

Quick Tips on How to be a “Dementia Friendly” Business

Guidance for All Neighborhood Businesses

Understand how to communicate with a customer who may have dementia ¹	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Slow pace slightly and allow time for person to process and respond. 2. Use shorter simple sentences, and ask one question at a time. 3. Speak clearly and calmly, be patient and understanding; listen. 4. Treat the person with dignity and respect. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Avoid arguing with or embarrassing the person. 6. Be aware of your body language: smile and make eye contact at eye level. 7. Seek to understand the person’s reality or feelings. 8. Apologize and redirect to another environment or subject as needed.

Join others in your community, or take advantage of training opportunities
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Connect with others to help make your community safe, inclusive and respectful for all of its residents and visitors. To learn how, contact Pam MacLeod at pam.macleod@state.ma.us. 2. Host training on how to be a dementia friendly business and receive Dementia Friendly Business window stickers. For more information, contact Maura Moxley at mmoxley@alz.org, or call the Alzheimer’s Association’s 24/7 Helpline at 800-272-3900.

Additional Guidance for Restaurants²

Challenges for persons with dementia:	Here’s what you can do:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confusion over the menu and inability to choose what to order. 2. Agitation over noisy environment, wait time, or perceived wrong order. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offer simple choices and try to redirect (<i>This fried chicken is our favorite meal, would you like to try it and let me know what you think?</i>) 2. Seat individual and their companion(s) in a well-lit, quiet place as soon as possible; and provide a realistic estimate of wait time. 3. Apologize and avoid arguing (<i>I’m sorry; I must have misheard your order.</i>) 4. Consider registering to accept “Purple Table” reservations at www.purpletables.com.

¹ Dementia Friendly America, Sector Guides, Businesses: <http://www.dfamerica.org/sector-guides/>

² Adapted from Dementia Friendly America, Sector Videos, Restaurant: <http://www.dfamerica.org/sector-videos>

Additional Guidance for Hair Salons and Barber Shops

Challenges for persons with dementia:	Here's what you can do:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agitation over noisy environment or wait time. 2. Confusion over too many choices. 3. Intimidated by a well-meaning stylist or barber standing over them. 4. Difficulty with paying during checkout. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Try to schedule appointment on a day/time that is typically quiet. 2. Offer simple, sensible choices. (<i>Here's a picture of a style that I think would look great on you; would you like to try it?</i>) 3. Approach client slowly from the front and use a comforting tone of voice. Seat them in a quiet area. 4. Whenever possible, especially while conversing, remain at eye level. 5. Provide extra assistance during checkout and payment. Ask if the individual would like you to call a relative or close friend for assistance if that information is available, or ask for assistance from a companion if one is present.³

Additional Guidance for Grocery Stores⁴

Challenges for persons with dementia:	Here's what you can do:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An unfamiliar surrounding may prompt the individual to feel overwhelmed, wander, or become lost. 2. Problems describing what they want or need to buy. 3. Misplacing a purse or wallet, or forgetting to bring money to pay. 4. Extreme difficulty in paying or managing money at checkout. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Politely address the customer by sir or ma'am or by name if you know it. 2. Assist the individual with their shopping and offer sensible options when there is confusion. 3. Gently inquire if you notice unusual items or quantities. 4. Provide extra assistance during checkout and payment. Ask if the individual would like you to call a relative or close friend for assistance if that information is available, or ask for assistance from a companion if one is present.

³ Dementia Friendly America , Sector Videos, Grocery Store: <http://www.dfamerica.org/sector-videos>

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