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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Summit County Public Health Offers New Programs for  
People with Dementia and Their Caregivers**

Summit County - Summit County Public Health (SCPH) announces new programming for older adults and persons with known and suspected Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia, including individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and family caregivers.

Alzheimer's disease is the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in Ohio and it is estimated that 10% of Summit County's population is at significant risk of either living with or developing Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. For this population, most of their care is provided by a family caregiver.

Funding provided by a three year \$1,000,000 from the Federal Administration on Community Living – Alzheimer's Disease Program Initiative to Communities (Grant Number-90ADPI0045-01-11) has allowed SCPH and partner agencies (Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging, Summit County Developmental Disabilities Board, Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority, Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging, the Ohio Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program at Northeast Ohio Medical University, the Ohio Council for Cognitive Health and Smile Minded Smartworks, LLC) to enhance and strengthen existing dementia capable home and community based services in Summit County and address the following dementia-care program gaps:

1. Delivery of services to persons living alone with known or suspected Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD).
2. Improving the quality and effectiveness of programs and services dedicated to individuals aging with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) with ADRD or those at risk of developing ADRD.
3. Delivering behavioral symptom management training and expert consultation services to family and caregivers using evidenced based programming with a focus on impacting disease progression, quality of life for the caregiver and the person with dementia and functional decline.





## New Programming

- **The GateKeeper Program**-The goal of the GateKeeper Program is to systematically identify at-risk older adults and assist them to access the services and resources they need to remain safe and independent in the community. Through the use of non-traditional referral sources, Gatekeeper Volunteers, older adults identified and referred are assessed, linked to community resources and receive case management support. Gatekeeper Volunteers are employees of community organizations and businesses who come into contact with at-risk older adults as a result of their everyday job responsibilities and can include paramedics, police officers, pharmacists, the faith community, financial institutions, barbers and beauticians, and Home Delivered Meals volunteers to name just a few. Through the GateKeeper training, Gatekeeper Volunteers will recognize the signs and symptoms (i.e. memory loss, confusion, inability to manage medications, impaired decision making, wandering, change in mood or personality, functional impairment, and changes in ability to manage finances) that an older adult or person with suspected dementia needs assistance, make a referral so that the assessment process can begin.
- **BRI Care Consultation**- To address the needs of family caregivers and individuals with ADRD, SCPH has implemented the BRI Care Consultation Program. This evidenced-based program utilizes a flexible approach to initial and ongoing assessment that focuses on 24 care receiver domains (e.g. accessing resources, physical, cognitive and emotional health, activities of daily living) and 11 caregiver domains (e.g. caregiver stress and capacity of the caregiver). An action plan is developed to focus on solutions to the concerns identified through the assessment process and evolves as new areas of concerns are identified. Both the caregiver and individuals with ADRD will receive ongoing support through phone calls and/or email contact for up to one year.
- **Dementia Friends Ohio Training**-Dementia Friends is the primary education and call-to-action program used to raise awareness and educate community members on the basics of dementia, including signs and symptoms, helpful communication tips and community resources to assist individuals and families.

For more information about these trainings or help for a community member with dementia please contact: Summit County Senior and Adult Services at 330-926-5650 or

[seniorservices@schd.org](mailto:seniorservices@schd.org).

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