

Alzheimer's is a Public Health Crisis Devastating **MONTANA**

22,000
Montanans

are living with Alzheimer's.

By 2025 the number
is expected to increase by

22.7% 



Medicaid costs of
caring for people with
Alzheimer's in 2020



\$166 million

Medicaid costs
are expected
to increase
by 2025.

22.2%



In 2019 **51,000**
family caregivers provided

58 million
hours of unpaid care valued at

 **\$7.6 million**



In Montana, there are

1,307

emergency department
visits per 1,000 people
with dementia

and a

17.5%

dementia patient hospital
readmission rate



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What **MONTANA** Officials Can Do to Address the Crisis



Understanding the Impact, Improving the Response

We encourage the Legislature to support the collection of high-quality data on cognitive impairment and dementia caregiving by funding this data collection and requesting that it occur at regular intervals. Thanks to this data, we know that nearly one in ten Montanans over age 45 are experiencing subjective cognitive decline, increasing their risk of developing dementia. Additionally, one in three Montana caregivers provides more than 20 hours of care per week and one in five experiences depression.

The incidence of dementia is increasing nationwide, but Montana's data is over four years old, leaving a troubling gap in the knowledge our state needs to address this disease. Dementia-specific data modules compete with 25 other optional modules for limited space in Montana's yearly survey. State funding does not cover the costs of optional modules, sometimes jeopardizing the ability to gather this vital data.

Securing a Dementia-Capable Workforce

We encourage the Legislature to adopt methods of incentivizing employers to provide access to dementia-specific training for direct care workers. Providing care to individuals with dementia is more complex than other patients in long-term care or in-home settings. Having a trained and competent staff is imperative because dementia presents unique challenges for caregivers. Barriers to greater adoption of dementia-specific training include diverting care workers' time and costs of training curriculum.

Dementia-specific training has been demonstrated to improve care workers' job satisfaction and retention, and can help address Montana's senior and long-term care workforce challenges. Incentivizing training for staff with direct access to clients with dementia will improve quality of care.