



PRESS RELEASE

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State hosts annual *Memory Conference* during Alzheimer's Awareness Month

*IL Department on Aging holds a two day conference Nov. 7 & 8 in Springfield
for families of Alzheimer's patients, caregivers and professionals*

SPRINGFIELD – November 7, 2011. The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) today opened the 16th Annual *Memory Loss Conference* to address issues of dementia, such as Alzheimer's disease, and related disorders. The two day conference is November 7 and 8, at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. Today's agenda is geared toward care partners, friends and family of individuals with a memory loss disorder. Tomorrow's agenda is for professionals in the areas of healthcare, aging, and caregiving.

"It's important to look at the challenges those affected by Alzheimer's disease face, and not just the individuals, but family members, friends, caregivers and the professionals working to treat and cure this disease. Until there's a cure, we can teach the facts and find ways to better help. That's what this conference is all about," said Illinois Department on Aging Director John K. Holton, Ph.D.

The two day conference, held during this month's national observance of Alzheimer's Disease Awareness, is co-sponsored by the department, in conjunction with the Alzheimer's Association, St. John's Hospital, and Southern Illinois University School of Medicine - Center for Alzheimer Disease and Related Disorders.

With the rising numbers of people impacted, there is a greater demand for resources. In addition to the education sessions offered during the conference, there is also a resource fair for attendees.

Alzheimer's is an incurable neurological disorder that destroys the brain's memory cells. It is the most common form of dementia. It also causes problems with memory, thinking and behavior and can be severe enough to affect work, lifelong hobbies or social life. Alzheimer's gets worse over time, and is the sixth-leading cause of death in the United States. Worldwide, there are more than five million people living with Alzheimer's disease. The number of people with Alzheimer's disease is predicted to nearly double every 20 years. Here in Illinois, it is estimated more than 210,000 are living with Alzheimer's or related dementias.

Many organizations, like the Alzheimer's Association, help seniors and family members cope with and combat the disease. The Alzheimer's Association provides supportive services and special programs such as assistance to individuals with Alzheimer's who live alone, people living with early-onset Alzheimer's, rural and/or multicultural outreach, care coordination, and training programs for families and professionals. Help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week by calling 1-800-272-3900 or by contacting a local chapter at www.alz.org.

For more information about programs to assist older adults in Illinois and their caregivers, call the Department on Aging Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966 or for TTY (hearing impaired use only) call 1-888-206-1327.

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