

THE 2016 REPORT OF THE VIRGINIA ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND RELATED DISORDERS COMMISSION: RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Pursuant to Code of Virginia § 51.5-154, the Virginia Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Commission (Commission) must submit to the Governor, General Assembly, and Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) a report regarding the recommendations and activities of the Commission. The Commission, chaired by Courtney Tierney, develops and oversees the implementation of the Commonwealth's plan for meeting the needs of individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders and their caregivers.

VIRGINIA DEMENTIA STATE PLAN 2015-2019

Last year, the Commission issued an updated *Dementia State Plan: Virginia's Response to the Needs of Individuals with Dementia and their Caregivers 2015-2019*. The revised plan includes a new focus on coordinated care through a network of memory assessment clinics and increased focus on connections to public health initiatives. The plan guides legislators, other public officials, health and human services professionals, advocates, and other interested people on best practices and specific strategies for dementia-focused data collection, care, training, and research.

The five goals of the Virginia Dementia State Plan are:

1. Coordinate quality dementia services to ensure dementia-capability,
2. Use dementia-related data to improve public health,
3. Increase awareness and create dementia-specific training,
4. Provide access to quality coordinated care in the most integrated setting, and
5. Expand resources for translational research and evidence-based practices.

Virginia's Dementia State Plan, working in tandem with the National Alzheimer's Plan, provides the best chance of responding to dementia and providing support to the estimated 140,000 Virginians with Alzheimer's disease.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2016 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Acting in its advisory capacity and to further the Dementia State Plan goals, the Commission recommends the following actions to effectively and efficiently serve individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias and their caregivers.

Develop and Fund Interdisciplinary Memory Assessment Clinics with Dementia Care Managers

Extend the Commission's sunset to July 1, 2020

Ensure services for Medicaid eligible persons with dementia

2015-2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

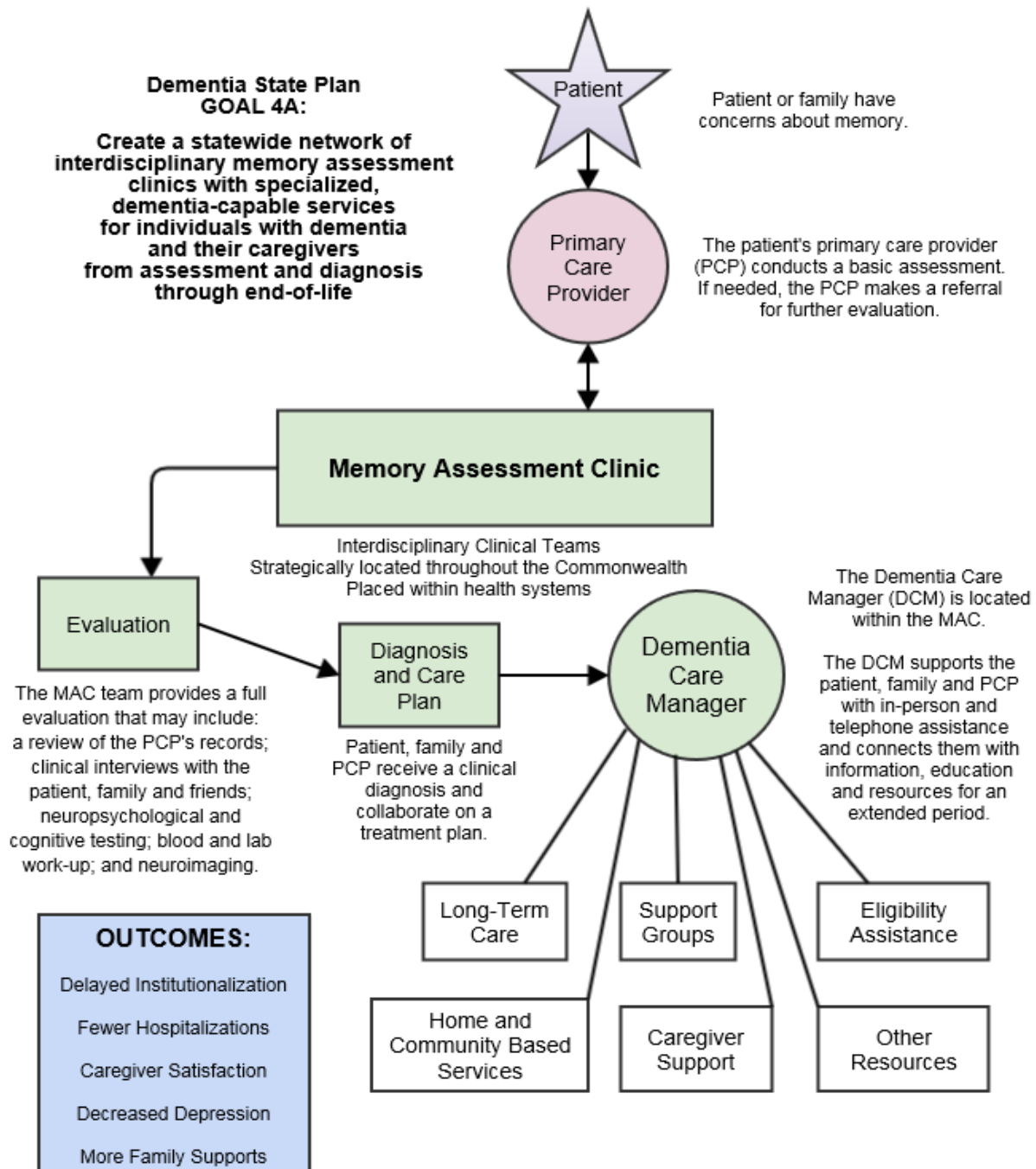


During the 2016 General Assembly, the Commission revised the Virginia Code through House Bill 337, sponsored by Delegate Brenda Pogge, to provide technical clarification to the informed consent provisions to ensure that research for prevention and treatment for dementias continues unimpeded.

DARS will submit a report on its progress to date with Interdisciplinary Memory Assessment Clinics and outcomes on two grants for persons with dementia by December 1, 2016 to the General Assembly.

Develop and Fund Interdisciplinary Memory Assessment Clinics with Dementia Care Managers

The Alzheimer's Association (AA) (2016) estimates that by 2050, the number of people age 65 and older with Alzheimer's disease may nearly triple, from 5.2 million to a projected 13.8 million, barring the development of medical breakthroughs to prevent or cure the disease. Previous estimates based on high range projections of population growth provided by the U.S. Census suggest that this number may be as high as 16 million. Approximately 200,000 individuals are under age 65 (younger-onset Alzheimer's). However, the AA states only 45% of people with Alzheimer's disease or their caregivers report being told of their diagnosis. Further studies have found that primary care providers are often overwhelmed, ill-equipped, and under-resourced to provide comprehensive management or care coordination for individuals with dementia. Coordinated care programs using trained Dementia Care Managers embedded in the memory assessment clinics are desperately needed for successful dementia-specific care and would realize significant cost savings, decrease health care utilization, and improve health outcomes.



Extend the Commission's sunset to July 1, 2020

The Commission, composed of 15 members and established in 1982, serves in an advisory capacity to the Governor and the Secretary of Health and Human Resources and assists individuals with Alzheimer's disease or related disorders and their caregivers. Code of Virginia § 51.5-154, which establishes the Commission, expires July 1, 2017. Given its accomplishments thus far and proven track record of advocacy for the needs of individuals with dementia and their caregivers, the Commission recommends extending its sunset by three years to July 1, 2020 to enable it to carry out the goals of the Dementia State Plan.

Ensure services for Medicaid eligible persons with dementia

The Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) has determined that the Alzheimer's Assisted Living waiver does not comply with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid home and community-based services settings requirements. The Commission supports DMAS' recommendation that ensures current waiver recipients continue to receive services. Second, the Commission supports that all DMAS contracts with Managed Care Organizations or Health Plans identify and describe, in detail, "core community-based dementia services." Finally, the Commission supports DMAS efforts to collaborate closely with DARS on the development and implementation of any dementia-related supports for individuals enrolled in Medicaid and receiving long-term care services and supports.

COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

Grants: In 2014, DARS received \$441,131 for a three-year grant from the federal Administration for Community Living (ACL) to establish Virginia as dementia-capable and implement a caregiver program in the greater Charlottesville and Williamsburg areas. The caregiver program aims to help family or informal caregivers feel more confident in their role, build a support network, and help caregivers assess and comfortably respond to behaviors that can sometimes affect people with dementia. An expansion grant was recently awarded to have statewide coverage of the caregiver program using telehealth and increased in-person delivery. In 2015, DARS received a second nearly \$1 million grant from ACL to establish a coordinated care system for persons with dementia and their caregivers. The project bridges the gap between clinical and community-based supports through a unique partnership between the University of Virginia's Memory and Aging Care Clinic and the Jefferson Area Board for Aging's specialized dementia care services. In 2016, DARS won a third \$900,000 grant from ACL to partner with the AA chapters in Virginia to expand Virginia's chronic disease management program, "You Can! Live Well, Virginia!" to include individuals with early-stage dementia and their caregivers, and it will provide training on dementia to those who coordinate and lead the workshops at the local level. All three grants offer crucial assistance to caregivers. DARS is well positioned to carry on all three opportunities due in large part to Devin Bowers, Virginia's Dementia Services Coordinator (DSC). The DSC is a critical recommendation of the Commission's 2011 Dementia State Plan to work towards creating a dementia-capable service delivery system in the Commonwealth. Persons may contact the DSC and review a copy of the updated Dementia State Plan at www.AlzPossible.org.

AlzPossible: The Commission, in collaboration with the Virginia Commonwealth University Department of Gerontology and World Events Forum, Inc., maintains the AlzPossible website. Aimed at providing professional caregivers in Virginia updated information on dementias, the innovative AlzPossible site hosts:

- The Commonwealth's Dementia State Plan,
- A library of free webinars for professionals and caregivers on dementias and related topics,
- A map and listing of interdisciplinary memory assessment centers in Virginia to guide consumers to clinics that provide thorough and holistic diagnostic and treatment services for memory disorders,
- Information and links to available data sets for researchers in Virginia interested in dementia,
- Links to local, state, and national resources, including state agencies, Senior Navigator, the Alzheimer's Association, and the federal ElderCare Locator and Alzheimers.gov.

CURRENT FOCUS

The Commission continues to partner with public and private partners throughout Virginia and at the national level to implement the Dementia State Plan. In the 2017 General Assembly session, the Commission will promote its recommendations for expanded support for people with dementias and their caregivers and facilitating dementia research and access to services. Additional information about the Commission may be found at: <http://www.vda.virginia.gov/alzcommission.asp>.