

APPROACHES TO ADDRESS THE STIGMA OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE DEMENTIA		
APPROACHES	ACTION STEPS	EXAMPLES
Personalize and validate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenge stereotypes through direct discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For both patients and caregivers: "There is no one way to 'have Alzheimer's disease.' It can differ from one person to another, and that's okay."</li> <li>For caregivers: "You're living a struggle: trying to do everything you possibly can for your relative and at the same time living your life. You can't fight this, but you can come to terms with it."</li> </ul>
Ask about beliefs, worries, and experiences related to Alzheimer's disease dementia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correct misinformation</li> <li>Adjust expectations to be more accurate</li> <li>Refer to allied health professions for psychological therapy and social support, as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Tell me what you know about Alzheimer's disease?" [Use answers to this to correct beliefs that are false or exaggerated]</li> <li>"Many people worry that a person will no longer be able to make medical decisions for themselves because of a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. Is this something you worry about?"</li> <li>In caring for a patient with mild-stage dementia or MCI: "Some people fear that after just a year or so they'll not be able to live in their home or recognize family. Let me assure you that we diagnosed this quite early. Those kinds of problems are years and years away."</li> </ul>
Foster dignity in language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use person-centered terms</li> <li>Use accurate, respectful, inclusive, and empowering phrases</li> <li>Leave room for individual experience by avoiding "absolutes"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Individual living with dementia" or "a person with dementia"</li> <li>"It's common for people living with dementia..." rather than "Alzheimer's disease causes people..."</li> <li>"You are the same person now after I have told you this diagnosis as you were before you came to see me. All that I've done is given an answer to what's causing your memory problems."</li> </ul>
Help individuals access self-care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask what individuals do to engage self-care</li> <li>Offer resource lists of activities that can be done at home, in the local community,</li> <li>Offer lists of self-care strategies like avoiding drugs and alcohol, eating well-balanced meals, giving oneself permission to feel (good and bad), and exercising even if it's only a little bit, like a walk around the neighborhood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When talking with the caregiver: "Taking care of yourself is very important for your health. It can sometimes feel hard, like the time it takes should be used to take care of your [father/mother/sibling], but actually taking care of your emotional and physical health can help you take even better care of [him/her]. It can help you be less stressed, more energetic, and have more patience. What do you do to take care of yourself?"</li> </ul>
Encourage involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage participation by suggesting possible activities, studies, and programs, where individuals can become involved</li> <li>Offer resource lists for ongoing research studies, local social programs, and patient organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Some people find it helpful to be with others who understand what it's like to live with Alzheimer's disease, even if they aren't talking about the disease. Would you be open to participating in a local research study or meeting up with others?"</li> </ul>
Abbreviation: MCI, mild cognitive impairment.		