



Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Commission Brain Health Work Group

Thursday, April 17, 2025
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

Electronic Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Michael Watson, *Chair*
Dan Bluestein
Annette Clark
Rachel Coney- Bowles
Jessica Fredrickson
Patricia Heyn
Joyce Nessbaum
Guy Mayer
Lindsey Vajpeyi

Staff:

George Worthington, DARS
Heather Kidd, DARS

Welcome & Introductions

Michael Watson began the meeting at 12:04pm, welcomed members, and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

Michael Watson, Chair

Adopt Agenda

Action Item: Adopt Agenda

Dan Bluestein made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Annette Clark seconded the motion. Members voted unanimously to adopt the agenda.

Michael Watson

Review and Approve January 16, 2025, Meeting

There were no changes to the minutes. The minutes were adopted as presented.

Michael Watson

Public Comment

No public comment was received, and no members of the public were in attendance.

Michael Watson

Discussion

Memory Screening Infographic Update

- Heather Kidd shared a pdf document containing the resource list with clickable links that will be accessed via a single QR code on the flyer.

George Worthington,
Heather Kidd,
Rachel Coney- Bowles

- A link to Easy Access's resource connector and future screening tool will be added to the flyer.
- There was a suggestion to add Virginia Memory Project (VMP) to the resource list. Dan Bluestein will touch base with Annie Rhodes.
- DARS staff may be able to track the number of people that access the pdf.
- The final flyer will be shared with the workgroup in July, by when the screening prompt and tool should be embedded in No Wrong Door for the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs).

AAA flyer

Ms. Kidd presented the revised flyer initially presented in January that links AAA programs with brain health.

Members suggested keeping the services listed at the bottom of the page, and adding language explicitly linking brain health and heart health. Mr. Worthington explained the twofold approach for these materials: first to educate AAA staff about how their programs link to brain health, and secondly to provide marketing for AAAs to use on social media and other outreach.

AAA Infographics

Ms. Kidd introduced six infographics that connect to modifiable risk factors for dementia. These can be used as social messaging tools that would link directly to local AAA programs.

Members discussed translating these materials. Mr. Worthington noted that several of the one-pagers available on DCV are being translated into five languages. There may be a possibility for further translations supported by No Wrong Door. Ms. Nussbaum may also be able to find volunteer translators.

2023 BRFSS (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System).

Mr. Worthington updated members on the BRFSS Cognitive Decline Module and results regarding subjective cognitive decline (SCD), as well as plans to utilize the data. The module was updated in 2023 so the results are not comparable to previous years.

The number of Virginians over the age of 45 experiencing SCD rose sharply with the revised wording. This increase lends a sense of urgency to the work of this group.

- 1 in 6 (15%) Virginians over the age of 45 reported experiencing some form of memory change getting worse over time, up from 1 in 9 previously.
- This extrapolates to roughly 450,000 people.

Dementia risk factors: Members discussed the possibility of having someone analyze the data set, particularly examining modifiable risk factors for dementia, and also cross-referencing the cognitive decline and caregiving modules, both of which are being asked in 2025.

Goal 6: Dementia Risk and Risk Reduction. Translating the objectives and strategies into outcomes.

Mr. Worthington discussed the DCV dashboard to track and demonstrate progress of the implementation plan. Members viewed and discussed the draft document (attached).

Ms. Coney extended an invitation to the group to attend the HBV Partner Meeting on April 30. Ms. Coney also noted that HBV is upgrading their website with the addition of a full-time graphic designer. Ms. Coney let members know that they can post events on the HBV community calendar that is disseminated via the VDH community hub and includes AAAs as well.

DSP Goals Document/ Grid

Mr. Worthington briefly discussed progress and accomplishments in strategies of Objective 6.2 that are not in the implementation plan:

- Virginia Department for deaf and hard of hearing trainings: Created an adaptation of Dementia Friends material that is also available for others to use. Information related to dementia and the deaf/hard of hearing community will be on the new website.
- Highlighting the explicit link between heart and brain health at multiple presentations.
- Encouraging and promoting regular hearing checks and use of hearing aids reflecting the link between hearing loss and dementia risk.

Mr. Worthington noted that plenty of work on these goals is being done by other organizations, and that DARS would like to capture as much of that as possible. Members were encouraged to add information or other partner organizations to the dashboard.

Ms. Nussbaum shared several accomplishments of Sentara RMH Dementia Friendly Hospital initiative.

Next Steps

- Obtaining the license to use the AD-8 tool.
- Completing brain health flyer and infographics for members to review.
- DARS social media campaign on screening.
- Selecting Dementia State Plan strategies for the workgroup to focus on.

New Business

Michael Watson

Ms. Clark shared a link and invitation for the DBHDS Lunch and Learn: Hoarding, Setting Up for Success to be held on **Wednesday, May 14**. No registration needed, join by this [TEAMS](#) link.

Meeting Adjournment

Michael Watson

Mr. Watson thanked members for their input and adjourned the meeting at 1:25 pm.

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Goal 6. Enhance brain health and address modifiable risk factors for dementia.

Objective 6.1 Work collaboratively with the Virginia Department of Health to implement the Healthy Brain Initiative.

Strategy	Measures	Accomplishments
Enhance collaboration between the DSC and the VDH Brain Health Coordinator to expand outreach, education, and resources to support brain health and dementia risk reduction across Virginia.	Number of meetings held; maintenance of calendar of events.	(Ongoing) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly meetings between DSD and VDH Brain Health Coordinator 4 HBV one-pagers posted to DCV Calendar maintained on HBV website
Embed information on brain health and modifiable risk factors of dementia in public health campaigns and raise awareness and understanding of dementia to reduce the incidence of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias in coming decades.	Number of public health campaigns including brain health messaging; Healthy Brain Virginia (HBV) webpage activity; social media interactions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DARS plan for social media Brain Health Campaign in development HBV Media Campaign Calendar developed and content creation underway HBV Social Media Campaigns Launched: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caregiver support Oral Health Diabetes Prevention Cardiovascular Health HBV Webpage Activity Update 4/16/25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,987 page views 29 direct contacts requesting resources and education 228 file downloads
Collaborate with VDH to enhance and raise awareness about the Brain Health Virginia initiative.	Include information about HBV meetings in DARS newsletter; social media posts;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HBV Informational one-pager as well as a data focused one-pager both underway

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	website activity; develop and disseminate one-pager of HBV project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HBV utilizing Community Calendar to highlight events across the state including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Brain health education sessions ○ Dementia trainings, screenings, support groups ○ Events hosted by VDH's Chronic Disease Units
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Objective 6.2 Support statewide and local initiatives to improve brain health measures and reduce the modifiable risks for dementia at the population and individual levels.

Strategy	Measures	Accomplishments
Use the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) to collect health outcomes data for persons with subjective cognitive decline in Virginia and analyze and apply the findings to improve dementia capability.	Analysis of BRFSS results relating brain health, cognitive decline, chronic conditions, and caregiving.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRFSS module infographics posted on DARS Dementia page • Analysis pending release of 2025 data
Collaborate with related public health efforts (e.g., diet, exercise, co-morbid conditions, etc.) to improve treatment adherence and encourage risk-reduction strategies, including lifestyle changes.	Number of Area Agencies on Aging using brain health messaging in materials about their programs. Identify other collaborative efforts and incorporate brain health messaging where applicable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials currently under development for AAAs to incorporate Brain Health Messaging • Brain Health handouts distributed at 61 presentations • BHC has connected with five new Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) across the state to share brain health and ADRD education and materials • BHC is continuing to host screenings of Saving Claire, a falls prevention

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		<p>documentary, as part of ongoing community education efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HBV continues to collaborate with VDH's Chronic Disease Unit to cross-promote educational materials, encourage early screenings, and provide Local Health Departments (LHDs) with ADRD messaging materials.
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Objective 6.3 Embed brain health and dementia risk reduction messaging and education across the lifespan.

Strategy	Measures	Accomplishments
Develop infographics and social media posts to promote cognitive health.	Number of social media campaigns; use of Virginia Dementia Messaging group.	<p>(Ongoing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodically share info to Virginia Dementia Messaging group; Since September 2024, the Dementia Messaging Group has shared approximately 70 brain health and ADRD resources and educational opportunities. • New Infographics under development
Promote awareness and education campaigns working with higher-risk populations.	Number of people accessing campaigns; documents and campaigns produced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Five presentations delivered to Deaf and Hard of Hearing community ○ Alzheimer's Association to provide numbers annually starting in Aug 2025"

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ HBV has continued to disseminate the Community Health Worker (CHW) ADRD training, with a total of 200 individuals having completed the program to date. Participants have gained:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Foundational knowledge about ADRD○ Strategies for effective communication with individuals living with dementia,○ Guidance on supporting caregivers,○ Resources to promote early detection and brain health within their communities
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