

Referral to Community Resources

Effective care for patients with dementia requires partnership with community service providers who have specialized expertise and can meet needs where patients live.

In many cases, caregivers and people living with dementia are too overwhelmed to seek out these resources on their own. Direct clinician referral to community-based organizations (CBOs) can help. These referrals should be standard interventions for patients with dementia and their caregivers.

QUICK TIP: Write referrals to community supports on a prescription pad to increase the likelihood that caregivers will actually connect with the services.

3 STEPS FOR CONNECTING PATIENTS AND CAREGIVERS TO COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

1. After needs assessment, refer to the Alzheimer's Association.
2. Print or email CAPC's Dementia Care Resources for Caregivers handout to help caregivers locate resources.
3. Use the resources listed below to locate services in your area that meet the specific needs of the patient and caregiver, and refer them to the resource(s) via a prescription.

The Alzheimer's Association is a nationwide source of evidence-based and practical information about all aspects of care for people living with dementia and their caregivers. The local Alzheimer's organizations provide care consultation, support groups, 24/7 support line services, connection to other local services, education, and safe return programs. **Always write caregivers a prescription to call the Alzheimer's Association's 24/7 national helpline at 1-800-272-3900 or visit their support web pages.** Providers can [order referral pads](#) or download the Alzheimer's Association [Pocketcard App](#) online. Use the [ALZ Direct Connect Referral Form](#), developed by Alzheimer's Los Angeles, as an example of how health care providers can link patients and families to local Alzheimer's organizations.

Potential Community Partners

Online Directories of Local Resources	
Alzheimer's Association's Local Chapter Directory	Online search tool to locate your community's local Alzheimer's Association Chapter
Family Caregiver Alliance's Family Care Navigator	Helps caregivers locate public, nonprofit, and private programs, services, and resources
Aunt Bertha	Social services locator by zip code, connecting people to local services for food, housing, transit, health care, and more
Eldercare Locator	Community service locator provided by the U.S. Administration on Aging; offers a search function for resources based on zip code or city and a toll free support number, 1-800-677-1116
Caregiver Education and Training	
NIA Alzheimer's Caregiving	Tip sheets for caregivers to help with communication, behavioral symptoms, legal and financial issues, safety, and caregiver well-being
Home Alone Alliance	Video series to support caregivers at home, available in English and Spanish and covering a variety of clinical topics including falls, wound care, and medication management; offered via a public-private partnership led by AARP, Family Caregiver Alliance, United Hospital Fund (UHF), and the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing at UC Davis
United Hospital Fund's Next Step in Care	Resources for clinicians to support discharge planning, community partnership, and caregiver support
Alzheimer's Association's 10 Signs Brochure	For patients, families, and clinicians on the 10 warning signs of Alzheimer's
Alzheimer's Association's Caregiver Resources	Handouts on common challenges in dementia caregiving, and a support group locator
Family Caregiver Alliance's Disease-Specific Tip Sheets	A wealth of resources for caregivers that includes skill building, coping, and psychosocial support; resources available for many types of dementia
UCLA Alzheimer's and Dementia Care Program	Training videos and webinars for caregivers on common behavioral, psychological, and physical symptoms of dementia, and common challenges in dementia caregiving
Alzheimer's Los Angeles' Caregiver Tip Sheets	Tip sheets for caregivers on 15 topics, including bathing, driving, medications, and sundowning; available in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Japanese
Emotional and Psychosocial Support	
Alzheimer's Association's Support Groups	Online directory for local and virtual support groups; local Alzheimer's organizations often offer support groups as well
Family Caregiver Alliance's Support Groups	Online support groups for caregivers of those with any chronic conditions or disease; not dementia specific

Smart Patients	Free, online discussion forums for patients and caregivers divided into different communities based on diagnosis; offers specific threads on Alzheimer's Disease, Lewy Body Dementia, and more
Department of Veterans Affairs Caregiver Support	For caregivers of veterans, the VA offers a caregiver support hotline (1-855-260-3274) and an online search to find local support
Respite Care and Adult Day Services	
Arch National Respite Network	Online directory of respite providers and programs (Note: Medicare only covers respite through the hospice benefit)
National Adult Day Services Association	Online database of adult day center locations (Note: Medicare does not pay for any form of adult day care, but Medicaid and other non-Medicaid assistance programs may help defray costs)
Other Resources	
Legal Aid	Help finding legal aid for advance health care directives, wills, Medicaid and Medicare benefits and asset protection, housing issues, and other legal needs such as discrimination or using the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys	Help finding legal aid, as well as educational resources for older adults
Meals on Wheels	Available in many communities to bring hot meals to the homes of older adults; depending on individual circumstances, meals may be provided along a sliding fee scale, from no cost to full price; local Alzheimer's organizations, senior centers, and churches may also offer meal delivery services
Financial Power of Attorney	Tips from the AARP for discussing advance financial planning

Follow up with patients and caregivers to determine if they were able to access the services you referred them to, and whether the services met their needs. Regular re-assessment of their needs is essential for effective care for people living with dementia and their caregivers.

Clinicians can serve as a lifeline to caregivers by including them as part of the care team, assessing their health and well-being, and addressing their needs through communication, psychosocial support, medical care, and direct referrals to community resources.