



## Why is it important to know the signs of advance dementia?

Nelson found out that he has dementia five years ago. His family is now needing to provide total care for Nelson at his home. He is unable to walk and mostly lays in bed. Nelson stopped eating and drinking. He always wanted to be home with his family at the end of life. The hospice team comes each week to meet with Nelson and his family to answer questions and provide support. His family is thankful that they can spend quality time together, sharing memories that will live on forever. Knowing the signs of advanced dementia is important so that customer-owners and families can receive quality end of life support.

## What can you look for?

- Hard time communicating
- Unable to bathe, dress, eat or toilet alone
- Mostly in bed since unable to walk or sit
- Hard time swallowing, eating, or drinking
- Loss of expressions such as being able to smile
- Infections of the lungs or urinary tract

Advanced dementia has different signs and symptoms. These changes can be signs that a person is nearing the end of their life. During these transitions, a family may want to focus care on comfort.

## Questions to ask yourself:

- Where do you want to be if time is short — home or hospital?
- At the end of you life, what is most important to you?
- Would you want aggressive medical treatments or a focus on comfort?
- Are your caregivers feeling well supported?





## What can you do?

- Ask your health care team for a care conference to ask questions and learn about resources and support services
- Review your health care wishes with your health care team
- Reach out to local hospice agencies to learn more about end-of-life services and support
- Seek out emotional support knowing that these transitions can be difficult
- Remind caregivers about the importance of self-care and reaching out for assistance

## Where can you find support?

- **Palliative Care** can assist with goals of care and understanding end-of-life transitions.
- **Community Resource Specialist** and **Waiver Care Coordinator** can connect you to programs and services for support.
- **Behavioral Health Consultant** and **Traditional Healing** can provide emotional and cultural support during these transitions.
- **Home Visit Team** can assist with home safety assessment and education on dementia.
- **Integrated Pharmacist** and **Home Visit Team** can assist with medication management.

For more information, visit <https://www.southcentralfoundation.com/aging-well/>

## Alaska Native Health Campus Resources

### Anchorage

(907) 729-3300

### Matanuska-Susitna Borough

(907) 631-7880

#### Primary Care

- Behavioral Health Consultant
- Community Resource Specialist
- Home Visit Team
- Integrated Pharmacist

#### Palliative Care

#### Traditional Healing

## Community Resources

#### Aging and Disability Resource Center (907) 343-7770

#### Alzheimer's Resources of Alaska (907) 561-3313

#### Local Hospice Agencies

