Information and Referral Needs for Care Partners of Older Adults with Alzheimer’s Disease in Rural and Remote Communities

Morgan E. Longstreth, Andrea E. Slosser, Robin A. Barry, Catherine P. Carrico, & Christine L. McKibbin

1. INTRODUCTION

- There is dramatic growth in the number of older adults with Alzheimer’s Disease and related dementias (ADRD) in the Rocky Mountain West.
- Primary care providers frequently make ADRD diagnoses in rural and remote areas due to a shortage of specialized providers.
- Research suggests that individuals with ADRD do not receive specialized disease-related information and are primarily informed about medication rather than necessary resources.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To understand types of information needed by individuals recently diagnosed with ADRDs throughout the state of Wyoming.
- To use areas of identified needs to inform the development of a statewide dementia care plan.

3. METHODS

Recruitment
- Towns across Wyoming were selected (n = 10).
- Participants were recruited through key stakeholders across Wyoming.
- Advertisements were posted in community sites in specific towns and surrounding communities.

Instruments
- Demographics were assessed using a participant profile form designed for this study.

Analysis
- SPSS version 24 was used to examine demographics.
- Thematic analysis was utilized to identify common themes. Three coders were utilized.

4. RESULTS

Participant Characteristics
- Wyoming residents (n = 174)
- Non-Hispanic (n = 157, 94.1%)
- Female (n = 126, 72.7%)
- Health professionals or administrators (n = 48, 27.6%)
- Caregivers or community members (n = 84, 48.3%)
- Other (n = 42, 24.1%)

Thematic Analysis
- Saturation was achieved and coding reliability exceeded 90%.
- Two primary themes emerged. See Figure 1 for quotations from Town Hall Meetings representing each theme.
- Primary and secondary themes include:
  - Information and Referral
  - Community Resource Awareness
  - Information on Service Quality
  - Methods of Information Delivery

5. CONCLUSIONS

- Two primary areas for intervention were identified from participant perspectives.
- The need for dissemination of ADRD-related information is growing increasingly prevalent across the Rocky Mountain West.
- Recommendations for remediating this need include broadening community and provider awareness of existing resources, making resources more accessible to those in need in rural regions across Wyoming, and expanding the number and specificity of ADRD-related resources through multiple means of communication (i.e., online, in-print, and through training and courses).

Figure 1. Primary and secondary themes with representative quotes.