



State of Utah

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**Utah Department of Health
Executive Director's Office**

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Dear Colleague,

In Utah there are currently 31,000 individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias with a projected increase of nearly **forty percent within the next eight years**. This disease continues to be an important priority for the Utah Department of Health. We are pleased to announce the launch of a public awareness campaign this month called *Age Well*. It will raise awareness of Medicare Annual Wellness Visit and encourage adults over the age of 65 to ask their primary care provider about the three-minute brain health check that should be conducted during their Annual Well Visit. You may recall an earlier letter sent on February 28, 2017 encouraging you to conduct the Mini-Cog on all of your patients starting at age 65 years old.

There are resources available to primary care providers including:

1. Cognitive Assessment reimbursement
 - a. Cognitive Assessment Encounter CPT® code 99483 provides enhanced reimbursement for an encounter that results in a comprehensive care plan, for patients exhibiting and/or having issues related to dementia. <https://alz.org/careplanning/overview.asp>
2. Training provided by HealthInsight in administering the Mini-Cog and recommended follow up.
3. The *Age Well* campaign website provides information and resources including contact information for questions or to request additional support. www.agewell.health.utah.gov

The Utah Department of Health recommends all healthcare professionals:

1. Understand the benefits of early and accurate diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias- www.alz.org/health-care-professionals/dementia-diagnosis-diagnostic-tests.asp
2. Promote the use of the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit. This yearly encounter includes the creation of a personalized health wellness plan and includes the use of a cognitive screen to detect possible cognitive impairment. This can be a first step in a thorough process of evaluation, with referral to specialists for further assessment to determine the cause of the memory loss. Please visit <https://www.acponline.org/practice-resources/business-resources/payment/medicare/how-to-bill-medicare-annual-wellness-visit-awv> for more information about this Medicare benefit.
3. Familiarize yourself with the tools the Alzheimer's Association has available to assist with diagnosing individuals with dementia. Please visit <http://www.alz.org/hcps>.

4. Review Utah's State Plan for Alzheimer's disease and Related Dementias -2018 to 2022:
https://livingwell.utah.gov/docs/Alzheimers_StatePlan.pdf

The Utah Department of Health continues to work with local and national organizations to promote awareness of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, make strides toward preventing this devastating disease and to support the many individuals and families currently affected by this disease.

Thank you for working with us to promote the health and well-being of all Utah residents. Early assessment for cognitive impairment is critical to help individuals and caregivers make advance plans for the future.

Best Regards,



Joseph K. Miner, M.D.