



Dementia Caregiving Network of the Hartford Change AGENTS Initiative

Part of the Hartford Change AGENTS Initiative (see box), the Dementia Caregiving Network, is working to achieve improvements in services, supports, and care for persons with dementia and their family caregivers. Initiated in January 2014, the Network is comprised of nationally recognized leaders with expertise in practice, policy and research related to caregiving and dementia.

Taking Action

The Network is currently working on two **Action Projects** to address topics critical to practice change. These include:

- **Cataloging evidence-based approaches that address the needs of family caregivers by characteristics that are important both to those prepared to provide services and family caregivers (i.e., the two “end users” groups).** This work will help provider and payer organizations and other potential users understand the available evidence-based programs and care practices and make decisions about which ones to provide, pay for, and use. Our goal is to create “community-friendly” decision support tools, such as a searchable website, to make this catalog more broadly accessible.
- **Developing a practical approach to identify family members who are providing care to older adults.** Engagement of family members in the initial stage of dementia care can facilitate the care of the person with dementia and provides an opportunity to link family members to support services that help them prepare for and/or prevent caregiving challenges. The Network is working to embed reliable and culturally sensitive tools to assist in the identification of those providing care to family members. Initial practice change activities will target healthcare settings.

About the Hartford Change AGENTS Initiative

The Hartford Change AGENTS Initiative accelerates sustained practice change that improves the health of older Americans, their families, and communities. It does this by harnessing the collective strengths, resources, and expertise of the John A. Hartford Foundation’s interprofessional community of more than 3,000 scholars, clinicians, and health system leaders.

See more at: <http://www.changeagents365.org/>

Additional Efforts

Other ways the DCN is engaged include:

- Participating as active stakeholders in the ongoing work on the development of performance/quality measures that are meaningful to the well-being of family caregivers and respectful of their role in chronic disease management; and
- Fostering collaboration across national, state and local organizations to enhance the network of support services for dementia caregivers. This includes leveraging activities of the National Plan to Address Alzheimer’s Disease.

Contributing to the Hartford Change AGENTS Initiative

The Network is an active part of the larger Change AGENTS Initiative, collaborating closely with the Initiative’s other network, focused on Patient-Centered Medical Homes, as well as with the Initiative’s leadership team and broader Community. Together, we are identifying practice change opportunities on a range of subjects and building the Change AGENTS Community’s knowledge and willingness to take action that improves the health and well being of older adults and their families.

For more information

To learn more about the Dementia Caregivers Network, please visit: <http://www.changeagents365.org/change-agents-networks/dementia-caregiving>

Or contact: Kathryn Zahm at kHzahm@geron.org.

