



**Our Vision:** Milwaukee County will be a national leader in the prevention of falls in the adult population through community education, collaboration, and innovation



## Milwaukee County Falls Prevention Coalition Resource Series

### Caring for Those with Cognitive Limitations During the COVID-19 Pandemic

#### Background

- Falls are a major cause of injury in older adults with cognitive limitations.
- Older adults with dementia are twice as likely to fall than those without dementia.
- Social isolation has a negative effect on cognitive function and may worsen behaviors.
- Due to social distancing, many older adults are unable to access previous activities such as day programs, senior centers, or volunteer activities.
- Family members are providing additional care to those with cognitive limitations due to decreased home care workers or moving out of residential facilities.

#### Practical Tips

- Encourage participation in mentally challenging activities such as games, puzzles, and conversation.
- Create a daily plan of activities to provide structure and decrease wandering.
- Establish a consistent time for virtual check ins or simple phone calls. Remote caregivers should watch for changes in conversation suggesting the person is struggling to manage daily routine.
- Learn a new hobby or revisit an old one – painting, crocheting or simple woodworking can be adapted to the person's skill level.
- Physical activity can improve cognitive function and decrease challenging behaviors.
- Take care of yourself as a caregiver by getting physical activity, sleep, and taking time for breaks.
- Reach out to health care providers for additional equipment or referrals to home care services
- Be sure there is a backup plan, in case you, the caregiver, become ill. Trial that plan, it will provide you a needed break as well.

#### Electronic Resources

[Tips for Dementia Caregivers](#) – resources from the Alzheimer's Association

[Home Safety Tips](#) – Alzheimer's Association

[ALZConnected](#) – Online forums to connect caregivers to resources and support.

[MindMate](#)- Multi-faceted app allows for caregivers and their loved ones to participate in a variety of activities together.

[AmuseIT](#) - App designed to stimulate communication between caregivers and person with dementia.

[MyReef](#) – App that allows patients to create and interact with their own aquarium.

#### References:

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