

# 2005 REPORT OF THE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND RELATED DISORDERS COMMISSION

[www.vda.virginia.gov/alzcommission.htm](http://www.vda.virginia.gov/alzcommission.htm)

- The Commission is forming a **task force on the mental health needs of people with dementia who need psychiatric services.**

Currently, many older Virginians with a dual diagnosis of dementia and severe mental illness or behavioral symptoms face closed doors to mental health services. A confluence of factors at the state and federal levels often leave these Virginians bouncing from placement to placement with little opportunity for stabilization and improvement.

- The Commission recommends a **one time investment of \$50,000** from the General Fund to support expansion of the **Virtual Memory Disorders Clinic** and the associated **Database Project** which were initiated over the past two years by the Commission's Virtual Alzheimer's Center (review details at [www.alzpossible.org](http://www.alzpossible.org)).

The Virtual Memory Disorders Clinic assists practicing physicians in providing patients with better diagnosis and care.

The Database of Children of Persons with Alzheimer's Disease will be a powerful resource for Virginia-based Alzheimer's disease researchers seeking and utilizing federal and private research funding.

- The Commission recommends expanded General Fund **support for dementia-specific training of public safety personnel (DCJS) and of long-term care workers (DSS).**

Both training projects have long track records of efficiency and efficacy in making the Commonwealth safer for people with dementia and safer for those public and private sector workers who care for and protect people with dementia.

- The Commission recommends **dementia specific training requirements, as a part of the Assisted Living Facility licensure requirements**, for administrators and direct care staff, including medication aides.

The vast majority of residents in these facilities have dementia and the staff must be able to understand it in order to best serve the needs of the persons with dementia. Facility staff should have a broader base of geriatric education in general and dementia specific skills in particular.

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Director of Programs  
Department for the Aging

## CONTACT

Janet L. Honeycutt  
Director of Programs  
Virginia Department for the Aging  
1610 Forest Avenue, Suite 100  
Richmond, VA 23229  
(804) 662-9341 Phone  
(804) 662-9354 Fax  
[Janet.Honeycutt@vda.virginia.gov](mailto:Janet.Honeycutt@vda.virginia.gov)