ICRN Quarterly Meeting Agenda and Minutes – October 28, 2026

Location: Teams Meeting **Time:** 1 to 2 pm
Attendees: Tarisha W., Chrishun B., Watkins K., Abby D., Allissa H., Darby M., Jeff B.; Elaine J., Debbie K., Renee K.

Introductions and welcomes were made to new attendees: Abby D. and Megan W. (AgeGuide) and Allissa H. (IDPH)

1. DEMENTIA FRIENDLY ILLINOIS

Susan F. (Rush)
Report presented by Tarisha W.

57 Total Communities

Since the beginning of July, four communities have been recognized:

- Mount Vernon
- East Moline (Joined Illinois Quad Cities)
- Bloomington-Normal

Dementia Friendly Zoom Meetings

- Average attendance remains approximately 20 participants.
- Meetings have returned to the standing time of the third Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m.
- Discussions continue to focus on sustainability, community updates, best practices, and resource sharing.

Dementia Friendly Summit

Rush hosted a Dementia Friendly Summit in October prior to the ADAC meeting.

- 32 participants attended from communities throughout Illinois.
- Participants engaged in small-group discussions focused on sustainability, collaboration, and community engagement.

- Feedback indicated participants appreciated the opportunity to connect with individuals from urban, suburban, and rural communities and learn about activities taking place throughout the state.
- Dr. Raj Shah presented on Belonging and discussed ways communities can create welcoming environments for people living with dementia, caregivers, and families.

Action Items:

- Tarisha Washington will share Dr. Raj Shah's Belonging presentation and summary materials with ICRN members.

Tarisha W. (Rush)

Community Updates

Pilsen

- Continuing work on Dementia Friendly designation.
- Application materials and letters of support are being finalized.

Garfield Park

- Meetings have been held with community organizations and library representatives.
- Efforts are underway to establish a Dementia Friendly task force.

Proviso Township

- Initial outreach efforts have engaged representatives from Maywood, Broadview, Westchester, and neighboring communities.
- Local government representatives have expressed interest in moving the initiative forward.

Abby B.D. (AgeGuide)

Glen Ellyn

- Successfully achieved Dementia Friendly recognition.

Lombard

- Efforts continue to recruit task force members and community leadership.
- Interest remains high, but leadership capacity and volunteer recruitment continue to present challenges.

Aurora

- Community interest remains strong, but leadership capacity and volunteer recruitment continue to present challenges.

Members discussed ways Area Agencies on Aging and community partners can support communities working toward Dementia Friendly designation.

Group Discussion

Members discussed options for continuing the Dementia Friendly Summit model.
Topics included:

- Holding annual or semi-annual statewide summits.
- Coordinating future summits with ADAC meetings.
- Rotating summit locations around the state.
- Exploring regional "mini summits."
- Developing a toolkit and planning resources communities could use to host local gatherings.

Debbie K. shared that SIU has successfully used satellite participation sites as part of the Brain Aging Conference and suggested a similar model could be explored for future Dementia Friendly events.
Darby M. shared that Northwestern would be interested in hosting a future summit alongside the Fall 2027 ADAC meeting.

Action Item:

- Tarisha will compile and share summit survey results and evaluation feedback with the network.

2. DEMENTIA FRIENDS ILLINOIS

Susan F. (RUSH)

Report presented by Tarisha W.

17,271 – Total Dementia Friends (16,579 as of last meeting)
    13,584 – from in-person talks (12,963 as of last meeting)
    3,678 – from online sign-ups (3,616 as of last meeting)
483 – People who have attended Dementia Champions training and said they would like to be a Champion (460 as of last meeting)

Monthly Breakdown

In-Person Dementia Friends Talks

- July – 235
- August – 192
- September – 235

Online Sign-Ups

- July – 27
- August – 19
- September – 25

Champions

- July – 14
- August – 5
- September – 4

Discussion

Members discussed strategies for increasing Dementia Friends participation and strengthening connections between Dementia Friends and Dementia Friendly Community efforts.
Suggestions included:

- Incorporating Dementia Friends recruitment strategies into community plans.
- Engaging municipal leadership and mayoral groups.
- Building stronger connections with Age-Friendly initiatives.
- Exploring opportunities through healthcare systems, colleges, and universities.

Renee K. suggested outreach through mayoral caucuses and municipal leadership groups as a way to increase awareness and participation.
Debbie K. encouraged greater collaboration between Dementia Friendly and Age-Friendly efforts throughout Illinois.

Champion Video Project

Tarisha W. provided an update on the Dementia Friends Champion video project.

The goal is to collect short videos from Champions discussing:

- Why they became involved.
- Their experiences promoting dementia awareness.
- The impact the program has had within their communities.

Members were encouraged to identify Champions who may be interested in participating.

Updated Training Materials

Debbie K. asked whether updated Dementia Friends training slides were available.

Action Steps:

- Tarisha W. confirmed updated slides are available and will be shared with members.
- Chrishun will provide link with promotion materials.

3. ILLINOIS HRSA GWEP/ADRD – SHARE Network

Jeff B. (Northwestern Illinois Area Agency on Aging - NWILAAA)

Memory Café Coalition

The statewide Memory Café Coalition continues to grow and meets monthly.
Recent discussions have focused on:

- Sensory-based activities
- Holiday programming
- Activity-sharing among Memory Cafés
- Resource sharing and peer support

Dementia Resource Champion Program

A pilot Dementia Resource Champion Program is currently being implemented with first responders at the University of Chicago Police Department.

Participants are being introduced to dementia resources and awareness strategies, and Dementia Friends training may be incorporated as part of future implementation efforts.

4. MULTI-STATE PLAN ON AGING/EngAging IL

No updates

5. ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ADAC) UPDATE

Allissa H. (Illinois Department of Public Health)

ADAC Fall Meeting Recap

The October 9 ADAC meeting was held at Rush University Medical Center.
Attendance included approximately:

- 15–18 in person
- 42 virtual participants

Topics discussed included:

- ADAC subcommittee activities
- Budget reductions
- Tax return funding awareness efforts
- Program implementation updates
- Staffing transitions

IDPH continues to operate without a permanent Dementia Coordinator position. Recruitment efforts have not yet begun.

Funding Updates

BOLD Funding

- Year 4 funding has been approved.

GRF Funding

- Current fiscal year funding has been approved.

Grant Management Transition

- Programs are currently transitioning to the UNIS grant management system.

Members discussed the challenges associated with annual grant renewals and the importance of maintaining statewide momentum despite staffing and administrative transitions.

6. Alzheimer's Association

David O. was unable to attend due to conference travel and did not provide a report. He encouraged ICRN members to send him an email to submit questions regarding legislation or public policy for follow-up.

7. Other News/Updates:

Debbie K. (SIU)

- Sent flyers for upcoming events. Will be attached in email with meeting notes and scheduled on the blog.
- **Summary of Action Items / Follow-Up**

Item	Lead
Share Dr. Raj Shah's Belonging presentation and summary materials.	Tarisha W.
Share Dementia Friendly Summit survey results and evaluation feedback.	Tarisha W.
Distribute updated Dementia Friends presentation slides.	Tarisha W.
Create and distribute a shared folder of Dementia Friendly outreach materials.	Chrishun Brown
Continue development of Dementia Friendly Summit toolkit and planning resources.	Rush Dementia Friendly Team
Continue collecting Dementia Friends Champion testimonial videos.	Rush Dementia Friends Team
Discuss support strategies for communities experiencing task-force recruitment challenges at a future meeting.	ICRN Leadership Team

General Information:

Email Chrishun_m_brown@rush.edu if you have announcements to include in the ICRN news blast or email updates to the ICRN listserv.

Next Meeting Wednesday, January 27, 2027