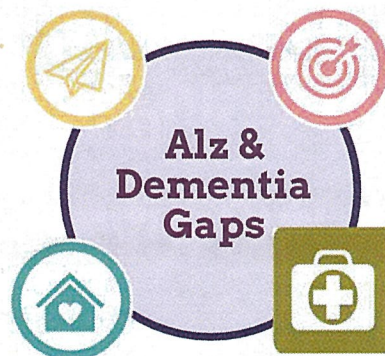
KEY PRIORITIES AND GAPS

EDUCATION & AWARENESS

- Brain health as public health priority
- Public awareness campaigns
- Encourage early detections and diagnosis
- Risk factors
- Dementia care specialists
- Evidence based training
- Specialized training
- Research

CAREGIVER SUPPORTS

- Training and educations
- Respite care
- Financial assistance
- Referrals and resources
- Support groups
- Recruit and retain formal caregivers
- Caregivers as integral part of care team



ACCESS TO SERVICES

- Workforce development
- Dementia care specialists
- Culturally appropriate services
- Reduce wait times to access care
- Virtual appointments
- Caregiver supports and resources
- Respite services
- Training

ACCESS TO CLINICAL SERVICES

- Diagnostics
- Providers
- Treatments
- Clinical trials
- Telehealth expansion
- Specialized staff
- Reimbursements for care
- Reduce wait times to access care

AGING AND LONG-TERM SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Programs and Services focused on Alzheimer's and Other Dementias

Office of Alzheimer's and Dementia

- State plan, education, resources, dementia certified practitioners

Lifespan Respite Grant

- Respite services, education, training

New MexiCare

- Financial assistance to caregivers, resources, training

Aging & Disability Resource Center

- Information and assistance
- 800-432-2080

Adult Protective Services

- Protective planning, education, placements, personal and homemaker services

Aging Network

- Respite services, adult day care, resources, meals, food delivery, transportation

Community Outreach

- Campaigns, programming information, Conference on Aging, public awareness

UNM MEMORY & AGING CLINIC: BACKGROUND

Only dedicated memory clinic in NM

- Formally named in 2015
- Previously 3 clinicians provided services since the 1990s
- Senior Health Center (new building 2023) is current clinic location
- Current faculty/staff:
 - Neurologist: 30% time weekly
 - Neurologist/Geriatrician: 20%
 - Nurse Practitioner: 60%
 - Medical Assistant: 80%
- Current available clinic capacity:
 - New patient appointments: 8 per week
 - Follow-up appointments: 39 per week
 - Providers work overtime an average of 1-3 hours per clinic day

As of October 2025, there are 697 open referrals = ~1.8 year wait

UNM MEMORY & AGING CLINIC: SERVICES

Services needed for evaluation of cognitive decline/dementia:

- Discussion of patient/family's observation of cognitive decline
- Review of risk factors for dementia
- Detailed, in-person cognitive assessment
- Initiation of medical evaluation for cognitive decline:
 - Laboratory screen
 - Structural imaging of brains: MRI or CT scan
 - Advanced imaging as needed: metabolic or amyloid PET scan
 - May require EEG (brain wave testing for seizures)
 - Recommendations for remediation of identified risk factors

Evaluation requires multiple clinic visits over time and treatment dependent upon specific diagnosis

UNM MEMORY & AGING CLINIC: RESOURCES

Need additional resources:

- Care providers:
 - 2 full-time physicians
 - 3 full-time NP/PA/clinician pharmacist
- Staff:
 - 2 full-time medical assistants
 - 1 full-time registered nurse
 - 1 full-time front desk clerk
 - 1 full-time patient care coordinator
 - 1 full-time cognitive testing technician
 - 1 full-time social worker
- Clinic space:
 - At this time, there is adequate clinical space for expansion

Expand the workforce and enhance training for specialized providers to reduce wait times and provide timely assessments and treatments

MOVING FORWARD

Continue Programs and Planning for Enhancements

Education & Awareness

- Increase Certified Dementia Care practitioners
- Monthly Alzheimer's Foundation webinars
- Expand training to health professionals from dementia care practitioners
- Take Action. Talk. Campaign
- Streamline resources

Caregiver Supports

- Expand respite services
- New MexiCare program (financial support for caregivers)
- Training and education
- Support groups
- Navigation services
- Enhance caregiver organizations
- Creative workforce solutions
- Increase caregiver workforce

Access to Services (Including Healthcare)

- Treatment resources in NM
- UNM Memory & Aging Clinic
- Expand provider workforce with specialized training
- Increase direct workforce
- Telehealth services
- Reduce wait times
- Access to certified specialists for assessments
- Reimbursement for services

MOVING FORWARD: 2026 PLANNING

ONGOING
TASK FORCE
EFFORTS

RESEARCH
AND
CLINICAL
TRIALS

ALTS
2026
PLANNING

SEEK
ALTERNATE
FUNDING
SOURCES

PARTNERSHIPS &
COLLABORATIONS

CAREGIVER
SUPPORTS AND
ADVOCACY

SPECIALIZED
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC
AWARENESS