



West St. Paul ACT on Alzheimer's Group

Summary of Activities 2017 - 2018

The West St. Paul ACT on Alzheimer's group had its beginning when a community member contacted Jenny Halverson, mayor, in May of 2017 to ask if something could be done to help West St. Paul become more "dementia friendly". This led to discussion with Jess Luce, the Communities for a Lifetime program manager for Dakota County Public Health and coordinator of the Living Longer and Stronger in West St. Paul.

The request for action was received enthusiastically and 30 individuals representing every aspect of the West St. Paul community (business, banks, police, church, social services, library, and community members) came together on August 2017 to discuss useful activities.

Attendees at this August meeting examined the results of a Dakota County 2017 survey of older adults in the community and two goals were agreed upon:

- 1) To increase residents' knowledge about dementia, including how to help people with dementia and community resources to caregivers
- 2) To increase awareness of businesses about dementia and the impact on customers.

In keeping with these goals, the following activities have taken place regarding Goal #1:

- With the assistance of funding from the South Robert Street Business Association, volunteers created a brochure entitled: "Resources for Alzheimer's and other Dementia" for West St. Paul, MN residents. This is now available at the library, city hall, medical clinics, churches, Dakota County Public Health office, and at fire and police stations.
- Wentworth library staff put together a list of library resources related to dementia that are available to the community and created a display to showcase the materials.
- Over 200 individuals in the community attended a free one-hour Dementia Friends MN session on the basics of dementia and how to be a supporter of those with dementia at the following locations:
 - Members of Saint Stephen's Lutheran Church
 - Eighth graders at St. Joseph's School
 - High school seniors is at Sibley High School
 - Attendees at District 197 community education session
 - Attendees at the Thompson Park Activity Center session
 - Librarians of Dakota County
 - Community members in a neighborhood home
- \$2,500 was raised for the Alzheimer's Association at a "Memory Walk" co-sponsored with Walker Methodist Westwood Ridge. Over 60 community members participated and while honoring people who are living with or have died with Alzheimer's.



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- Tables were staffed and educational materials handed out at West St. Paul Days, Great Neighbors' Duck Races, and the YMCA Health Fair.
- Articles have been published in *The Voice* and in *What's Happening in West St. Paul*, giving educational as well as contact information for additional assistance and training.
- Presentations were made at the Dakota County Regional Chamber of Commerce meeting on memory loss and Alzheimer's disease. Presentations were given at the South Robert St. Business Association meetings.
- DARTS had a number of their staff become Dementia Friends' Champions so they could provide training to the volunteers and staff at DARTS.
- Sixteen Dementia Friends' Champions have received training and are prepared to offer additional training in English and Spanish when requested.

In keeping with Goal #2, the following activities took place:

- With the support of the South Robert Street Business Association, volunteers created a brochure titled "Serving People with Dementia" for local businesses. In partnership with Lyngblomsten, 300 packets of information on dementia were sent to businesses and service organizations. These packets included a letter with endorsements from the West Saint Paul Mayor and City Council, the Dakota County Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the River Heights Chamber of Commerce.
- Over 35 individuals from business and service groups participated in dementia education sessions at Wentworth Library.
- Committee members also provided on-site training for local head librarians, for managers at CUB, Lowe's, the YMCA, and the Health Advisory Council of District 197. Informational interviews on serving customers with dementia were held at Menards, Perkins Restaurant, and Affinity Plus Credit Union. These provided opportunities to provide printed information and answer questions related to dementia. Target also indicated an interest in training for managers once their remodeling and online sales projects were completed.

(For more information, please contact Jess Luce at jess.luce@dakota.mn.us or 651-554-6104.)