

Rethinking Dementia: Accelerating Change

July 2016



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rethinking Dementia: Accelerating Change was born out of a group of West Michigan aging and healthcare providers coming together and deciding to do something about dementia. It was obvious to all that the prevalence of dementia is increasing, and the current systems that exist to help and support people with dementia are not good enough. Too many people with dementia are isolated, too many caregivers are overwhelmed, and too much money is being spent on ineffective or inefficient ways of caring for them.

In response to this frustration, a group of committed organizations and individuals invested in a new organization, Rethinking Dementia: Accelerating Change (RDAC), that now serves as the facilitator of a collaborative process to address dementia for the whole community. In order to maximize its effectiveness, RDAC has chosen to involve a wide and varied group of organizations and individuals in developing its mission and strategic vision. The result of this collaborative process is an opportunity to improve awareness about dementia, access to services and resources, and aggregation of service delivery systems in West Michigan.

In order to accomplish this, RDAC will first build and develop a working Collective Impact initiative. This process will streamline communication between multiple partners in dementia care, set a standard for data collection and measurement of success, and provide a foundation for collaboration on a variety of interventions.

Second, RDAC will work with patients, caregivers, and service providers to provide helpful education and support to physicians and health systems. By filling gaps in physicians' knowledge and access to supplementary services, people with dementia will receive earlier, more accurate diagnoses and be connected quickly with community resources that will make their dementia journey more hopeful and positive.

Improved awareness, access, and aggregation related to dementia will result in reduced stigma, delivery of quality diagnoses, better care for people with dementia, caregivers that are empowered rather than burned out, public policy and funding that recognizes the impact of dementia on people's lives, and more participation in research to one day prevent and cure major diseases that cause dementia.

RDAC plans to implement the strategies of pursuing Collective Impact and educating physicians over a three-year time period, beginning in 2017. The total amount of funding needed to carry out this work and achieve the intended outcomes for people with dementia and those that care for them is \$2 million.