

# Foreword

A diagnosis of dementia doesn't mean a person has lost their dignity, nor should it mean that they give up those daily routines or practices that make their life fulfilling. "Dementia-friendly communities" are designed to help a person with dementia do things such as go to the bank and make a deposit, go to the grocery store and find the frozen foods aisle, or go to their favorite coffee shop to order an espresso, even if they can't quite remember why they are there.

Community means that we're all in this together, and whether you are an established dementia-friendly community or taking the steps toward becoming one, this tool kit was created to help you find helpful and respectful ways to include people with dementia as important members of your community.

We're all in this together, and working together, we can be successful!



# Executive Summary

Wisconsin's tool kit, *Building Dementia-Friendly Communities*, provides information, resources, lessons learned and steps for building a dementia-friendly community. The tool kit is a collaborative effort with contributions from project partners from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, the Alzheimer's Association of South-eastern Wisconsin, AARP Wisconsin and local communities throughout the state that have implemented dementia-friendly projects.

The tool kit is designed to be a user-friendly resource guide for implementing and sustaining dementia-friendly community efforts. The tool kit features several Wisconsin communities' dementia-friendly programs. Specific sections include information for use by professionals, businesses, public health, families, and individuals with dementia and include resources and services available from state-specific organizations and programs. Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are identified as chronic diseases to be addressed by local and state public health agencies as an increasing public health issue.

The tool kit is unique to Wisconsin, drawing from the direct experience of local and state partners and agencies that are currently working on projects to improve the quality of life for those with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias and their caregivers.



## Using the Tool Kit

The *Building Dementia-Friendly Communities Tool Kit* is:

- a resource guide for individuals and community leaders who are interested in creating a dementia-friendly community initiative.
- a tool to assist communities with existing dementia-friendly community initiatives in their efforts to become sustainable.

The *Building Dementia-Friendly Communities Tool Kit* is a collection of resources based on lessons learned from promising practices gathered from dementia-friendly community initiatives from state, national and international experiences. This tool kit will be available online at the Wisconsin Department of Health Services' website, where it will continue to evolve and grow as more is learned about dementia and dementia-friendly communities.

Any resources, examples or information contained in this tool kit are to be used to support and encourage local community initiatives and are not to be confused with state certification or monitoring standards.

Any reference to a business or agency should not be considered an endorsement by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.