



Dementia Friendly Community Joining the National Network

Dementia Friendly America (DFA) communities are influencers and catalysts for change that foster capability to support people with dementia and their care partners in local communities across the nation. The following factors indicate that your community is ready for and committed to this undertaking. Joining the DFA network means you are engaged in a process to become more dementia-friendly. DFA does not certify communities as dementia-friendly. Communities interested in being a member of the Dementia Friendly America network pledge that their efforts will include the following factors.

Readiness and Recognition Criteria

- **Leadership of People Living with Dementia.** People living with dementia and their caregivers are key to leading and shaping dementia friendly communities. It is imperative that people living with dementia shape a dementia friendly community effort and are represented on the action team.
- **Establish and maintain a cross-sector team that works collaboratively to create change.** Creating change in a community cannot be accomplished without establishing and maintaining an effective planning team that works collaboratively. A cross-sector team includes at a minimum, government, clinical, community-based organizations and people living in community with dementia and their care partners. Ideally, several community sectors are represented on the cross-sector team. The team is an asset that will help to engage the wider community to increase awareness and change the way the community thinks about living with dementia. No one single organization can be responsible for change across a community.
- **Connecting Across Sectors.** DFA communities convene a cross-sector team across three or more community sectors to advance dementia friendliness. A cross-sector team includes at a minimum, government, clinical, community-based organizations and people living in community with dementia and their care partners. Ideally, several community sectors are represented on the cross-sector team.¹
- **Adoption and Communication of Dementia Friendly Practices and Change Goals.** DFA communities foster sector-specific dementia friendly practices across their communities. The DFA toolkit guides communities through a step-by-step process that fosters adoption of dementia friendly practices in all parts of community. The DFA toolkit guides communities through a comprehensive process of convening an action team, identifying community needs, prioritizing those needs and developing an action plan for ensuring a more dementia friendly

¹ Sectors of community include are listed on the DFA website and include banks/financial services, community members, legal and advanced planning, local government (including transportation, housing, first response, public spaces), health care, hospitals, libraries, faith communities, businesses, community-based services, and residential and specialty care.

community. Please summarize how your community plans to engage in dementia friendly work and how it will sustain these efforts moving forward.

- **Champion Organization and Coordination Capacity.** Many DFA communities benefit from having an organization that is willing to champion, coordinate and, if needed, serve as a fiscal sponsor. The champion organization may help recruit and partner with a senior leader of local government in the effort (e.g. mayor; city council; other elected officials).
- **Progress Tracking and Sharing.** Communities will report progress by providing a current program description, upon request, and by completing periodic surveys.

To Join the Dementia Friendly America Network of Communities:

- Complete the DFA Community Application Form. This includes a one-paragraph project description to be used for public dissemination (see sample description on next page)
- Provide three or more letters of support representing different community sectors
- If your DFA community is in a state with a DFA state lead, please include an additional letter of support from that agency/individual.

Once DFA has reviewed a community's materials and communicated approval, a community may identify themselves with the Dementia Friendly America logo.

Benefits of Joining the DFA Network of Communities:

- Participation in a national movement
- Access to webinars for DFA communities
- Access to DFA communities listserv
- Technical assistance with DFA staff team
- Access to DFA logo / branding
- Ability to connect with other DFA communities
- Opportunities to have your work highlighted

Sample One-Paragraph Project Description

Age & Dementia Friendly Greenwich is a collaborative effort led by the Greenwich Commission on Aging and an Action Team that includes local government officials, key internal and external stakeholders as well as older adults, individuals living with dementia and their care partners. Current projects include offering Dementia Friends sessions to all sectors of the community and working with the medical community to encourage early and accurate diagnosis of dementia. Twenty-five Dementia Champions will continue to promote dementia awareness throughout the community and members of the general public will have an enhanced awareness of what it means to live with Dementia and to support the ability of people with Dementia to continue to live, engage, participate and thrive in the Town of Greenwich. Future projects include local certification of Age and Dementia Friendly Businesses and bringing Dementia Friends education to students in grades 6 through 12.