



# Improving Palliative Care Outcomes for Patients with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias and Family Caregivers



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## Statement of the Problem

- Advanced Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) are an assemblage of serious illness affecting large numbers.
- Cognitive decline commonly limits decision-making capacity thereby compounding family caregiver distress.
- Needs of aging in place are often unmet without services to improve palliative care (PC) outcomes.<sup>1</sup>

## Methods

**Design:** Quality Improvement  
**Sample:** PACE participants with ADRD and family caregivers  
**Setting:** Providence ElderPlace in Spokane, WA  
**Evaluation (Measures):** Quantitative and open-ended surveys of burden (Zarit-12) and satisfaction (4-point Likert)  
**Data Collection and Analysis:** Descriptive statistics and qualitative review  
**Timeline:** January 2022 – January 2023

## Conclusions

- Patients with ADRD and family caregivers report benefit from ACP
- Unmet needs may be better supported through expanding engagement with PC services set in PACE
- Future directions may align with hybrid in-person and remote technologies integral to community-based care

## Background

A database literature search found that advance care planning (ACP) with surrogates is key to delineating goals of care, preparing for complications, and accessing PC and hospice in a timely fashion

- Attending to family caregiver burden<sup>2</sup>
- Early and recurring ACP<sup>3</sup>
- POLST conversations in PACE<sup>4</sup>

## Findings

PACE	CAREGIVER	ZBI-12	POLST	COMFORT CARE	IMPORTANT VALUES	QUALITATIVE REPORTING
home	partner	high	DNR/I	no	4	"family oriented and professional"
home	daughter	high	DNR/I	yes	4	"more talking is better"
AFH	sister	mod	Full Code	no	4	"grieving support is helpful"
AFH	sister	high	DNR/I	yes*	4	"honored in ways that reassured me"
home	daughter	mod	DNR/I	no	3	"helpful because I live so far away"
home	daughter	mod	DNR/I	no	3	"I know I can speak my mind"
home	partner	mod	Full Code	no	4	"in the home made this awesome"
					mean	
* death w/in 6 mo					3.71	

- PACE participants and caregivers enrolled (N=7)
- ACP documentation 100%
  - Burden  $\geq$  moderate; satisfaction with ACP (mean = 3.71)
  - "Family oriented" and "honored in ways that reassured"

## Limitations

- Educational resource page shortcomings
- Lack of awareness
  - Difficulty in accessing
  - Inadequately individualized

## Purpose/Aims

- This quality improvement project's purpose is to determine the effect of an expanding PC intervention for Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) participants with ADRD and their family caregivers. **Specific Aims:**
- To determine if ACP documentation improved
  - To determine if family caregiver burden decreased
  - To improve family caregiver satisfaction and feelings of support

## Acknowledgements/References

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