

Actions States and Communities Can Take to Address Cognitive Health

[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For older adults, optimal aging includes preventing injuries, effectively managing existing chronic conditions, and maintaining physical *and* cognitive health and social engagement.

Welcome to CDC Audio Rounds. I'm Dr. Lynda Anderson, Director of CDC's Healthy Aging Program.

The promotion of cognitive health is a critical component of overall good health. Cognitive health among older adults is not just the absence of disease. It's the development and preservation of cognitive abilities, such as memory, language, judgment, and remembered skills, such as driving. Cognitive abilities enable individuals to maintain social connectedness, an ongoing sense of purpose, and the ability to function independently.

In 2013, CDC and the Alzheimer's Association released the second in a series of road maps. This road map, *The Public Health Road Map for State and National Partnerships, 2013–2018*, was developed as part of CDC's Healthy Brain Initiative. It reflects the insights and expertise of a wide range of stakeholders at the national, state, and community levels. The road map shares the Healthy Brain Initiative's vision of cognitive health as a vital component of overall health and well-being, an area ripe for public health efforts.

Specific actions are addressed in four traditional domains of public health. The first is *Monitor and Evaluate*. Tracking the health of the nation is a fundamental public health function. Actions in this area include assessments related to cognitive health that help quantify and qualify the public health impact and inform public health policies and strategies. The second domain is *Educate and Empower the Nation*, which focuses on actions that raise public awareness and improve access to information and resources. The third domain, *Develop Policy and Mobilize Partnerships*, includes actions aimed at ensuring that cognitive health is integrated into a broad spectrum of public health work. The fourth area, *Assure a Competent Workforce*, focuses on preparing public health professionals to translate current and emerging findings on cognitive health into effective public health practice. This road map provides a solid foundation for the public health community to anticipate and respond as new scientific discoveries related to cognitive health emerge. Public health agencies and partners are encouraged to work together on actions that best fit their mission, needs, interests, and capabilities.

For more information, please visit cdc.gov/aging/healthybrain.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.