

# **ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE INITIATIVE**

## **DESCRIPTION**

Alzheimer's disease is an irreversible, progressive brain disorder that occurs gradually and results in memory loss, changes in behavior and personality, a decline in thinking abilities and eventually, death. More than five million people in the United States alone currently suffer with Alzheimer's disease. Although Alzheimer's disease is not a normal part of aging, the risk of developing the illness rises with age. However, some individuals develop Alzheimer's disease in middle age. Because of the inevitable decline in functioning, everyone with Alzheimer's disease will eventually require care. However, with appropriate training and support for caregivers, this care can usually be provided at home instead of in institutional settings.

The Alzheimer's Disease Initiative (ADI) was legislatively created in 1985 (Sections 430.501 - 430.504, Florida Statutes) to provide a continuum of services to meet the changing needs of individuals with, and families affected by, Alzheimer's disease and similar memory disorders. In conjunction with a ten-member advisory committee appointed by the Governor, the program includes four components: 1) supportive services including counseling, consumable medical supplies and respite for caregiver relief; 2) model day care programs to test new care alternatives; 3) memory disorder clinics to provide diagnosis, research, treatment, and referral; and 4) a research database and brain bank to support research. This document primarily focuses on the first two components of the program.

## **RESPITE SERVICES FOR CAREGIVER RELIEF**

Alzheimer's Respite Care programs are established in all of Florida's 67 counties, and many counties have multiple service sites. Many Alzheimer's victims require care 24 hours a day, especially in the late stages of the disease. ADI respite includes in-home, facility-based (usually at adult day care centers), emergency and extended care respite (up to 30 days) for caregivers of victims of memory disorders. On average, less than three hours of respite care per week are provided per person.

In addition to respite care services, caregivers and persons with Alzheimer's Disease may receive supportive services essential to maintaining persons with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia in their own homes. The supportive services may include caregiver training and support groups, counseling, consumable medical supplies and nutritional supplements. Services are authorized by a case manager based on a comprehensive assessment and unmet needs identified during that assessment.

## **MODEL DAY CARE**

Four model day care programs have been established in conjunction with memory disorder clinics to test therapeutic models and provide day care services: Al'z Place in Gainesville, Easter Seal Society in Miami, Villa Maria in North Miami, and Hillsborough County Adult Day Care Services in Tampa. The model day care programs provide a safe environment where Alzheimer's patients congregate for the day and socialize with each other, as well as receive therapeutic interventions designed to maintain or improve their cognitive functioning.

## **PROGRAM RESULTS**

In Fiscal Year 2007-2008, the state provided \$10,667,535 for respite services and model day care. These funds enabled 2,379 persons to be served, at a cost of \$4,484 per person. In accordance with statutory requirements, clients participate in their cost of care through a sliding fee scale.