



# Awareness. Education. Empowerment.

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## Breaking News

New Law to Promote  
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## Our Mission

The mission of DFLV is to raise awareness and reduce stigma related to Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders (ADRD) among community members and encourage the Lehigh Valley community to become more accessible and supportive for individuals affected by ADRD and their caregivers.

## New Law to Promote Early Detection, Diagnosis of Dementia

Legislation aimed at improving the early detection and diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias was signed into law by the governor after unanimous approval by both the House and Senate this week.

The law calls on the Department of Health to establish and maintain a toolkit of resources to help educate primary care providers on the importance of early detection. Detecting and diagnosing Alzheimer's and other dementias promptly allows for better care and treatment, and empowers affected individuals to participate in decision-making about their future care at a time when their cognition is least impacted.



*"Far too many Pennsylvanians live with undiagnosed Alzheimer's disease or dementia," said Gov. Wolf. "This is a tragedy, especially because we know that early diagnosis can improve care, help maintain a person's quality of life, and reduce the financial impact of the disease. This is an important step to raise awareness and keep Pennsylvanians informed about how to recognize Alzheimer's or dementia, and what to do if you notice those symptoms in a loved one."*

This toolkit will help promote better understanding of the importance of early detection among health care workers and the public, as well as providing information about diagnosis, treatment and prevention.

The law will take effect in early April.

## Can the Use of a Robotic Cat Help Dementia-Related Behaviors?

Moravian Hall Square in Nazareth, PA was recently utilized as a research site for Master of Science in Occupational Therapy students at Moravian University. The second-year students' research study – *Simulated Pet Care Tasks with a Robotic Cat to Address Dementia-Related Behaviors* - was conducted over eight sessions and focused on residents in Galilee House at Moravian Hall Square. Galilee House is the Memory Support neighborhood for those diagnosed with dementia or Alzheimer's disease.



The research objective was to observe and examine improvements in behavioral symptoms, such as agitation, after engagement with a robotic cat. Each 20-minute session included a 10-minute control session (using cat videos played on an iPad) followed by a 10-minute experimental intervention, during which the resident interacted with the robotic cat. Interaction with the cat included brushing, playing with toys and feeding the cat. Quantitative observational measurements were utilized during the sessions to explore the reactions of individuals with dementia to the robotic cat. Specifically, a Participant Behavior Observation Form and the Modified Apparent Affect Rating Scale were used. Outcomes were measured using the Cohen-Mansfield Agitation Inventory (CMAI). Moravian Hall Square caregivers provided posttest input by completing Caregiver Perception Forms and Caregiver Open-Ended Questions to understand the benefits and perceived barriers of utilizing the robotic cat. A Joy for All robotic cat was used for this study. Four Moravian University students conducted the study - Alexandra Brincka, Taylor Heffner, Kayla Krasinsky and Crystal Nguyen. The Moravian University Research Advisor for this study was Dr. Sara. E Benham, OTD, MOT, OTR/L, ATP. The Moravian Hall Square advisor was Dr. Alice Donlan, PT, MBA, DPT, Interim Nursing Home Administrator.

The study results showed:

- Interaction with the robotic cat elicited more positive behaviors than viewing videos of cats.
- CMAI indicated no change.
- The caregivers agreed 100% that the robotic cat benefits participants.

The research students will present their findings at the Pennsylvania Occupational Therapy Association annual conference and the American Occupational Therapy Association annual conference. They also intend to publish the research findings in an occupational therapy-related journal. By presenting and publishing the results, this research will aid occupational therapy practitioners in implementing meaningful programming for people with dementia.

The robotic cat used was given to Moravian Hall Square at the conclusion of the study to be integrated into activity programming for the residents of Galilee House.





## Caregiver Corner

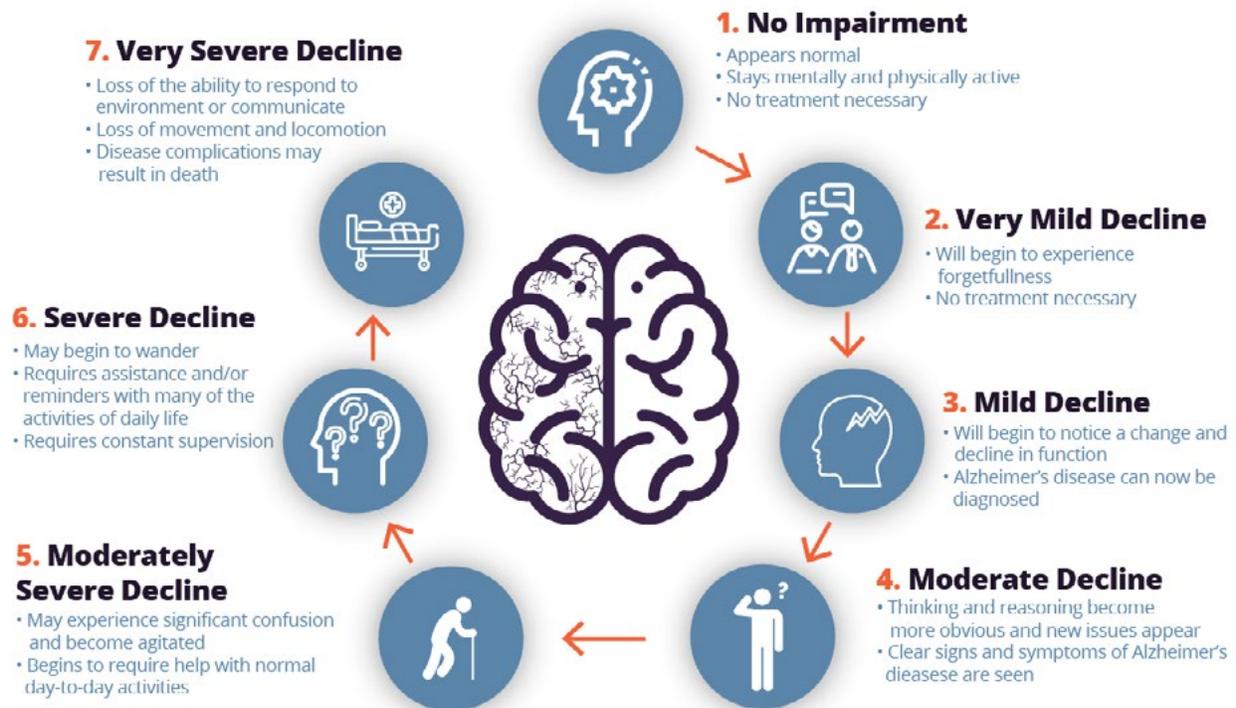
### Is this Normal Aging or is this Dementia?

	Normal Aging	Possible Indicator of Dementia
Memory Loss	Temporarily forget names or where you left your keys.	Difficulty remembering familiar names, places, or recent or important events.
Disorientation	Forget the day of the week or why you entered a room	Get lost on your own street or forget where you are and how to get home.
Challenged by Mental Tasks	Make a mistake when balancing a checkbook.	Unable to complete tasks that may be familiar to you such as balancing a checkbook or following a recipe.
Difficulty Completing Activities of Daily Living	Sometimes need assistance with an electronic device.	Need assistance with brushing teeth, getting dressed or using the phone.
Trouble Using Words Appropriately	Occasionally struggle to find the right word.	Difficulty completing sentences and following directions/conversations.
Poor Judgment	Make questionable or debatable decisions at times.	Unable to choose appropriate clothing or giving money to solicitors excessively.
Changes in Mood and Personality	Fatigued by obligations or irritable when a routine is disrupted.	Increased suspicion, withdrawal or disinterest.

### What are the 4 Most Common Types of Dementia?

	Typical Age at Onset	Causes	Prevalence
Alzheimer's	65+; between 40 and 50 for early onset	Build-up of amyloid plaque in the brain.	Most common form of dementia accounting for 60% - 70% of all dementia cases.
Vascular Dementia	65+	Decreased blood circulation to the brain.	2nd most common form of dementia accounting for 20% of all dementia cases.
Lewy Body Dementia	50 - 85	Microscopic deposits of synuclein (the same protein associated with Parkinson's disease) inside the brain's cells that damage them over time.	3rd most common form of dementia accounting for 5% - 10% of all dementia cases.
Frontotemporal Dementia	40 - early 60s.	Brain disorders that cause nerve cell damage in the brain.	Most common form of dementia occurring in a younger population and accounting for 10%-20% of all dementia cases.

## Dementia Research & Data



Source: Dr. Barry Reisberg of New York University

Image from [www.mymemoryclub.com](http://www.mymemoryclub.com)

### Aducanumab Approved for Treatment of Alzheimer's Disease

Aducanumab (Aduhelm™) received accelerated approval as a treatment for Alzheimer's disease from the FDA on June 7, 2021. Accelerated approval is granted when a drug's effect is reasonably likely to predict a clinical benefit to the patient. There is also a required post-approval trial to verify that the drug provides the expected clinical benefit.

Aducanumab is the first FDA-approved therapy to address the underlying biology of Alzheimer's disease. This new drug demonstrates that removing amyloid, one of the markers for Alzheimer's, from the brain, is likely to reduce cognitive and functional decline in people living with early stage Alzheimer's.



Approval of this therapy underscores the importance of early detection and accurate diagnosis. We encourage people who are interested in learning more about this treatment, for themselves or a loved one, to have a conversation with their health care provider.

Food and Drug Administration, June 7, 2021

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### **Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) release a draft decision on coverage of FDA-approved monoclonal antibody treatment, such as Aducanumab**

On January 11, 2022, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a proposed National Coverage Determination (NCD) decision which would cover FDA-approved monoclonal antibody treatment, such as Aducanumab. FDA-approved drugs in this class would be covered for people with Medicare only if they are enrolled in qualifying clinical trials. This proposed NCD is the result of an intense evidence analysis that found while there may be potentially positive results with this treatment, there is also the potential for harm to patients. This proposed decision will allow researchers to collect important data in order to evaluate the clinical benefits of these particular drugs.

The Alzheimer's Association believes that people with Alzheimer's disease deserve the same access to therapies as those with other conditions, such as cancer and heart disease. By requiring that persons be involved in a clinical trial to get these monoclonal antibody treatments, it limits availability to those who are impacted by this disease.

The Alzheimer's Association is calling upon CMS to change this draft decision before it is finalized. Hopefully, CMS will reconsider this decision before the final proposal is made, so that all those who could benefit from these FDA-approved treatments can have equitable access to them.

Excerpted from the Alzheimer's Association Statement on the CMS Draft Decision.  
CMS press release on January 11, 2022

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### **New IDEAS Study**

The New IDEAS is a study from the Alzheimer's Association and the American College of Radiology on mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and dementia. This study addresses the importance of diversity in clinical trials. At least 4000 of the projected 7000 New IDEAS participants will be African American or Hispanic. In the past, Blacks and Hispanics



have not been fully represented in Alzheimer's or other dementia clinical studies. This study is working to ensure that the results represent all racial and ethnic groups.

The New IDEAS study will examine brain amyloid positron tomography (PET) scans in diverse populations with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and dementia. It will also examine biomarkers. Biomarkers are changes that a disease might cause in the body that doctors can measure with tests like a blood test. Identifying these biomarkers can help to diagnose or treat the disease.

To find out more about this study or to participate in this study, visit [alz.org/research/new-ideas-study](https://www.alz.org/research/new-ideas-study) or consult with a memory care doctor in your area.

Information from <https://www.alz.org/research/new-ideas-study>

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## **DFLV's Professional Education Workgroup Welcomes Officer Nickischer & Chief West**

DFLV's Professional Education Workgroup is happy to welcome two new workgroup members. Officer Peter Nickischer, of the Upper Macungie Police Department, will serve as a resource consultant in the workgroup's development of training and materials useful to law enforcement. Chief Matt West, of the Borough of Emmaus Ambulance Service, will serve as a working member of the workgroup. Both of these individuals will be valuable contributors in the development of training and education for first responders who interact with people who are living with dementia.

The purpose of DFLV's Professional Education Workgroup is to develop and present educational resources to healthcare providers, first responders, social workers, case managers, members of the clergy, and other community helpers. Because of considerations relating to the pandemic, in-person training sessions may not be feasible, both now and in the foreseeable future. For this reason, the workgroup is planning alternative methods for delivering training and education in the community. Currently, a PowerPoint presentation is being developed for Outpatient Case Managers employed by the health networks across the Lehigh Valley, as well as an outline of topics to be presented to EMS professionals.

We are grateful Officer Nickischer and Chief West are willing to invest their time and share their expertise and experience to forward the mission of DFLV.

## Dementia-Friendly Morningstar Living



Morningstar Living is a not-for-profit business that owns and operates two Life Plan Communities, Moravian Hall Square and Heritage Village. The organization employs over 300 team members and is home to over 300 residents living at the Moravian Hall Square campus in the Borough of Nazareth, and over 120 residents living at Heritage Village in Upper Nazareth Township.

In 2021 Morningstar Living began providing "dementia-friendly" training to team members and residents at its communities. *"We want to be a leader in making the Lehigh Valley a safe and supportive community for people who are living with dementia,"* states Susan C. Drabic, President & CEO at Morningstar Living. *"In order to do this, we must provide education and resources to equip our team members and the residents who live at our communities, with the knowledge and skills they need to make individuals who have dementia feel valued, respected, and welcomed members of our community."*

Morningstar Living engaged Wendy Scott, Dementia Friends Champion, to provide the training for the organization's employees and residents. The photo above was taken during one of the dementia-friendly training sessions at Morningstar Living's Moravian Hall Square campus on January 18th. To date, approximately 65 employees have become "dementia friends." Training will continue throughout 2022 with the goal of training hundreds of employees and residents who work and live at Moravian Hall Square and Heritage Village.

## Upcoming Events & Conferences

alzheimer's association  
**AAIC** Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC)

**July 31 – August 4, 2022 | San Diego, CA**  
 Join the Alzheimer's Association in San Diego and online for AAIC 2022, where the world's leading basic scientists, clinical researchers, early career investigators, clinicians and the care research community will share breaking research discoveries that will lead to methods of prevention and treatment and improvements in the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease.

**Sign Up Today →**

### Memory Lane



Morningstar Living is dedicated to providing education to caregivers, professionals and community members about dementia-related diseases. Memory Lane is an initiative aimed at providing information and education to the public, specifically about dementia.

Explore ways that Alzheimer's and other dementias affect an individual's ability to communicate across different stages. Maggie Dominici, Regional Manager for Home Helpers of the Lehigh Valley, will provide tips to better communicate with people living with the disease. This educational program is offered by the Alzheimer's Association.

#### Effective Communication

**THURSDAY, MARCH 17th | 6:00 PM**  
**PRESENTER: Maggie Dominici**

**LOCATION:** Kortz Hall, Moravian Hall Square  
 175 West North Street, Nazareth, PA

**Reservations are required. Call 610.746.1000 or email to [RSVP@moravian.com](mailto:RSVP@moravian.com).**






Nazareth, PA

[www.MorningstarLiving.com](http://www.MorningstarLiving.com)

610.746.1000

**The Phoebe Institute on Aging (PIA) Conference**  
**Thursday, April 28, 2022**



## The Personal Cost of Caring: Secondary Trauma and Resiliency in Senior Care



**Keynote Speaker: Laura van Dernoot Lipsky**  
 Founder and director of The Trauma Stewardship Institute.

**For more information or to register, visit [Phoebe.org/pia-conference](http://Phoebe.org/pia-conference).**

**Registration opens March 14.**

This conference will be virtual.



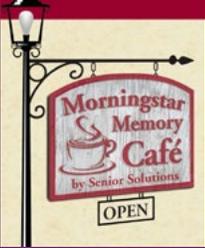
### Webinars



## Delaware Valley Chapter Webinars

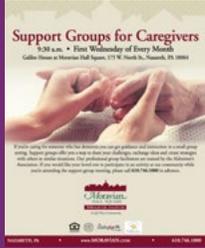
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## Caregiver Support



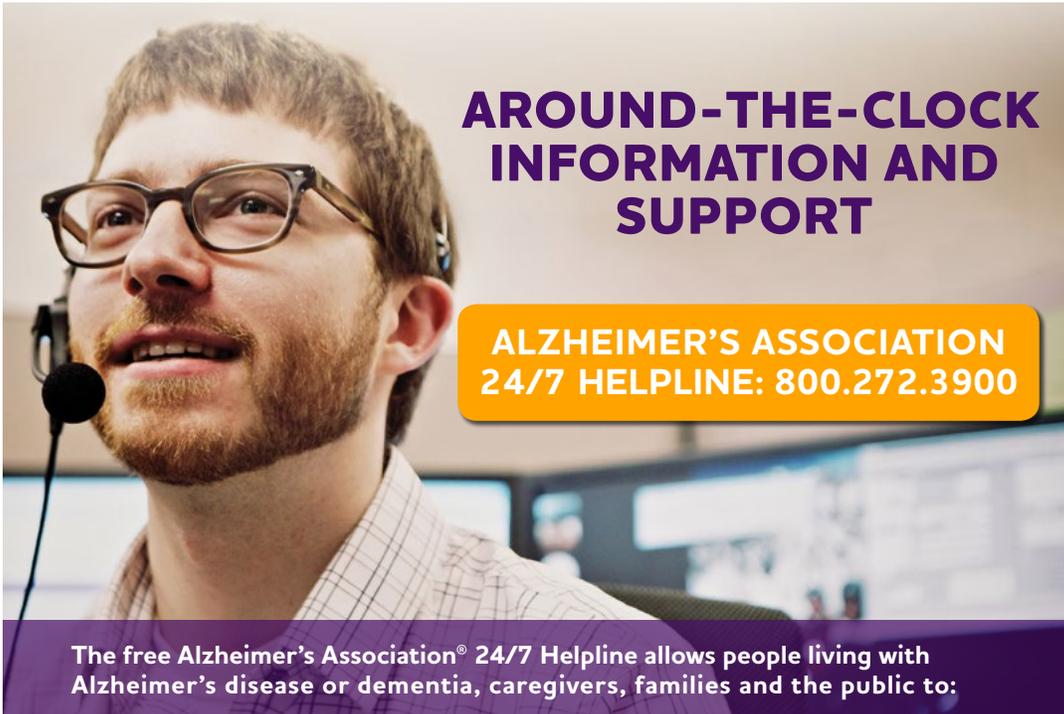
Memory Cafe by Senior Solutions

[View PDF →](#)



Memory Support Groups

[View PDF →](#)



### AROUND-THE-CLOCK INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

**ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION  
24/7 HELPLINE: 800.272.3900**

The free Alzheimer's Association® 24/7 Helpline allows people living with Alzheimer's disease or dementia, caregivers, families and the public to:

- » Speak confidentially with master's-level care consultants for decision-making support, crisis assistance and education on issues families face every day.
- » Learn about the signs of Alzheimer's and other dementias.
- » Get general information about medications and other treatment options, and legal, financial and care decisions.
- » Find out about local programs and services.
- » Receive help in their preferred language through our bilingual staff or translation service, which accommodates more than 200 languages.
- » Access support through our TTY service (TTY: 866.403.3073) if assistance is required via a teletype device.

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alzheimer's  association®

**800.272.3900 | alz.org®**

[al.org/delval](https://al.org/delval)