



Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign

REPORT TO THE MINNESOTA LEGISLATURE

June 2023 – June 2025

Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign: Report to Legislature Biennium 2023 - 2025

Minnesota Department of Health
Orville L. Freeman Building
PO Box 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975
651-201-5400
health.healthybrain@state.mn.us
www.health.state.mn.us

As requested by Minnesota Statute 3.197: This report costs approximately \$2,238 to prepare, including staff time, printing and mailing expenses.

*Upon request, this material will be made available in an alternative format such as large print, Braille or audio recording.
Printed on recycled paper.*

Contents

Alzheimer’s Awareness Campaign.....1

Executive summary4

 Increasing Alzheimer’s awareness across Minnesota4

Alzheimer’s awareness grants.....6

 Grant focus and alignment with the Minnesota Dementia Strategic Plan8

 Community impact 13

 Alzheimer’s and Related Dementias Community Toolbox..... 15

Additional Alzheimer’s awareness efforts..... 16

 Healthy Brain Community Grants..... 16

 Memory Kits for public libraries 19

 Healthy Brain newsletter 19

References 19

Executive summary

In 2020, an estimated 99,000 Minnesotans 65 years and older had Alzheimer's disease. The numbers will only increase overtime as a large percentage of the population reaches older ages. By 2025, the number of Minnesotans with Alzheimer's is expected to increase 21.2% to 120,000, largely due to the state's population aging. National data suggest 2020 numbers will double by 2060.

The Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign was created as a proactive solution to meet the changing landscape of Minnesota's population. This public information campaign aligns with the [Minnesota Dementia Strategic Plan](#), ensuring awareness of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) by working with communities and leading organizations to attain the best possible brain health and wellbeing for Minnesotans. This campaign focuses on needs based on each distinct demographic, ensuring the Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign provides the most meaningful messaging and education to aging Minnesotans and their caregivers.

The Campaign leverages the expertise of community-based organizations through grant-funding. Thanks to the 2023 legislation, MDH was able to fund \$80,000 in awareness messaging across the state from June 2023 – June 2025.

Per the legislation, the Campaign addressed the following goals through grant-funding, creation of an online [resource library \(Community Toolbox\)](#), and other initiatives:

- Promotes the benefits of early detection and the importance of discussing cognition with a health care provider.
- Outlines the benefits of cognitive testing, the early warning signs of cognitive impairment, and the difference between normal cognitive aging and dementia.
- Provides awareness of ADRD.

In March of 2025, four community-based organizations were funded at \$20,000 each to implement awareness work. The four grantees reached a collective 231,000 Minnesotans as part of the campaign. The communication materials they created are available on MDH's Community Toolbox for the public to use. Success stories for the Alzheimer's Awareness Grantees are being added to the community toolbox.

Grantees report 76 total grant activities. Grantee activities occurred in 15 counties.

Increasing Alzheimer's awareness across Minnesota

Alignment with Minnesota Dementia Strategic Plan

Minnesota succeeds when state agencies, local public and Tribal health, community organizations, and additional key institutions collaborate. The Minnesota Dementia Strategic Plan (MDSP) seeks to align Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias work across all entities. The Campaign addresses the Educate and Activate strategy of the MDSP in the following areas:

- Raise Awareness
- Support People with Dementia
- Reduce Stigma
- Eliminate Discrimination

Community engagement makes it happen

MDH's Aging and Healthy Communities Unit believes deeply in creating and sustaining meaningful relationships with communities and Tribal partners. The Campaign was created with the thoughtful consideration of existing community organizations who are already engaging in dementia and brain health education. Rather than create messaging to Minnesotans through a state-to-community filter, we wanted to elevate community-based organizations' (CBOs) existing messaging.

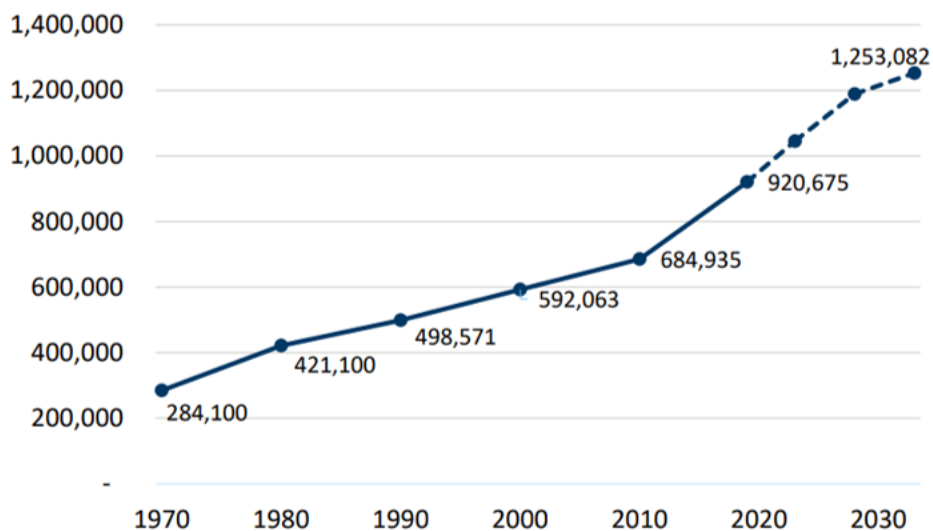
These CBOs already know how to reach their populations through culturally relevant approaches and therefore are in the best position to spend funding in the most effective way. All activities related to this campaign were created in consultation with community organizations and local public health partners.

In return, MDH was able to connect community organizations to other relevant partners, share additional funding opportunities, and provide technical assistance and resources.

Growing Minnesota aging population calls for continued dementia awareness

In 2025, the Alzheimer's Association estimated that about 120,000 adults 65+ (12%) are living with dementia. Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) diagnosis are expected to double by 2050. ADRD is not part of normal aging, and while there is no single way to prevent the onset of ADRD there are ways to reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's. There is growing evidence that healthy behaviors may reduce the risk of dementia like exercise, healthy eating, quitting smoking, and preventing and managing chronic conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes, and obesity.

Number of Minnesotans age 65+



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Minnesota State Demographic Center Projections.

Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign Legislative Report

Black, Hispanic, and American Indian populations are more likely to have Alzheimer's but less likely to be diagnosed due to structural racism. One in three Native Americans will be diagnosed with a form of dementia and Older Black Americans are twice as likely to have Alzheimer's or other dementias as White Americans. Older Hispanic Americans are about 1.5 times as likely to have Alzheimer's or other dementias as White Americans. Chronic Diseases are also more prevalent in these populations which are known risk factors for ADRD.

Caregivers for people living with Alzheimer's and Related Dementias tend to provide more extensive assistance to individuals than caregivers for other conditions. In 2016, through a statewide survey, Minnesota caregivers said they need more support in the following areas:

- Classes about providing care
- Help accessing additional services
- Support groups
- Individual counseling to support them in their role, or respite care that provides short-term relief for primary caregivers.

Data also shows that underdiagnosis is a factor in the existing data – only four in 10 Minnesotans who noticed signs of cognitive decline had talked with a healthcare provider about it. Continued awareness building throughout the state and de-stigmatizing ADRD is crucial.

Additionally, from June 2024 – June 2025, the “Funding Opportunities” page has the most traffic of the ADRD pages having 22.7% of visitors. The Alzheimer's Awareness Grant page (linked from “Funding Opportunities”) has the second highest page with 17% of ADRD traffic. This web traffic demonstrates the interest in partnering and community involvement around this topic.

Alzheimer's awareness grants

The Alzheimer's Awareness Grant Program was directly created from the [Minn. Law 2023 c 70 art 4 s 1010, 2023 c 70 art 20 s 3 \(www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2023/0/Session+Law/Chapter/70/#laws.20.3.0\)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2023/0/Session+Law/Chapter/70/#laws.20.3.0) designed to implement a public information campaign to provide awareness of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD). As stated in the legislation, the purpose of the grant program is to design and make publicly available awareness materials for a statewide public information campaign that:

- 1. Promotes the benefits of early detection and the importance of discussing cognition with a healthcare provider.**
- 2. Outlines the benefits of cognitive testing, the early warning signs of cognitive impairment, and the difference between normal cognitive aging and dementia.**
- 3. Provides awareness of ADRD.**

Before the first Request for Proposals, the Alzheimer's Awareness Advisory Group was formed. The group consisted of brain health and communications professionals from various state agencies and partner community organizations. This group guided the tactics of the MDH Alzheimer's Awareness grant program before and during the grant duration, supported the overall awareness campaign, and served as an avenue for networking.

Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign Legislative Report

In 2024, the Request for Proposals was launched. It asked for applications from community organizations with prior experience in ADRD who could reach communities disproportionately impacted by underdiagnosis and misdiagnosis. These communities include Black, Indigenous, People of Color, LGBTQ+, American Indian, people living with disabilities, and communities in Greater Minnesota. Four organizations were selected as Alzheimer's Awareness grantees by members of the advisory group to use culturally responsive and community-specific communications tactics to address stigma and increase awareness about ADRD topics including prevention, early detection, and caregiver wellbeing. Criteria for approval had to align with the legislative goals, and prior experience messaging ADRD.

In March of 2025, four community-based organizations were funded at \$20,000 each to implement awareness work. **The four grantees reached a collective 231,000 Minnesotans as part of the campaign.** The communication materials they created are available on MDH's Community Toolbox for the public to use. Success stories for the Alzheimer's Awareness Grantees are being added to the community toolbox.

Date	Activity/Deliverable
Feb. 2024 – Sept. 2024	Healthy Brain Grantees Funded
Feb. 2024- June 2024	Campaign Phase 1: Community Toolbox Development
Nov. 2024 – Dec. 2024	Alzheimer's Awareness Grant RFP Development
Jan. 6, 2025 – Feb. 5, 2025	RFP Open
Feb. 11, 2025 – Feb. 28, 2025	Application Review & Due Diligence
April 22, 2025	Grantee start date
April 22, 2025 – June 30, 2025	Duration of Grant
July 30, 2025 – Sept. 30 2025	Grantee Reporting
Dec. 7, 2025 – Jan. 8, 2026	Cycle 2 RFP Application Period
March 15 , 2026	Cycle 2 Notice of Awards
June 2026	Cycle 2 Contract Execution

Grant focus and alignment with the Minnesota Dementia Strategic Plan

The Minnesota Dementia Strategic Plan (MDSP) is an actionable plan to reduce dementia risk, detect dementia earlier, and improve the health and well-being of caregivers and people living with dementia. The MDSP's creation was facilitated by the Minnesota Healthy Brain Partnership (MNHBP), a statewide coalition of organizations, professionals, and community members working together to improve brain health and dementia care in Minnesota, especially for those most impacted by inequities.

The MDSP was shaped by feedback from community meetings, a survey of dementia partners, interviews, a workshop with the Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging's Diverse Elders Coalition, and other reports on aging, dementia, and caregiving.

The plan is organized into four main areas:

1. Educate and Activate

2. Develop Policies and Partnerships

3. Ensure Culturally Responsive Caregivers

4. Accountability, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Alzheimer's Awareness campaign intentionally aligns with the Educate and Activate area of the Strategic Plan. All grantees as part of the campaign are required to meet the following sections of Educate and Activate strategy in their planning:

- **Raise Awareness:** Teach people about dementia, including what causes it, how early detection and diagnosis can help, and the importance of caregiver health and well-being.
- **Educate Providers:** Inform health care and social service providers about local, culturally responsive resources for dementia.
- **Support People with Dementia:** Help people living with dementia and their care partners understand the disease, plan for future changes, and find services that can help.
- **Reduce Stigma:** Work with communities to create messages that address misinformation and provide an accurate understanding about dementia.
- **Eliminate Discrimination:** Work with communities to address discrimination and build welcoming spaces, programs, and care for the people living with dementia and their care partners.

Cultural connectedness

The Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign is rooted in community. The grant program was designed to elevate existing dementia work in the state of Minnesota. To meet the needs of Minnesota Hispanic, Black, Native American, and Greater Minnesota Communities, MDH spent a planning period immersed in community to hear needs and receive feedback from community members on their current experience with ADRD.

MDH's Aging and Healthy Communities Unit met with MDH's Office of American Indian Health as well as the Office of African American Health. The Aging unit also met with the following community organizations:

- Volunteers of America
- The Remember Project
- Center for Healthy Aging and Innovation (UMN)
- Indian Health Board

Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign Legislative Report

- Urban Indian Elders Coalition
- Centro Tyrone Guzman
- Alzheimer's Association
- African Career Education & Resource Inc.
- Northwoods Caregivers
- Restoration For All
- SEWA
- Memory Keepers
- Centro Nazareno Tyrone
- Minnesota Northstar Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program

These community groups reiterated the importance of partnering with trusted messengers. Thus, MDH focused on expanding existing CBO outreach strategies to further include or elevate ADRD messages to their unique audiences.

In addition to an equitable grant review process, MDH made sure the \$80,000 in grant funds could be used in culturally beneficial and relevant ways. One of our four grantees, the Minneapolis American Indian Center, was chosen to serve the Urban Indian community. Another one of the grantees, Memory Keepers Medical Discovery Team, was chosen to serve Tribal communities. Both organizations used funds to create culturally tailored events in their communities.

During the grant duration, the four grantees worked with several partners across the state:

- Native American Community Clinic
- Indian Health Board
- Convivencia Hispana
- Centro Tyrone Guzman
- KMSU Radio Station
- Alzheimer's Association
- HealthFinders Collaborative
- Northwoods Caregivers
- Leech Lake Diabetes Center
- Leech Lake Elder Services
- Leech Lake Health Division
- Anishinaabe Legal Services
- KOJB 90.1 FM the Eagle

Grant activities

Approved grant activities included:

- Community events or one-day workshops
- Social media advertising
- Digital media advertising
- Print flyers and infographics
- Videos
- Television and radio
- Other relevant and promotional materials

Grantees report 76 total grant activities. Below are key activities proposed and delivered by each grantee.

Alzheimer's awareness campaign tactics

MDH Tactics	State of Minnesota
Share grantee materials on Community Toolbox. Continue outreach of Community Toolbox (and new layout for easier navigation)	State of Minnesota, Community Health Workers, Partner Organizations
Table at various events sharing grantee work and MDH branded info graphics on ADRD	Partner Organizations, Minnesotans with an interest in ADRD
Share awareness materials from grantees with partners and their digital channels	Healthy Brain Initiative Digital email subscribers (7,268)
Share awareness materials on MDH Social media channels	MDH Social Media Followers
Success stories for each grantee and their awareness tactics	State of Minnesota
Utilize Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign advisory group channels	Advisory Group Partners
Alzheimer's Awareness Grantees	
Memory Keepers Medical Discovery Team	Tribal Indian Communities
Brain Train event	Leech Lake Reservation
Brain Train toolkit	Minnesota Tribes
Minneapolis American Indian Center	Urban Indian Community
Wellness Breakfast w/ ADRD education	Twin Cities

Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign Legislative Report

Powwow w/ Alz. Awareness Education	Twin Cities
Survey on brain health knowledge	Twin Cities
Brain Health Day	Twin Cities
Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency	NE MN, Rural Minnesota
Informational sessions featuring speakers from Alz. Association	Cass, Itasca, St. Louis, Cook, Lake Counties
Community-partnered events	Cass, Itasca, St. Louis, Cook, Lake Counties
Dissemination of newspaper, radio, flyers	Cass, Itasca, St. Louis, Cook, Lake Counties
Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research	Latin Communities, SW MN/TC Metro
Digital and printed information booklet – Spanish & English language	Hennepin, Ramsey, Dakota, Rice, Steele, Olmsted, Mower, Martin, Watonwan, Blue Earth counties
Event tabling	Hennepin, Ramsey, Dakota, Rice, Steele, Olmsted, Mower, Martin, Watonwan, Blue Earth counties
Facebook Live sessions	Hennepin, Ramsey, Dakota, Rice, Steele, Olmsted, Mower, Martin, Watonwan, Blue Earth counties
Radio segments	Hennepin, Ramsey, Dakota, Rice, Steele, Olmsted, Mower, Martin, Watonwan, Blue Earth counties

Figure 1. Alzheimer's awareness campaign reach numbers

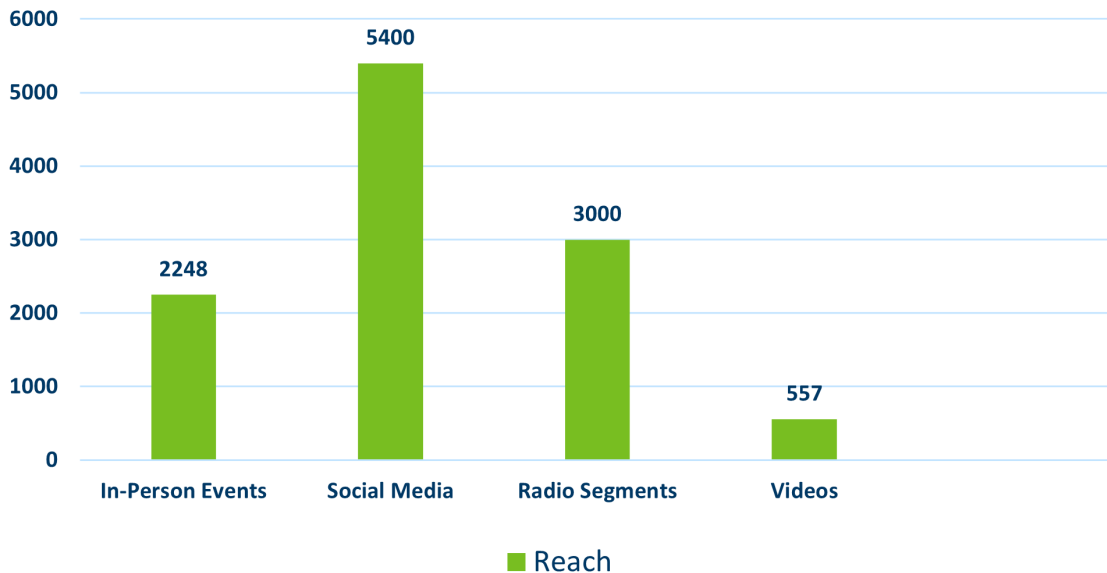


Figure 1: Figure shows the total reach number of outreach tactics for all grantees: 2248 through in-person events, 5400 through social media, 3000 through radio, and 557 through video.

Newspaper ads: 212,679. These numbers are based on the estimated reach of the newspapers in which ads were placed.

Figure 2. Purpose of communication campaign tactics

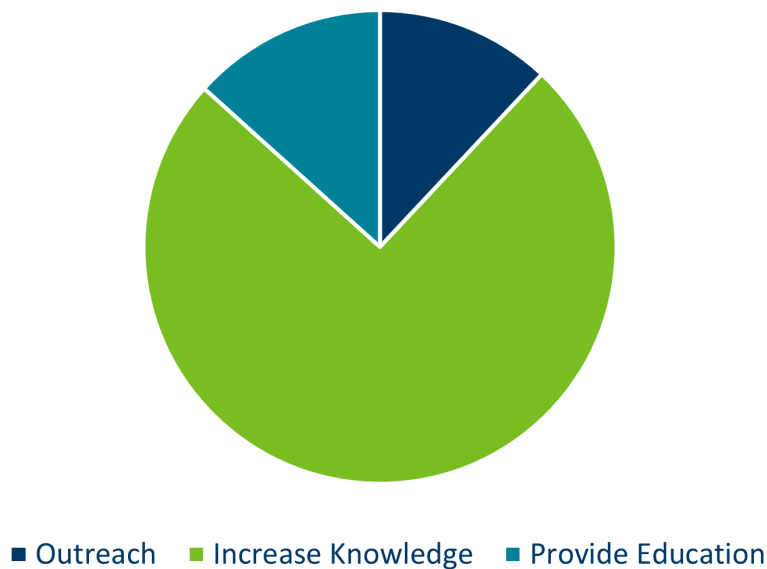


Figure 2: Chart shows the breakdown of tactic purpose for grantees: outreach for event, increase public knowledge of ADRD, Provide specific education of ADRD. Grantees reported 75 tactics total, nine tactics were for event outreach, 56 were to increase public knowledge, and 10 were to provide specific education of ADRD.

Figure 3. Minnesota Dementia Strategic Plan areas addressed

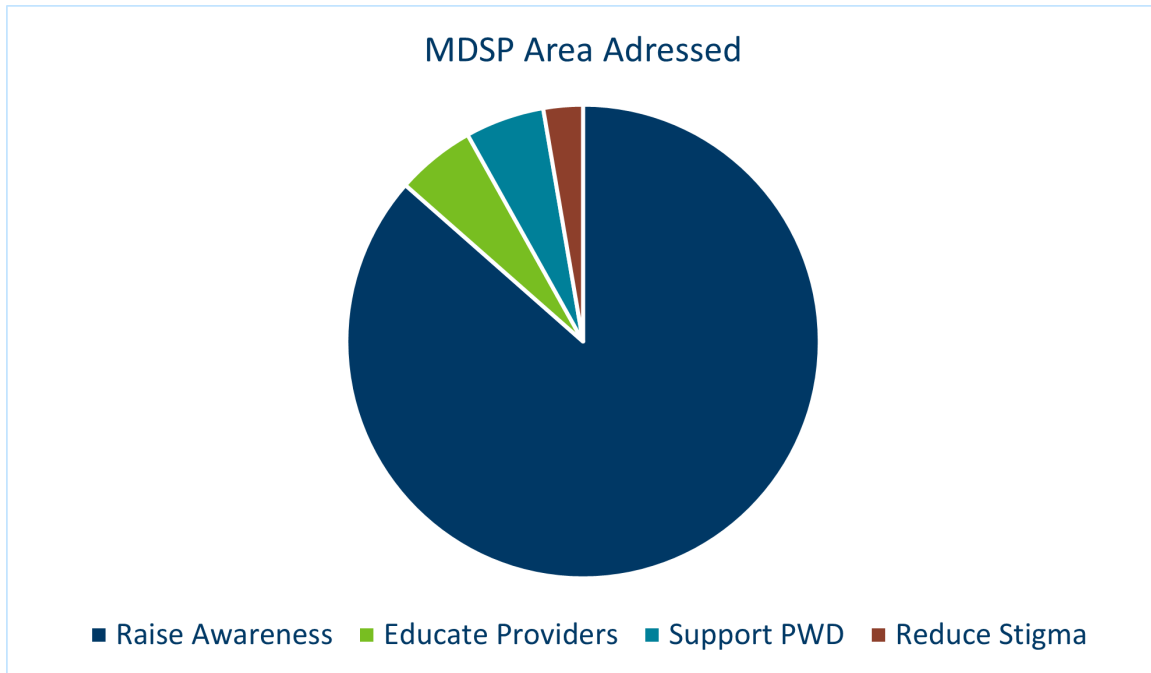


Figure 3: Breakdown of MDSP areas each tactic met: Raise Awareness, Educate Providers, Support People with Dementia, Reduce Stigma.

Community impact

Alzheimer's Awareness Public Information Campaign funding means Minnesota communities can strengthen the health of their communities. In 2025, grantees spread awareness across 15 counties. All grantees received feedback from community members on how they were reached and the effectiveness of each strategy.

Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research reached 1,863 Spanish-speaking community members through 27 outreach events across 10 counties.

"Participants expressed deep appreciation for receiving materials in their native language—many for the first time. Several recognized symptoms in loved ones after reviewing the information and felt empowered to seek further support." – Deisy Canon Lovera, HACER

In addition to social media and fliers, two grantees executed awareness strategies to reach Native communities by going directly to community itself.

Memory Keepers Medical Discovery Team's "Brain Train" provided a day of learning and resource sharing for tribal members.

"There is hope with education, prevention, and a better understanding of dementia. Thank you!" – Brain Train participant, Leech Lake Reservation

Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign Legislative Report

"I didn't know there were multiple topics for holistic health and available resources." – Brain Train Participant, Leech Lake Reservation.

The Minneapolis American Indian Center held a powwow to reach Urban Natives with attendance of 500 people. In addition to the powwow, they held an information wellness breakfast with about 50 attendees.

"Thank you for sharing this information on Alzheimer's, it doesn't feel as scary." – Wellness breakfast attendee, Minneapolis American Indian Center

Figure 4. Map of Minnesota counties with grantees

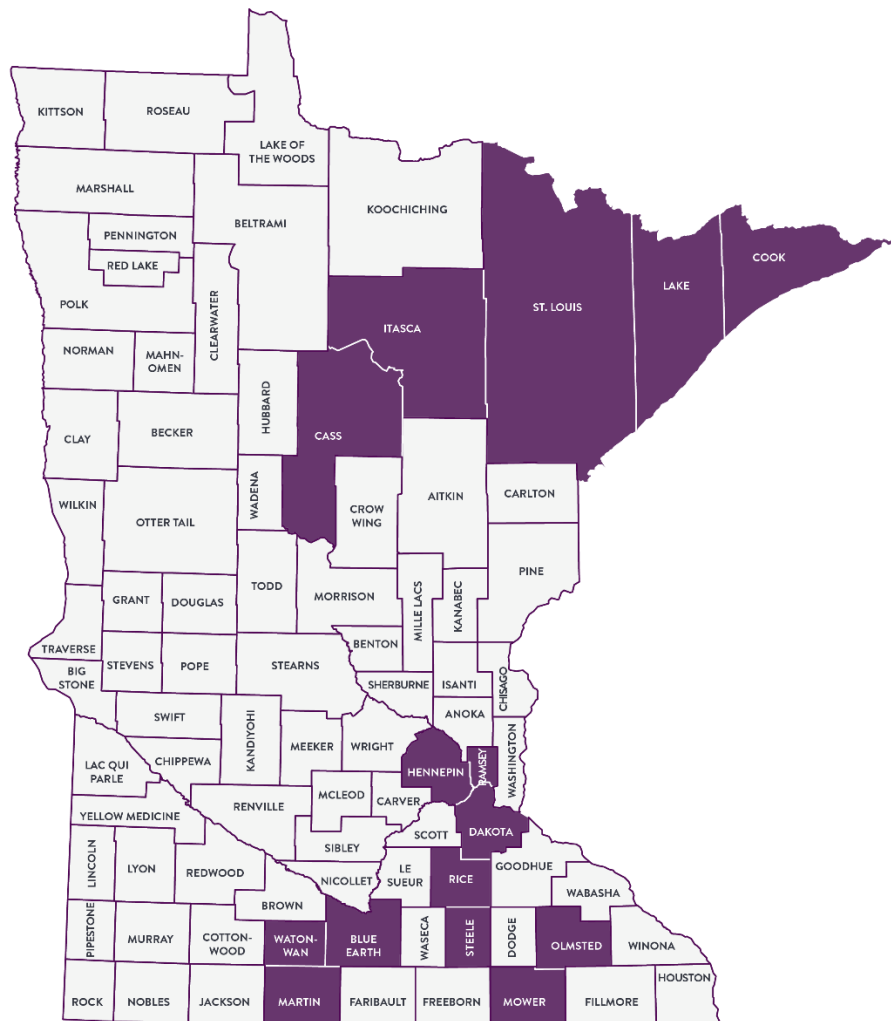


Figure 4: Highlighted purple counties are counties our grantees reached in their awareness tactics: Cook, Lake, St. Louis, Itasca, Cass, Hennepin, Ramsey, Dakota, Rice, Blue Earth, Watonwan, Martin, Steele, Rice, Olmsted, Mower.

Alzheimer's and Related Dementias Community Toolbox

MDH Aging and Healthy Communities launched the Alzheimer's Community Toolbox for public use on June 21, 2024. The toolbox is an aggregate of 65 culturally relevant national and local resources for brain health and ADRD, covering topics like:

- Caregiving
- Research
- Faith-based and traditional remedies
- Advanced care-planning
- Emotional wellbeing
- Early detection and education
- People living with dementia
- Healthy living and brain health
- Social determinants of health

The toolbox was created in consultation with culturally focused organizations and teams within MDH who are leading dementia work in Minnesota, including:

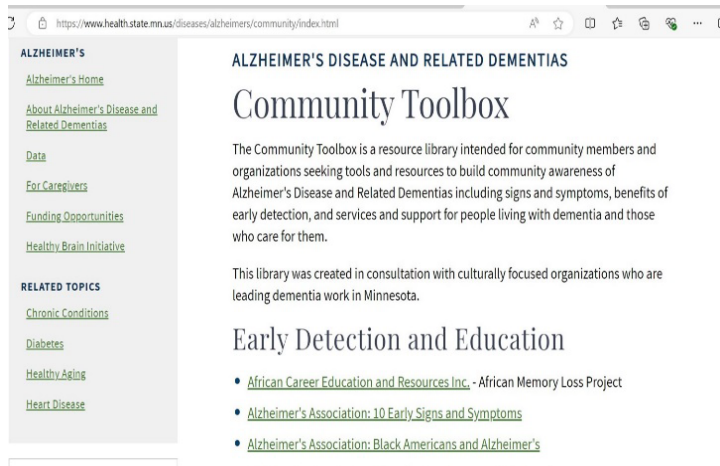
- Alzheimer's Association
- Volunteers of America
- Memory Keepers Medical Discovery Team
- Centro Tyrone Guzman
- Minnesota Board on Aging Native Elders Director
- MDH Tribal Affairs
- MDH Tobacco Cessation
- MDH Suicide and Prevention Tribal Liaison
- MDH Statewide Health Improvement Partnership
- MDH Health Equity Bureau

The intent for the toolbox is for community organizations and community health workers to use when working with community members looking for additional services and education. The toolbox is maintained with feedback and input from community partners and grantees.

Toolbox highlights

- 274 link clicks from digital emails
- Fifth most popular MDH page related to Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias
- 1,689 page views

Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign Legislative Report



ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND RELATED DEMENTIAS

Community Toolbox

The Community Toolbox is a resource library intended for community members and organizations seeking tools and resources to build community awareness of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias including signs and symptoms, benefits of early detection, and services and support for people living with dementia and those who care for them.

This library was created in consultation with culturally focused organizations who are leading dementia work in Minnesota.



The online toolkit was “remodeled” in August of 2025 based on user feedback to make it easier to navigate and sort through topic areas users were interested in.

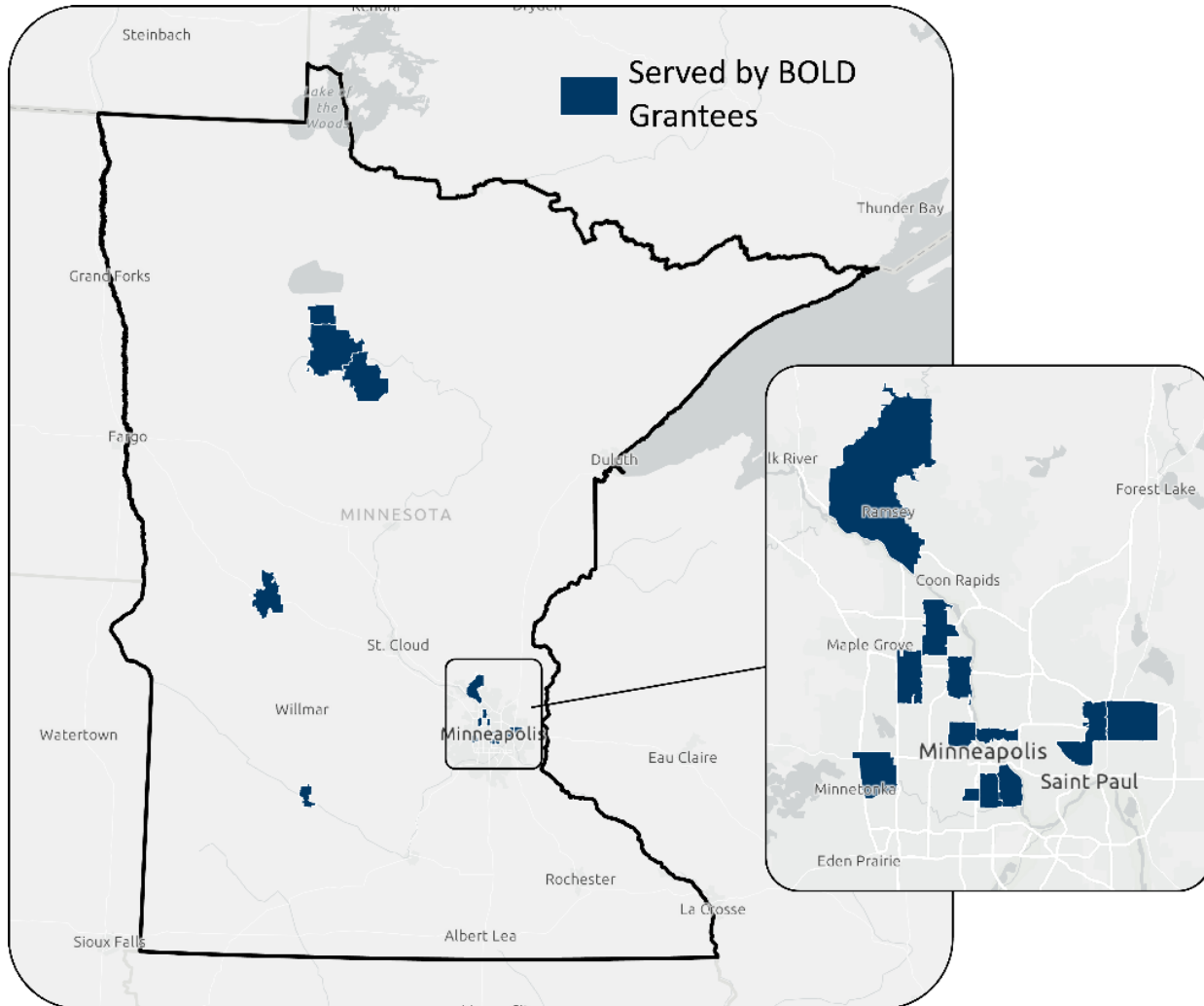
Additional Alzheimer's awareness efforts

Healthy Brain Community Grants

The MDH Healthy Brain Community (HBC) Grant Program, funded through the CDC BOLD (Building our Largest Dementia Infrastructure) Grant, funds organizations to implement strategies that will reduce the risk of developing dementia, detect and diagnose dementia earlier, and connect people living with dementia and their caregivers to needed resources and supports.

HBC Grantees reached 2,238 adults between April and October 2024.

Figure 5: Areas of Minnesota the Healthy Brain Community Grantees reached in 2024.



Grant activities

Healthy Brain Community Grantee tactics	Audience
Centro Nazaerno de Campasion Agape	Hispanic, Latino, Spanish
Connect Pastors and Staff to culturally specific resources	Twin Cities Faith communities
Create content for dementia education magazine	Twin Cities Faith communities
Attend health fairs to increase awareness	Twin Cities Faith communities
Alzheimer's Awareness Advisory Group	Community partners, state agencies
Restoration for All	African Immigrant Community

Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign Legislative Report

Parter with Remember Project to produce videos on lived experience of African immigrants and Refugees	Twin Cities, East Metro, Southeast Metro area
"Common Ground Community Conversations"	Twin Cities, East Metro, Southeast Metro area
Alzheimer's Awareness Advisory Group	Community partners, state agencies
The Remember Project	Rural Minnesota, Twin Cities Metro Area
Photo essay project to capture messages and spread testimonials on brain health	Twin Cities, Central Minnesota Rural Area, Eastern Minnesota
Community events	Twin Cities, Central Minnesota Rural Area, Eastern Minnesota
Alzheimer's Awareness Advisory Group	Community partners, state agencies
Northwoods Caregivers	Rural Minnesota, Tribal Communities
Host Dementia Awareness Week	Northern, Northeastern, northwestern Minnesota, Tribal Communities in Northern Minnesota
Host Bi-Annual ADRD Conference for Tribal Communities	Leech Lake Reservation, White Earth Reservation, Fond Du Lac Reservation, Bois Forte, Urban Indian Community
"Walk to Create Awareness" Event	Bemidji, Minnesota - Northern, Northeastern, northwestern Minnesota, Tribal Communities in Northern Minnesota
Host 1 Lunch and Learn on the "10 warning signs of ADRD"	Northern, Northeastern, northwestern Minnesota, Tribal Communities in Northern Minnesota
Alzheimer's Awareness Advisory Group	Community partners, state agencies

Memory Kits for public libraries

In conversations with partners and community members, libraries were identified as a trusted localized source of information and support. With a small amount of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease division funds, we developed a Letter of Interest disseminated to all Minnesota libraries. We received 60 responses and were able to select 14 libraries and 2 community centers to receive bilingual English/Spanish memory kits for families to check out and use to support connection between children and family members living with dementia. An AmeriCorps Public Health Program Coordinator working with us in the second year of the grant, curated the kits which include sensory activities, Alzheimer's education story books for kids, family games, caregiver guides, and more.

Healthy Brain newsletter

While our funded partners work to build awareness of ADRD through community-tailored strategies, our MDH team has worked to share key ADRD messages, tools, and resources to a statewide audience. Tactics include the MDH website, social media, health fairs, podcasts, presentations, 16 MDH Healthy Brain Initiative GovDelivery newsletters, and other MDH newsletters.

When we first began disseminating messages through our newsletter, we had 1,299 subscribers. To date, we have 7,802 subscribers receiving evidence-based information about ADRD risk reduction, early diagnosis, and caregiver health and wellbeing monthly. We see this as evidence of increased engagement across the state due to collaborative efforts to elevate the topic of brain health and dementia.

References

- [1] Minnesota Department of Health. 2024 Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Data. (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/alzheimers/data.html>)
- [2] Minnesota Laws, Legislative Session 2023. Minnesota Laws Chapter 70. [Minn. Law 2023 c 70 art 4 s 1010, 2023 c 70 art 20 s 3.](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2023/0/Session+Law/Chapter/70/#laws.20.3.0) (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2023/0/Session+Law/Chapter/70/#laws.20.3.0>)
- [3] Minnesota Department of Health. 2024 Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Community Toolbox. (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/alzheimers/community/index.html>)
- [4] Minnesota Department of Health. 2023 Minnesota Dementia Strategic Plan. (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/alzheimers/docs/dementioplan.pdf>)