



Dementia  
Friendly  
Oklahoma

# Partner Guide

This document is a QuickStart guide for DFO Partners. It is produced by the Oklahoma State Department of Health's Oklahoma Healthy Brain Initiative. This guide will provide information on:



Environment  
& Atmosphere



Quiet Rooms



Accessibility  
Devices



Support  
Activities/Events



Helpful Links  
& Resources

## Environment & Atmosphere

### Lobby:

- Do you have a ramp to the front door?
- Do you have railing for stairs, etc.?
- Is there enough room in between furniture for a walker or wheelchair to maneuver?
- Do you have rugs? Are they taped down?

### Things to consider:

- Plain flooring; not shiny and non-slippery.
- Uncluttered space; easy to maneuver around the room.

### Age-Friendly Furniture:

- Age-friendly furniture is easily accessible for all ages, from childhood to elderly.

### Things to consider:

- Does your furniture have wheels?
- Do your chairs have arm rests?
- Do your chairs have backs?
- Are your chairs low to the ground or higher up?
- Does your furniture have non-slip surfaces?

### **Easy-to-Read Signage:**

- Are your signs recognizable and easy to understand?
- Does your signage clearly display restrooms, exits, entrances, etc.?
- Are your signs lit up or do they have the capability to light up in darker areas?

Things to consider:

- Simple and direct.
- Large print; 14-16 pt. minimum.
- Bold colors; contrasting colors.
- Fonts that are crisp, clean and powerful; avoid script fonts.

### **Family Restrooms:**

- Or unisex bathrooms.
- This allows a care partner to accompany their loved one to the restroom for assistance.

### **Ample Lighting:**

- Do you have lighting around your entrances/exits?

Things to consider:

- High-powered lighting.
- Well-lit entrances, exits, hallways, etc.
- No fun disco lighting or colors; use normal white or off-white colors.

There is a [Physical Spaces Checklist](#) at the end of the document.

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## Quiet Rooms

- Provide a space or room that is quiet and can be utilized if someone becomes overwhelmed.
- This space can also be used to have easier discussions with a person living with the disease, as it will help cut down on distractions.
- These can be physical rooms or offices, or a space that is underutilized and most likely to have less foot traffic in your organization.

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## Accessibility Devices

- Do you have devices you can offer for those who are hard of hearing or vision impaired?

Things to consider:

- Magnifying glasses.
- Hearing enhancers.

### Support Groups:

- The Alzheimer's Association trains volunteers as Support Group Facilitators and has support groups across the state.

#### Criteria:

- Support groups are NOT to be used as marketing events for any company, facility, etc. This is a safe space for caregivers and people living with the disease to support one another.
- Every support group must have a Support Group Facilitator and Co-Facilitator.
- Support groups hosted in senior communities may only have one facilitator employed by the facility and one facilitator selected by the Alzheimer's Association.

### Health Fairs:

- Do you host health fairs? If so, can we or you provide information on Alzheimer's disease and related dementias?
- Do you offer a resource fair?
- If you have fliers for any upcoming events you are hosting, let us know! We will gladly share with other DFO partners, as well as the Oklahoma Healthy Brain Initiative Coalition.

### Memory Cafés:

- Most memory cafés tend to be activity-focused, often taking into consideration seasons, holidays or events happening during the month.
- Some memory cafés endeavor to have a guest speaker each month. This is more work to arrange for the host, but can be very rewarding for guests.
- To learn more about memory cafés, you can access the DFO Memory Café Guide [here](#).

### Educational Presentations:

- We can assist you in setting up a presentation or series for you to host for your community. Let us know and we can connect you to one of our partners for the various educational opportunities they offer.
  - Community-focused (optional):
    - Ten Warning Signs
    - Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia
    - Effective Communication
- We can also assist in creating a presentation to fit your needs.
- If you have fliers for any upcoming events you are hosting, let us know! We will gladly share with other DFO partners, as well as the Oklahoma Healthy Brain Initiative Coalition.

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## Other Suggestions & Advice

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### Parking

- Do you have ample handicapped parking spots?

## Helpful Links & Resources

- OSDH Webpage: <https://oklahoma.gov/health/dfo.html>
- Dementia Friendly America: <https://dfamerica.org/>
- ACT on Alzheimer's: <https://actonalz.org/>
- Alzheimer's Association: <https://www.alz.org/>
- Us Against Alzheimer's: <https://www.usagainstalzheimer.org/>
- Oklahoma Healthy Aging Initiative (OHA): <https://www.ouhealth.com/oklahoma-center-for-geroscience/healthy-aging-services/oklahoma-healthy-aging-initiative-ohai/>
- Oklahoma Dementia Care Network: <https://www.ouhealth.com/oklahoma-center-for-geroscience/healthy-aging-services/oklahoma-dementia-care-network-okdcn/>
- Certified Healthy Oklahoma: <https://oklahoma.gov/certifiedhealthy.html>



# Physical Spaces Checklist



Currently, there are over 70,000 Oklahomans living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. As the population ages, we can expect even more members of our communities to develop cognitive decline. Because of this, Dementia Friendly Oklahoma strives to educate businesses, healthcare providers, faith communities and the community at large on how to be inclusive and supportive of those living with dementia and their caregivers. A large part of being dementia friendly is creating environments that are safe and suitable for everyone. This checklist can serve as a guide to creating dementia-friendly physical spaces as planners create new construction projects or building renovations.

**Thank you for being dementia friendly!**

## **Walls and floors**

- o Use plain flooring. Busy patterns can be disorienting, and shiny floors can appear slippery.
- o Use contrasting colors for walls and floors.
- o Avoid dark floor mats/rugs, dark-colored tiling and pools of shadow which may appear as obstacles.
- o Keep floors/walkways free of clutter.

## **Signage**

- o Entrances and exits should be clearly marked.
- o Use clear directional signage.
- o Use large print and contrasting colors to increase visibility.
- o Restroom signage should be clear and visible.
- o Make sure glass doors are clearly marked.
- o Use clear, unambiguous pictures on signage.

## **Other building characteristics**

- o Use lots of high-powered/natural lighting.
- o Have a family restroom available.
- o Maintain a quiet area for people to use if they are anxious or overwhelmed.
- o Make sure there is plenty of seating in large spaces and in long hallways/walkways.
- o Reduce excess noise (like TVs in waiting rooms).
- o Be mindful of reflective surfaces such as large windows and mirrors. They can be confusing or even frightening for people living with dementia.
- o Use bright or bold colors for furniture and furnishings that contrast with the walls and floors.