



Research Forum

Please join us at this year's Research Forum featuring renowned speaker Dr. Maureen Nash.

Maureen C. Nash, M.D., F.A.P.A. is board certified in both psychiatry and internal medicine and serves as the Medical Director of the Tuality Center for Geriatric Psychiatry at Tuality Forest Grove Hospital.

Dr. Nash will be discussing Lewy body dementia and the most current information on symptoms, diagnosis, treatment options and future research.



Lewy Body dementia (LBD) is an irreversible form of dementia associated with abnormal protein deposits in the brain called

Lewy Bodies. Symptoms of LBD are similar to Alzheimer's symptoms and include memory loss, confusion, and difficulty communicating. Hallucinations and paranoia also may become apparent in the earlier stages of the disease and often last throughout the disease process.

Although initial symptoms of LBD may be mild, affected individuals eventually develop severe cognitive impairment.

Poor Sleep May Be Early Sign of Alzheimer's

People with Alzheimer's often have troubled sleep patterns, waking up many times during the night or sleeping on and off throughout the day. Now, new research suggests that problems with sleep may be among the earliest signs of Alzheimer's, occurring years before memory loss and other symptoms become evident.

In the latest study, researchers at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis worked with mice that had been specially bred to develop a disease resembling Alzheimer's in people. They

Research Forum Schedule

Anchorage

Loussac Library
3600 Denali Street
November 4th, 6-8pm

Palmer

Community Center
610 S. Valley Way
November 5th, 6-8pm

Juneau

Centennial Hall
Convention Center
101 Egan Drive
November 6th, 6-8pm

found that disruptions of the sleep cycle corresponded with the first appearance of plaques in the brain.

Plaques, a hallmark of Alzheimer's disease, are composed of beta-amyloid, a toxic protein that builds up in the brains of those with Alzheimer's. Beta-amyloid begins to aggregate in the brain long before symptoms of Alzheimer's appear.

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Statewide

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Letter from the Executive Director



Dear friends,

After 19 years with the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska, the time has come for me to say goodbye. I will be retiring from the organization as of the end of October. It has been a privilege to serve this organization and to work alongside some of the most dedicated professionals in the field. Our mission, "to unite with Alaskans affected by Alzheimer's disease and related disorders to ensure quality of life until a cure is found," was meaningful two decades ago and is even more relevant today. While 20 years ago there were about 2,200 Alaskans with ADRD, today that number has grown to 6,000.

While the organization has expanded its programs and services to serve an increasing number of people, its focus has remained consistent. The organization aims to raise community awareness, bring information and education to individuals, families and professionals, and keep elders living in their home and community for as long as it is feasible.

In the next few years the demographic trends will bring challenges of a magnitude which we have not seen before. However, with continued focus, the guidance of a dedicated Board of Directors, the expertise of exceptional staff and the leadership of the new Executive Director, Karl Garber, the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska will be ready for the challenge.

This organization will always have a special place in my memories. Over the years, it has been an honor to partner with one of the most supportive, dedicated and engaged Boards in Alaska and a joy to work with a dynamic staff, planning and implementing projects, changing and adapting to workflow and industry changes, being challenged and celebrating successes. I learned continually from those we serve, mostly about resilience and courage. And I was inspired by those who gave selflessly of their time and resources to further the mission of the organization. You have my utmost respect and gratitude.

Having the opportunity to serve the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska for almost two decades was a growing and fulfilling experience. I will miss it, but leave confident that the support of so many in the organization and the community will safeguard and guarantee the advancement of such an honorable mission.

Warm regards,

Executive Director

Poor Sleep May be Early Sign of Alzheimer's... *Continued from cover*

“If sleep abnormalities begin this early in the course of human Alzheimer’s disease, those changes could provide us with an easily detectable sign of pathology,” said study author Dr. David M. Holtzman. “As we start to treat Alzheimer’s patients before the onset of dementia, the presence or absence of sleep problems may be a rapid indicator of whether the new treatments are succeeding.” The findings appeared in the journal *Science Translational Medicine*.

Doctors increasingly believe that Alzheimer’s may be a decades-long process and are searching for ways to detect the disease in its earliest stages, when it may be most treatable. Sleep problems could provide an early clinical clue that Alzheimer’s may be beginning, though many older people have insomnia and other sleep problems without having dementia. Further research would be needed to distinguish between ordinary insomnia and sleep troubles related to Alzheimer’s.

In the current study, the researchers found that mice with brain plaques slept less than those without the plaques. Mice are normally active during the night, and during the day sleep for about 40 minutes of every hour. When Alzheimer’s plaques began forming in their brains, their average sleep times dropped to 30 minutes per hour. Mice that were given a vaccine that prevented the buildup of beta-amyloid plaques, on the other hand, had normal sleep patterns as they aged.

Scientists are now studying whether sleep problems occur in patients who have markers of Alzheimer’s disease, such as plaques in the brain, but have not yet developed memory or thinking problems. “If these sleep problems exist, we don’t yet know exactly what form they take -- reduced sleep overall or trouble staying asleep or something else entirely,” Dr. Holtzman said. “But we’re working to find out.”

Other research has linked sleep problems to Alzheimer’s onset. An earlier study from Washington University, for example, found that men who wake up many times during the night – more than five times per hour – were more likely to be in the earliest stages of Alzheimer’s than those who slept soundly. Another large study of women found that those who slept fewer than five hours or more than nine hours a night were at higher risk of cognitive decline than those who slept seven hours a night. And sleep apnea, a common breathing disorder in which people stop breathing for short periods hundreds of times during the night, has been linked to memory decline and dementia.

Anyone can suffer from sleep problems at any age, and poor sleep is by no means a predictor of Alzheimer’s in most people, though it can interfere with quality of life. If you suffer from sleep difficulties or suspect that breathing problems during sleep may be contributing to memory and thinking problems, it is important to discuss this with your doctor. Effective treatments are available.

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Alzheimer's Blood Test Nearing

Currently there is no definitive test to diagnose Alzheimer's disease and often a diagnosis is delayed because the symptoms have not progressed far enough. Researchers at Saarland University in Germany have developed a new diagnostic technique that analyzes fragments of genetic code called microRNAs as a way to distinguish between those with Alzheimer's disease and those without.

The study found that 12 microRNAs were present in different quantities in patients with Alzheimer's disease. The new test had a 93% accuracy rate during testing. Although initial results are promising, there is still more research and trials that need to be done to increase accuracy and prepare the test for a clinical setting. Having a blood test that would accurately diagnosis Alzheimer's disease could help improve early diagnosis giving more valuable time for early stage treatment.



Q. Do the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease vary by the time of day?

A. Sundown syndrome -- also called sundowning -- is a behavior common in people with Alzheimer's disease. It describes the confusion, anxiety, agitation, or disorientation that often occur at dusk and into the evening hours. The episodes may last a few hours or throughout the night.

While the exact cause of sundown syndrome is not known, experts believe there are several contributing factors. These include physical and mental exhaustion (after a long day), and a shift in the "internal body clock" caused by the change from daylight to dark. Some people with Alzheimer's disease have trouble sleeping at night, which may contribute to their disorientation. Medication that can cause agitation or confusion also may contribute to this syndrome.

Sundown syndrome can be draining for the person with Alzheimer's disease and his or her caregivers. Here are some suggestions for helping a

loved one with sundown syndrome cope:

- Schedule the day so that the more difficult tasks are done early in the day, when the person is less likely to become agitated.
- Watch the person's diet and eating habits. Restrict sweets and drinks with caffeine to the morning hours. Try serving the person a late afternoon snack or early dinner.
- To help the person relax, try decaffeinated herbal tea or warm milk.
- Keep the house or room well lit. Close the drapes before the sun goes down so that the person doesn't watch it become dark outside.
- If the person falls asleep on the sofa or in a chair, let him or her stay there. Don't wake the person to go to bed.
- Try distracting the person with activities he or she enjoys. Soothing music or a favorite video may help, as well.
- Encourage the person to engage in some physical activity -- such as walking, if able -- during the day. This may help him or her to sleep better at night.

Do you have a question for our experts?
If so, write in to Aging@AlzAlaska.org.
All personal information is confidential.

A Night To Remember

The 35+ Singles Club of Anchorage held the fourth annual “A Night to Remember” formal dance to benefit Alzheimer’s Resource of Alaska. The dance was a wonderful success this year and participants danced the night away enjoying lively music, great food and door prizes. The club’s commitment to our organization makes it possible for our programs and services to enhance the quality of life for many frail Alaskans in need.



Rhonda Scott Art at UnWINEd

Recently, Rhonda Scott and UnWINEd hosted an art show featuring Rhonda’s beautiful works of art. We would like to thank them and the patrons who supported the show. Rhonda has generously contributed 25% of her sales to Alzheimer’s Resource of Alaska. This is not the first time Rhonda has shared her work to benefit our programs and services; we are honored by her philanthropy and commitment to frail seniors in our community.



2 Friends Gallery - Shop to support Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska

Since inception, an integral part of 2 Friends Gallery has been philanthropic work. Every month a portion of their proceeds are distributed to local nonprofits. During November, we have been selected to receive their generous contribution. In the past, funds from the gallery have supported our Art Links program, a natural partner!



Save the Date
2014 February Winter Workshop
“Accepting the Challenge” with Teepa Snow
Anchorage, February 3
Fairbanks, February 4
Sitka, February 6



Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Recognizes Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska with Award

Alaska's Adult Protective Services unit presented its Community Commitment Award to Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska for supporting Alaskans with Alzheimer's or related dementia, and their caregivers, family and friends. "Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska served 120 communities statewide in fiscal year 2013. We give them our heartfelt thanks for all that they do to support this vulnerable population," said Duane Mayes, director of the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services. To highlight the challenges faced by the clients of Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska, and other vulnerable adults, Gov. Sean Parnell designated September as "Vulnerable Adult Awareness Month."



Support Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska through your workplace!

Workplace giving makes supporting Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska easy for you and helps us provide sustaining support and services to frail elders and their families across Alaska.

You can contribute to us through any workplace contribution program, just list Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska in the "other" selection if not included in your campaign list.

The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) promotes and supports philanthropy through a program that provides federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for those in need of health and human services around the world. To contribute through the campaign, please use our CFC # 52943 on the pledge forms.

Many employers offer matching gift programs, check with your Human Resources department to double your support of our work.

Pick. Click. Give.

Pick. Click. Give. is an innovative program that gives Alaskans a way to contribute to their favorite nonprofit organizations in a safe and secure way. The program is a great way to make an additional gift to nonprofits that are on the ground working in communities across the state. Please consider sustaining our work with a portion of your Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend in 2014.

MEMORABLE *Moments* OF CARE

The Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska as a part of Alzheimer's Awareness Month is proud to announce its second annual Writing Contest. This year's theme is "Memorable Moments of Care."

Doing something for someone you love is the most basic way we can show we care. Tell us a favorite memory when you were cared for by an elder or a time you provided care for an elder that had a lasting impact on you. Please review the following rules for the format and relevant dates.

Contest Rules:

1. Limit one (1) entry per person.
2. All entries must be original work completed in English and must be in essay or story form.
3. Entries may be up to 1,000 words (4 pages typed and double spaced) in length and must be typed or legibly written. Please use 12 point font.
4. Entrants must reside in Alaska and be a member of one of the age groups.
5. Entries must include the entrants' name, age, and contact information including mailing address, email, and phone number. Pages must be numbered with the entrant's name on each one, though names will not be available to judges.
6. Entries must be received by 5:00 PM on Friday, November 29, 2013.
7. Judging will take place following the deadline and will be decided by a panel selected by Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska; all decisions are final.
8. Judging will be based on: creativity; representation of theme; and flow of ideas.
9. Winners will be announced on December 6, 2013; one prize winner will be selected from each age category and one grand prize will be awarded to an overall winner.
10. Age categories:
 - a. 12-18
 - b. 19-35
 - c. 36-50
 - d. 51-74
 - e. 75+
11. **Grand Prize: Travel on Alaska Airlines (40,000 miles) with excerpt of the winning entry published in the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska winter newsletter and the Senior Voice newspaper.**
12. All entries become the property of Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska which retains the right to use and publish the work in whole or in part. Permission will be sought if entries are published elsewhere and the applicant may choose to remain anonymous. Entries will not be returned.
13. Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska board members, staff and their immediate family are not eligible to enter. Please email entries to: aging@alzalaska.org
or mail to:
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska
ATTN: Cheryl Westley
1750 Abbott Rd. Anchorage, AK 99507



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Classes around the state

For information on any of these classes or programs visit www.AlzAlaska.org or contact the office nearest you.

Anchorage

1750 Abbott Rd.
561-3313

- **Parkinson's Disease: Caring & Coping** 10 AM-11:30 AM
Monday, October 14
- **Dementia Care Essentials**
1:00-3:00 PM
Mondays
October 21-November 18
Registration Required (\$25)
- **Behaviors that Challenge Us**
10 AM-12 PM & 5:30-7:30 PM
Monday, October 28
- **Care for the Caregiver**
10 AM-12 PM & 5:30-7:30 PM
Monday, November 18
- **Art Links**
11AM -12 PM
Fridays

Copper River Basin

822-5620

- **Mental Fitness & Senior Scribblers**
Glennallen Senior Center
1-2 PM - 2nd & Last
Thursday of each month
October 12-December 26
- **Introduction to Alzheimer (Online Webinar)** 7-8 PM
Thursday, October 10
Registration Required
- **Honoring Connection (Online Webinar)** 7-8 PM
Tuesday, November 12
Registration Required
- **Holiday Connections (Online Webinar)** 7-8 PM
Thursday, December 12
Registration Required

Mat-Su Valley

10355 E. Palmer-Wasilla Hwy.
746-3413

- **Legal Planning**
6:00-7:30 PM
Tuesday, October 29th
- **When Forgetting Becomes a Disease**
1-2:30 PM & 6-7:30 PM
Tuesday, November 19
- **Mind Matters NEW**
10:30 AM-12:00 PM
Wednesdays, October 30-
December 18
Registration Required
- **Art Links**
1-2 PM
Fridays

Fairbanks

565 University Dr., Suite 2
452-2277

- **Mind Matters**
1-2:30 PM - Thursdays
September 19-November 7
Registration Required
- **Overview of Alzheimer's Disease**
5:30-7 PM
Tuesday, November 12
- **What's New with Hospice Services?**
5:30-7 PM
Tuesday, December 10
- **Dementia Care Essentials**
5:30 - 7:30 PM
Wednesdays
October 23-November 20
Registration Required (\$25)

Juneau

3225 Hospital Dr., Suite 100
586-6044

- **Understanding Adult Guardianship**
6-8 PM
Monday, October 14
- **Holiday Connections**
6-8 PM
Wednesday, November 13

Memory Screenings

We offer free, confidential memory screenings by appointment at all of our offices. In addition, we will offer screenings at the following:

Anchorage Office

Tuesday, November 19, 1pm-5pm

Fairbanks Office

(By appointment)

Wednesday, November 13, 9am-5pm

Valdez

Connecting Ties Office
128 Chenega St.

Tuesday, November 19, 1pm-4:30pm

Palmer Office

Tuesday, November 19
10am-12pm & 2:30pm-4:30pm

Juneau

Juneau Senior Center
895 W. 12th Street

Wednesday, November 20, 10am-2pm

ADRAA Juneau Office
Tuesday, November 19
10am-12pm & 2:30pm-4:30pm

Ketchikan

Ketchikan Senior Center
1010 Water Street
Friday, November 1, 10am-3pm

For the most up-to-date class listings visit:
www.AlzAlaska.org/events



Support Groups around the state

Anchorage				
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska 1750 Abbott Rd.	General Caregiver General Caregiver	2nd Thursday 4th Thursday	10 -11:30 AM 5:30-7 PM	Marilyn McKay 561-3313
Chester Park Cooperative 2020 Muldoon Rd.	General Caregiver	1st Friday	10 -11:30 AM	Kim Jung 561-3313
Eagle River				
Holy Spirit Episcopal Church 17545 N. Eagle River Loop Rd.	General Caregiver	2nd Thursday	6:30-8 PM	Marilyn McKay 561-3313/Linda Shepard 746-3413
Statewide Telephone Support Group				
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska	General Caregiver	1st and 3rd Wednesday 2-3 PM Dial in 1-877-783-2009, Code 786108		Gay Wellman 882-5620 or (800) 478-1080 x6
Fairbanks				
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska 565 University Ave. Suite 2	General Caregiver	1st & 3rd Tuesday	11:30 AM-1 PM	Joan Adams 452-2277
Homer				
Friendship Center	General Caregiver	2 Thursday's a month	2:30-3:30	Mary Jo 235-2295
Juneau				
Juneau Public Library 292 Marine Way	Family Caregiver	3rd Thursday	12-1 PM	Joylynn 463-6177 or (866) 746-6177
Ketchikan				
Southeast Senior Services	Family Caregiver	Call for more information		Bernice 225-8080
Kodiak				
Kodiak Senior Center 302 Erskine Ave.	General Caregiver	4th Thursday	12:30-1:30 PM	486-6181
Mat-Su Valley				
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska Trinity Barn Plaza Mile 2.2 Palmer-Wasilla Hwy.	General Caregiver	2nd Wednesday	1-2:30 PM	Linda Shepard 746-3413
Seward				
Seward Senior Center	General Caregiver	4th Thursday	1-2 PM	262-1280 or (800) 776-8210
Sitka				
Brave Heart Volunteers	General Caregiver	2nd Wednesday	12-1 PM	747-4600
Soldotna				
Soldotna Senior Center	General Caregiver	2nd & Last Tuesday	1-3 PM	262-1280 or (800) 776-8210
Sterling				
Sterling Senior Center	General Caregiver	1st Tuesday	1-2 PM	262-6808



**Alzheimer's
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Anchorage, AK 99507

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Leaving a bequest for future generations

If you share our commitment to assist all who turn to us for help, then please consider leaving a legacy to Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska. Your contribution to Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska will secure a brighter future for those individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia and their caregivers by sustaining our programs and services such as Care Coordination, Education, Family Consultations, In-Home Services and Support Groups.

How to Leave a Legacy

- You can define a specific dollar amount or specify a percentage of your overall estate.
- You can leave the residual amount of your estate after all other specific bequests and obligations are met.
- You can leave a particular asset such as securities, real estate, retirement account or valuable personal property.
- You can leave a portion or all of a life insurance policy or purchase a new policy naming Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska as the beneficiary.

If you are thinking of leaving a legacy gift to the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska, or if you have already made a commitment to do so, please let us know so we may better serve you and honor your wishes. Contact our development office in Anchorage to discuss what options are available for your bequest.

To go paperless in 2014, email us at ADRAA@AlzAlaska.org to sign up for electronic delivery of this newsletter, training opportunities and other announcements.