

DePaul University
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**Alzheimer's Outreach
Best Practices Guide
for the Latino Community**



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Alzheimer's Outreach Best Practices Guide for the Latino Community

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For millions of Americans, the heartbreak of watching a loved one struggle with Alzheimer's disease is a pain they know all too well. Alzheimer's disease burdens an increasing number of our Nation's elders and their families, and it is essential that we confront the challenge it poses to our public health. ~ President Barack Obama



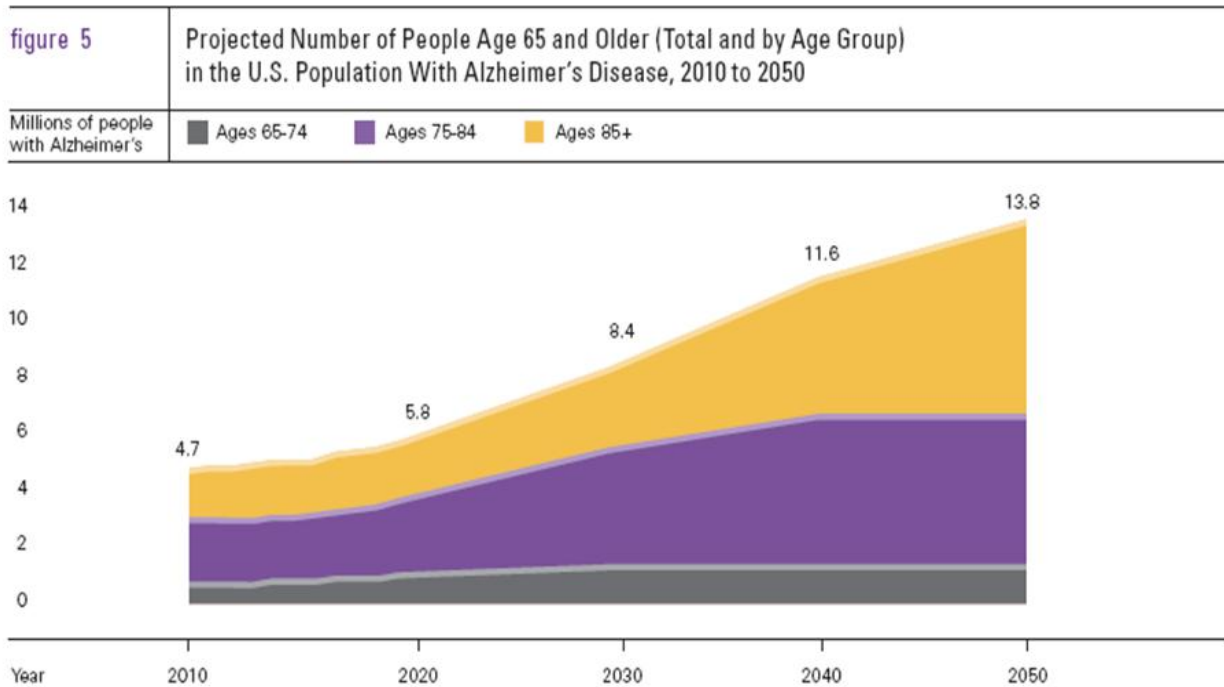
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This easy to use best practice guide is designed to equip Latino families, non-profit Alzheimer’s organizations, community leaders, and health professionals, non-for-profit beginners, who offer healthcare services to the aging Alzheimer’s Latino population and their primary caregivers with best practices to increase Alzheimer’s outreach and awareness. In addition, these best practices are being offered in attempt to reduce the barriers to care and increase the utilization of formal services.

Introduction

The number of Americans, aged 65 and older, in 2050 is projected to be 88.5 million. The number of elderly Latinos is expected to climb to 8 million by 2050 and those age 85 and older representing the fastest growing segment of the elderly. The increasing growth of elderly Latinos has significant implications for health care planning and services. As the number of elderly Latinos increases so will projected number of Alzheimer’s Disease cases as shown in Figure 5.



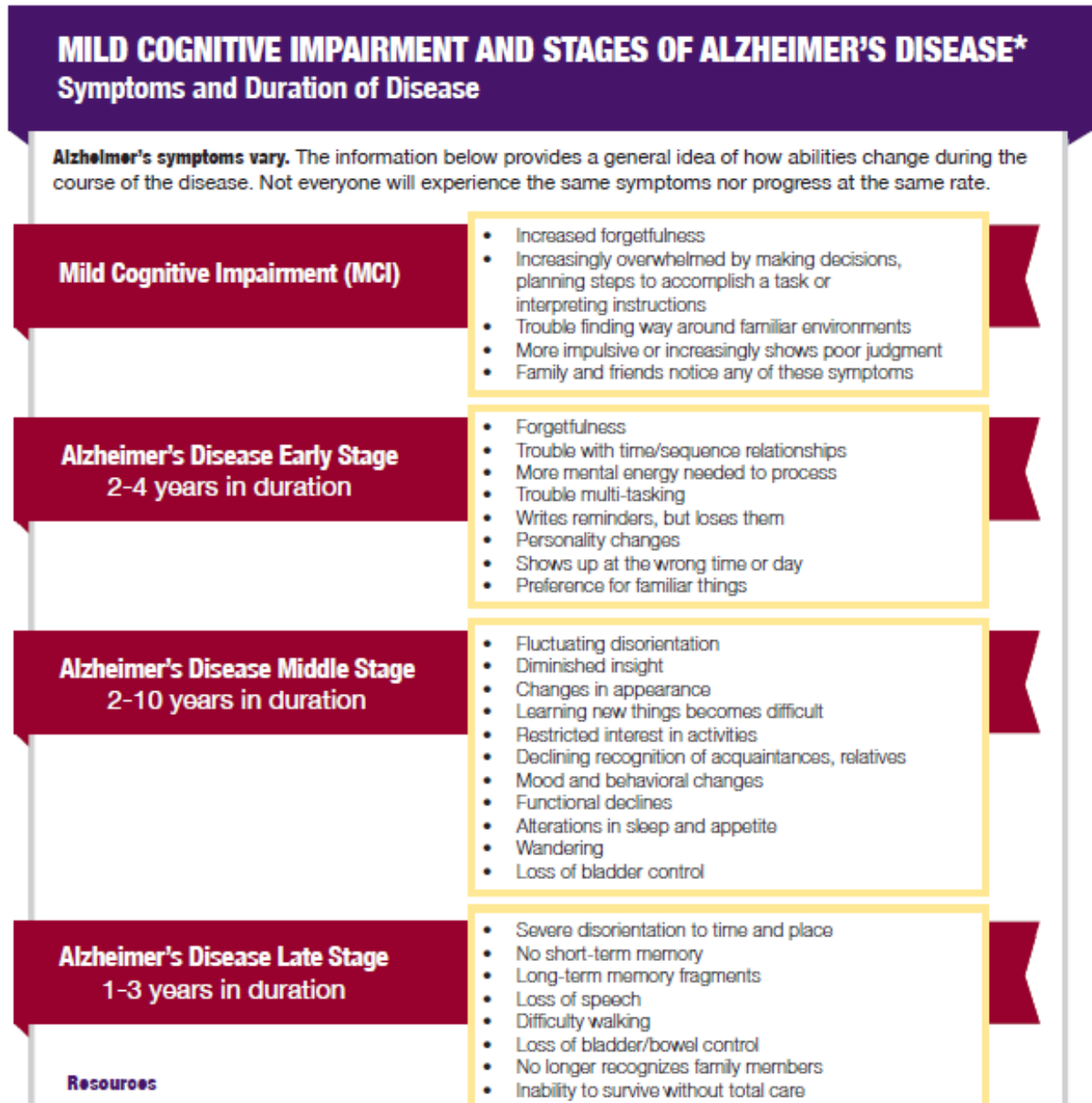
Source: (Alzheimer's Association 21)

“...there was also wide spread agreement that more community-based organizations will either need to emerge or the ones that exist will need to expand in order to meet the needs of a growing Latino older adult population.” ~ The Latino Age Wave

Alzheimer's

Alzheimer's is the most common type of dementia. Dementia is an umbrella term describing a variety of diseases and conditions that develops when nerve cells in the brain (called neurons), die or no longer function normally. The disease deteriorates the brain over a course of time and it slowly affects the intellectual functioning of the brain, eventually resulting in major thinking and physical impairments as well as changes in personality as shown in Figure 6.

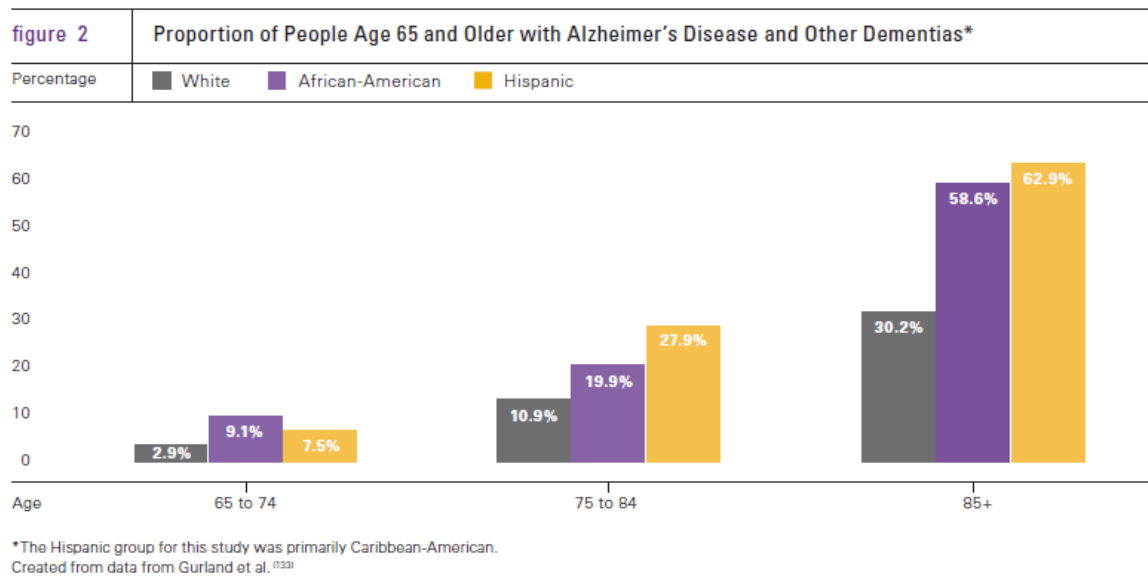
Figure 6



Source: (Act On Alzheimer's 4)

Latinos with Alzheimer's

The Alzheimer's Association projects 1.3 million Latinos will have Alzheimer's by the year 2050, and more than 200,000 are already living with the disease today. Furthermore, the Latino community seems to have a higher rate of vascular disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol that promotes a higher risk of developing Alzheimer's. Overall, Latinos face a greater risk of the disease because unlike the general population, Latinos are living longer and growing in numbers as shown in figure 2.



Source: (Alzheimer's Association 18)

Impact on the Latino Caregiver

Family is the heart of the Latino culture and there is an expectation that children will take care of their aging parents. Aging Latinos are more likely than other seniors to live with families.

- One-third of Latino households have at least one family caregiver resulting in approximately 8 million Latino caregivers in the United States.
- Eighty-four percent of Latino caregivers believe that their role is an expectation with their upbringing.
- Seventy percent think that it would bring shame on their family not to accept a caregiving role versus 60% of non-Latinos .
- Latino caregivers spend more hours a week giving care and taking on the more intensive caregiving needs, than caregivers from other ethnic groups.
- Forty-three percent of Latino caregivers live with their loved ones versus thirty-two percent of non-Latino caregivers.
- Many Latino caregivers have made major changes in their employment, from taking a leave of absence, to changing jobs, cutting back hours or stopping work entirely.
- Ultimately, many caregivers are making themselves more vulnerable to financial, health and emotional distress.

“ The family is the most important social unit among Latinos and it plays a central role in how they care for aging relatives. According to a 2008 survey, there are an estimated 8.1 million Latino caregivers in the U.S. — 74 percent of who are female and in their early 40s.”

~ The Latino Age Wave

Understanding the Barriers

Latinos families and caregivers are not receiving Alzheimer’s information and support service they need. These barriers make it difficult for them to seek services and place a heavy burden on the family.

- Lack of knowledge of the Alzheimer’s disease.
- Limited in speaking English makes it difficult to communicate with health professionals.
- Status of citizenship impacts the accessibility to public benefits and healthcare.
- Religion influences the attitudes and behaviors of Latinos.
- No health insurance or limited health insurance
- Lack of finding culturally proficient bilingual healthcare professionals.
- Limited culturally proficient Alzheimer’s services for Latino families and caregivers.
- Shortage of culturally proficient bilingual support and information for the Latino families and caregivers.
- Lack of knowledge of available federal, state and local assistance programs, as well as health and social support services related to Alzheimer’s.

Alzheimer’s Outreach Best Practices

Alzheimer’s Outreach Best practices provide advice and guidance for how to best serve the Latino aging population and their families; promote confidence to ask for Alzheimer’s support; and encourage participation in Alzheimer’s programs to enhance their quality of life. These best practices are based on practical considerations: culturally-appropriate, effective and replicable.

- Use culturally proficient and bilingual outreach staff that understands the Latino culture and its role in care.
- Make culturally proficient bilingual and bicultural materials available to the Latino community, caregivers, community partners and health and social service professionals.
- Train outreach staff to link Latino clients with Alzheimer’s resources and with assistance they are eligible for.
- Work with the Latino media to raise awareness about Alzheimer’s disease and dementia.
- Disseminate Alzheimer’s information through community events.
- Offer workshops and trainings for healthcare and social services professionals to educate them about Latinos and the Alzheimer’s disease.
- Partner the Latino community with existing and trusted community organizations.
- Operate Alzheimer’s programs as a means of providing culturally proficient activities, information and support for caregivers

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Mr. & Mr. Garibay –mom and dad, cover page