DEMENTIA
Care Aware

Early detection. Better care.

DEMENTIA CARE AWARE

Impact Report

July 2022 - June 2026

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The Dementia Landscape

Dementia prevalence is rising rapidly in the United States, with an estimated 7.4 million Americans aged 65 and older currently living with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias and projections that this will nearly double to 14 million by 2060. This growth is outpacing the preparedness of the healthcare workforce. (*Alzheimer's Association, 2026*)





Primary care providers are often the first point of contact for patients with cognitive changes, placing them on the front lines of dementia detection and care. Yet many providers report feeling underprepared to meet the needs of patients with cognitive impairment. Studies suggest that more than half of dementia cases may be missed in primary care settings, and the lack of robust training in dementia management is one possible cause. (*Bradford et al., 2009*) In a 2020 Alzheimer's Association survey, 82% of primary care providers reported having a frontline role in dementia care, but 22% reported no residency training in dementia diagnosis and care. (*Alzheimer's Association, 2020*)



Strengthening dementia capacity in primary care is critical for both quality of care and system readiness. A reliance on specialists to make the diagnosis could result in having to wait years for an evaluation. Globally, people wait an average of 3.5 years from first symptoms to receive a dementia diagnosis. (*Kusoro et al., 2025*)

Equipping primary care providers with the skills they need to conduct cognitive assessments means that a timely and high-quality diagnosis will become more accessible, even as dementia prevalence continues to climb.

7.4 million Americans

aged 65+ are living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias

(Alzheimer's Association, 2026)



13.8 million

people in the U.S.

Estimated to live with Alzheimer's by 2060

(Alzheimer's Association, 2026)



139 million

people globally

Estimated to live with Alzheimer's by 2050

(World Health Organization, 2021)



More than 1/2

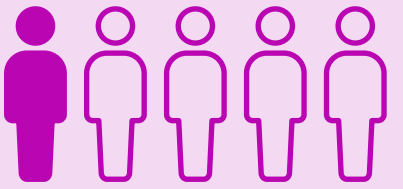
of people with probable dementia may be **undiagnosed** *(Amjad, et al. 2018)*

92%

of mild cognitive impairment cases **remain undiagnosed** **(***Mattke et al., 2023)*

Women are **2X more likely**

to develop dementia than men



1 in 5 women

who do not have dementia at age 45 are at risk for Alzheimer's in their lifetime *(Alzheimer's Association, 2026)*

Black and Hispanic Americans are **more likely** to have dementia and more likely to have **missed diagnoses** than White Americans *(Alzheimer's Association, 2021)*



The number of **LGBTQ+ Californians** living with Alzheimer's is projected to **more than double** by 2040 *(Ross et al., 2021)*

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Launching Dementia Care Aware

In California, Senate Bill 48 in 2021 took a groundbreaking step by expanding Medi-Cal benefits to include an annual cognitive health assessment for Medi-Cal only beneficiaries aged 65 and older. This benefit, effective July 1, 2022, provided them with similar access to routine screening for signs of Alzheimer's disease or other dementias as their Medicare-eligible counterparts, who can receive screenings through the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit.

After the passage of the bill, the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) partnered with the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) to operationalize this vision through Dementia Care Aware (DCA), bringing together clinical experts, researchers, community organizations, and health systems from across California to support the implementation of screening at scale.

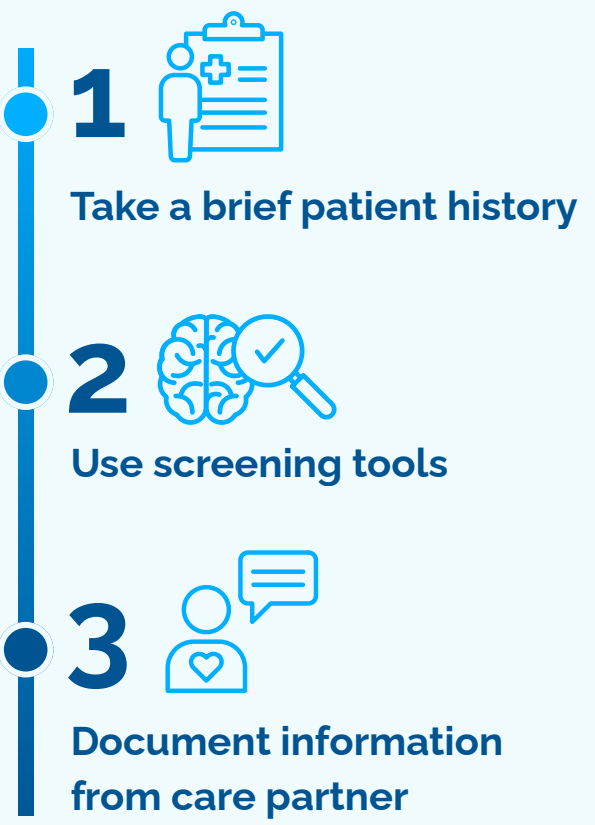
In the first four years of the program, DCA created the cognitive health assessment (CHA), an approach to screening for dementia with validated tools for cognitive and functional abilities, published a training curriculum, and compiled resources on the CHA approach and brain health care. We reached thousands of health care professionals across the state with training and support to start screening programs.

The Cognitive Health Assessment (CHA)

What is the CHA?

- An annual screen for older people without a dementia diagnosis.
- A quick check on cognitive and functional symptoms, and an assessment of the person's support system.
- It prompts a brain health plan.
- Prepares next steps for a diagnostic assessment.
- Flexible enough to be done by any team member, such as a medical assistant or nurse.

CHA Steps:



Partnerships and Outreach

12,335 Total Professionals Reached!

Through our outreach and communications channels.

DHCS · UCLA Health · UC Law SAN FRANCISCO · westhealth · RANCHO LOS AMIGOS NATIONAL REHABILITATION CENTER · Institute for Healthcare Improvement · Alzheimer's | SAN DIEGO · Harbor-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER · Alzheimer's ORANGE COUNTY · UCI · ADC Alzheimer's and Dementia Care PROGRAM · UCSF · ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION · SageNavigator YOUR SOLUTIONS TO AGING WELL · ALTER INSPIRING AND EQUIPPING FAITH COMMUNITIES · Alzheimer's LOS ANGELES · UCSF Fresno · UC San Diego

Dementia Care Aware built a robust statewide network to develop and disseminate the CHA.

Starting in October 2024, DCA partnered with the West Health Institute, one of the most important foundations improving the lives of older adults in the US. This new funding source allowed for tremendous growth in scope and reach.

In the spring of 2026, DCA collaborated with the Institute of Healthcare Improvement, Alter Dementia, and Sage Navigators for wider reach.

In total, we have reached over 12,000 professionals through our listserv, communications, and direct outreach!

DCA now reaches learners nationally, and its curriculum includes expanded dementia care topics to support the clinical implementation of comprehensive dementia care.



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Training the Primary Care Workforce

Free Courses, Webinars and Podcasts

Education and training are a core focus for DCA and a key to improving the preparedness of health care teams to address dementia. **DCA provides free, accessible education through online courses, live trainings, and webinars.**

Our training equips health care teams with the knowledge and skills needed to proactively assess for dementia and to respond effectively to cognitive concerns. Training emphasizes evidence-based screening, culturally responsive dementia care, and compassionate communication with patients and families. The content helps clinicians build confidence in addressing cognitive health as part of routine care. All courses are free and offer continuing education credits.

Dementia Care Aware's foundational course is called "The Cognitive Health Assessment: The Basics," and it reviews the CHA process, why it matters, how to administer it, and what to do when results are positive. This includes how to develop a brain health plan with patients.

Additional **courses** cover: adapting assessments for medical and linguistic considerations, brain health planning, and medical-legal planning for older adults. We host **webinars** and a **podcast** to cover more topics.

9 Courses

36 Webinars

17 Podcast Episodes

Course Catalog


The Cognitive Health Assessment: The Basics


Tips for Adapting the Cognitive Health Assessment


Telehealth and the Cognitive Health Assessment


Cognitive Health Assessment for Team Members


Assessing and Connecting with the Care Partner


Advance Care Planning for Older Adults


Next Steps After a Positive Cognitive Health Assessment


Evidence-Based Interventions to Improve Brain Health


Dementia: Making the Diagnosis

Training Reach and Early Success

9,984 learners | **49** states | **2** U.S. territories | **25** countries

Reach and Scale

DCA has trained 9,984 individuals across all educational offerings. Learners span 48 states, 2 territories, and 25 countries. The flagship course "The Cognitive Health Assessment: The Basics" has reached 8,727 learners, demonstrating that the CHA model translates across geographies and care settings. Significant repeat engagement across DCA's offerings suggests learners see DCA as a trusted, ongoing resource rather than a one-time training event.

Who Are Our Learners

Nearly half (47%) of all learners in "The Cognitive Health Assessment: The Basics" are practicing frontline clinicians, including 2,351 physicians, 1,557 nurse practitioners, and 235 physician associates.

Of these clinicians, 24% work in FQHCs, community clinics, or tribal clinics. This reflects DCA's strong presence in safety-net settings that serve high-need populations.

Of 8,008 learners in California, 45% are affiliated with hospitals, health plans, or FQHCs.

Learner Outcomes

Course evaluations point to our consistent impact (n=1514).

86%
of learners "strongly agree/agree" that DCA Courses are **relevant to their practice** across diverse occupation types and settings

83%*
of learners report **increased knowledge**

74%
of learners intend to **change their practice** and apply what they learned to patient care

**n= 1,297 respondents*



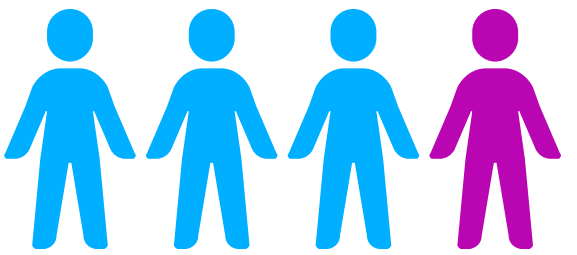
Implementing the Cognitive Health Assessment

Dementia Care Aware partnered with the **San Francisco Health Network**, **Los Angeles Department of Health Services,** and the **University of California, Irvine** to implement the CHA in primary care clinics. Across these sites, which represent both public and academic health systems, implementing the CHA produced clear gains in early detection, follow-up, and system capacity.

At the San Francisco Health Network, we introduced an interdisciplinary care team, with nurses making outreach calls to conduct screenings. **This enabled routine screening and resulted in over 340 assessments in one year,** and follow-up that included connecting patients to brain health planning, care navigation, and visits for follow-up clinical evaluation.

At UC Irvine, embedding CHA workflows into Epic and the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit **nearly doubled documented screenings** while improving documentation accuracy, billing capture, and population-level tracking.

Scan to see our implementation guide.



A major success in LA: At Los Angeles County DHS, a pilot between July 2022 and September 2024, more than 1,000 screenings across four clinical sites uncovered substantial unmet need. **Nearly one in four patients screened positive.**

These pilot results drove a systemwide rollout of a digital screening tool in their EHR and a training protocol for staff. **Screening is now standard of care for the more than 55,000 older adults in their primary care clinics, the majority of whom are Spanish-speaking.**

Together, the implementation efforts across these sites demonstrate how screenings can be normalized as standard care.

Check out our implementation guide on how to implement a dementia screening program in your clinic!

Billing for the Cognitive Health Assessment

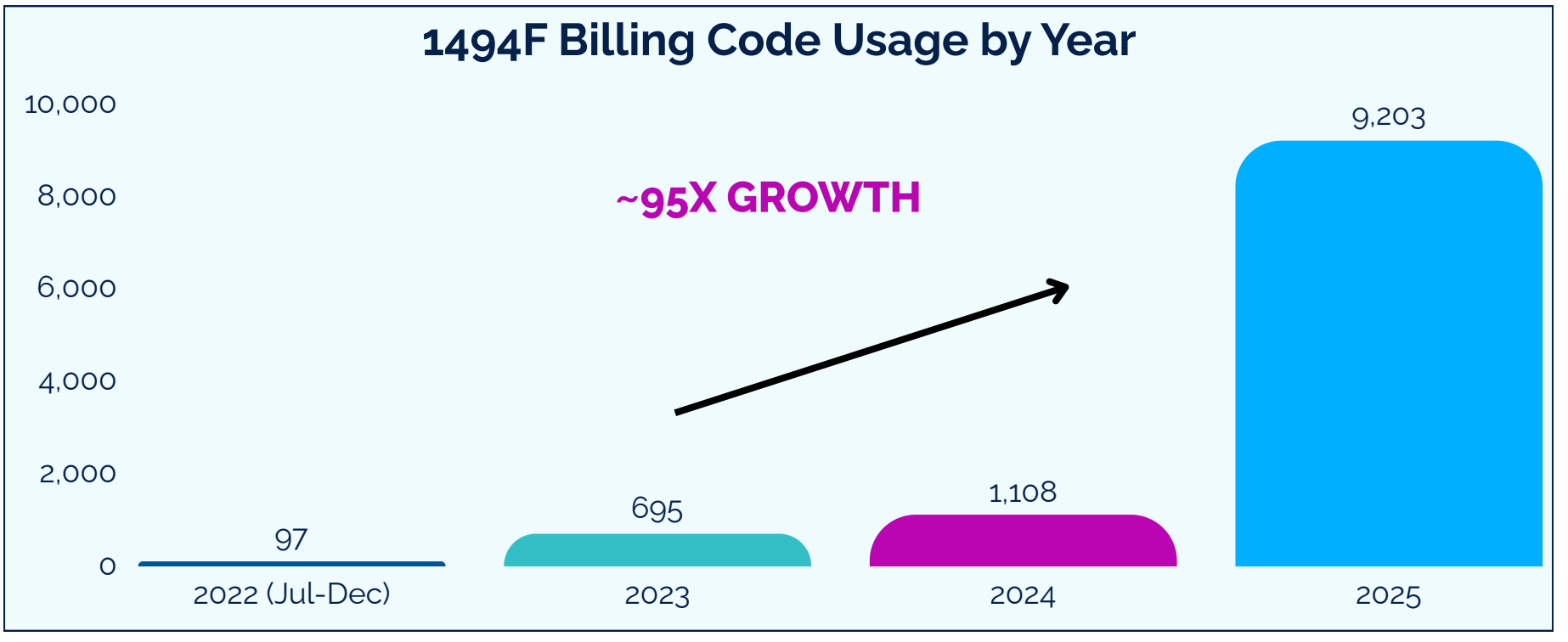
Senate Bill 48 expanded Medi-Cal benefits to include an annual cognitive health assessment for Medi-Cal only beneficiaries aged 65 and older that is billable under CPT code 1494F. This gave patients who only had Medi-Cal coverage access to the same routine screening their Medicare-eligible counterparts receive through the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit.

Since the benefit took effect in July 2022, DCA has supported providers and health systems in navigating these billing pathways by publishing billing guides and incorporating billing guidance into our trainings. (See our billing guidance **here**.)

11,100

CHAs Conducted Across California using 1494F

Billing data from DHCS shows that screening has taken hold. Between July 2022 and December 2025, providers reported **more than 11,100 cognitive health assessments under CPT code 1494F**, reaching over 10,800 unique patients across California. Annual **screening volume grew 11-fold** between 2022 and 2024, with 869 rendering providers across 372 billing organizations now participating.



Testimonials

> Achieving a timely diagnosis is absolutely essential to ensure that everyone living with dementia can access the right care and support at the right time. **Dementia Care Aware makes that possible** by bringing together dementia experts across California to support primary care doctors and community clinics with tools designed specifically for them and their patients. Together we can bring dementia out of the shadows and into the light so no one faces dementia alone.
>
> Elizabeth Edgerly Ph.D.
> **Executive Director, Alzheimer's Association Northern California**

> This is **helpful for me as a social worker**, especially after doing a CHA, to know how to discuss with patients and families and proceed with a brain health plan.
>
> Live Cognitive Health Assessment Learner

> [The Dementia Care Aware Warmline] is **exactly what I needed...** [to help with] wording on how I can discuss this delicate issue with patients who don't know me. **I feel much better equipped**.
>
> DCA Warmline Caller

> The Dementia Care Aware training was a **phenomenal experience** that allowed a collaborative approach to sharing knowledge and expertise between physicians and dementia specialists from various organizations. This unique approach helped **improve the complex practices and struggles** involved in caring for patients dealing with dementia in various settings, including outpatient, inpatient, and in various facilities, including nursing homes.
>
> Muhammad Nausherwan Khan, MD
> **Program Director, Family Medicine Residency**
> **Houston Methodist Sugar Land, TX**

Dementia Care Aware in the Media

Since October 2022, Dementia Care Aware was featured in 25 media placements across television, podcasts and digital and trade outlets, generating **more than 390M impressions, over 65 minutes of broadcast airtime and reaching an estimated 500K local TV viewers.**

This coverage positioned DCA as a trusted, credible voice in dementia care and normalized conversations about cognitive health. We want to elevate the need for dementia screening to be a routine and expected part of care rather than overlooked during visits.

We want to get the word out that early detection and high-quality dementia care should be a standard part of health care delivery!

25 total placements
across TV, podcast, and media

$100k
advertising value

10.83m
unique visitors monthly
across digital media outlets

8
total broadcast segments

65+
minutes of airtime

500k
local viewers

These efforts directly reinforced DCA's program goals by strengthening awareness, credibility, and engagement alongside training and implementation work. **Earned media generated more than one million additional impressions and over 1,100 website leads.** Together, these communications efforts positioned DCA as a go-to resource for clinicians, health systems, and the public.

NBC BAY AREA · U.S. News & World Report · MDLinx · FOX 2 KTVU · Spectrum News 1 · Alzheimer's Speaks · Patient Care

The Path Forward

Dementia Care Aware is building on its foundation in early detection to support the full continuum of dementia care: from screening and diagnosis to care planning and ongoing management. Our next phase will equip clinicians with practical skills, help health systems integrate dementia care into everyday practice, and expand access to high-quality care.

Expanding Clinical Skills

We are expanding our curriculum to help clinicians turn a positive screening result into a clear diagnostic and care plan. New and upcoming courses address brain health, diagnostic decision-making, and ongoing dementia care, including the management of behavioral symptoms. Designed for the complexity of everyday practice, these courses connect clinical knowledge with practical next steps.

Strengthening Implementation Support

In 2026, we are updating our implementation guide to make it easier for clinical teams to integrate a dementia care pathway into practice. Drawing on lessons from DCA implementation sites, the updated guide will offer expanded electronic health record (EHR) build specifications, order sets, guidance on diagnostic workups and referrals, and patient-facing resources.

Building the Business Case for Dementia Care

High-quality dementia care needs a sustainable financial foundation. Drawing on insights from our clinical partners and value modeling, we will examine how implementing dementia care can help practices capture revenue opportunities and achieve potential cost savings. This work will help health systems assess the resources and financial strategies needed to support proactive, ongoing care.

Strategic Partnerships

We are building partnerships to move dementia care beyond isolated initiatives and make it an integrated part of health-system practice. We are also exploring opportunities to bring DCA implementation support to additional clinical sites, including hospitals and long-term care settings. Through these partnerships, we aim to make high-quality dementia care part of everyday care for more older adults across the U.S.

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How You Can Help

Dementia Care Aware invites funders, health systems, and implementation partners to help bring consistent, high-quality dementia care to more older adults and their caregivers. Together, we can build on the program's impact, advance innovation, and make early detection and effective dementia care the standard across care settings.

Partner with us to expand what's possible in dementia care!

Contact us to learn more

DCA@ucsf.edu

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