

University of Southern Indiana Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program



AIM Nursing Home Consortium Monthly Newsletter October 2025

Residents' Councils

What is the AIM Nursing Home Consortium?

Join the USI GWEP AIM Nursing Home Consortium!

The [USI Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program \(GWEP\)](#) has established a [nursing home consortium, AIM \(Advance, Improve, Move\)](#), designed to support nursing home leaders with education and innovative opportunities to grow age- and dementia-friendly care.

How to Join?

Become an AIM Nursing Home Consortium member by attending one of our quarterly educational meetings or [opting in to one or more of our initiatives](#).

Quarterly Educational Meetings

Quarterly meetings featuring national and regional experts will be hosted on Zoom, with **free continuing education credits** offered at each meeting.

Upcoming meeting:

Wednesday, October 29

1-2:30 p.m. CT

Topic: Rejuvenating Resident's Councils

[Zoom Link](#)

[Visit Our Website](#)



The AIM Nursing Home Consortium is made possible through the USI GWEP. Continuing education credits are provided by the Center for Health Professions Lifelong Learning - funded by the Bronstein Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness.

Meet the Panelists!

Jeanette Sullivan-Martinez - President of a Residents' Council

Jeanette Sullivan-Martinez is President of the Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Residents Councils of the State of Connecticut Long Term Care Ombudsman Program and served as President from 2014 to 2021 and 2023 to present representing nursing home residents at State meetings. She has been President of the Residents Council of Pendleton Health and Rehabilitation Center since 2010. She is a member of the Steering Committee for Moving Forward and also a Resident Executive Committee Member for Consumer Voice, both national organizations focusing on the quality of long-term and nursing home care. Jeanette Sullivan-Martinez is a voice for nursing home residents and nursing home reform at state and federal legislative hearings and in interviews in local and national newspapers and on television programs, including one 1A on National Public Radio. She has been a resident of Pendleton Health and Rehabilitation Center since 2008 and is the proud mother of three and a grandmother.



Mairead Painter - Connecticut State Long Term Care Ombudsman

Mairead Painter was appointed to the position of Connecticut State Long Term Care Ombudsman in May 2018. In this role, she promotes and protects quality of life for older adults and individuals with disabilities, while overseeing the Program's advocacy work. She serves more than 30,000 individuals residing in skilled long term care nursing facilities, residential care homes and assisted living/managed residential communities. Ms. Painter has an extensive background working on Connecticut's long term care continuum. As State Ombudsman, Ms. Painter identifies issues, develops policies, regulations and legislation to improve quality of life for residents receiving support services. Ms. Painter is committed to advocating for person centered care and informed choice for individuals, no matter their age and/or disability. She actively participates in a variety of stakeholder workgroups, legislative task forces/committees and is a member of the National Association of State Ombudsman Programs and National



Dr. Anna Fisher - Nurse and Educator

Dr. Anna Fisher serves as a nurse and educator for the Papillion Community Living Center, which provides services for memory care, in-patient rehabilitation, hospice and skilled nursing care. Dr. Fisher continues to serve as a Clinical Practice Committee member, Emergency Preparedness & Life Safety Committee member, and Quality Award Senior Examiner for the American Health Care Association (AHCA) and National Center of Assisted Living (NCAL). Dr. Fisher is also an adjunct professor in the College of Arts and Sciences at Bellevue University. Dr. Fisher is host and producer of the award-winning television program series, *Now What?*, about elder care, dementia and behavioral / mental health.



Upcoming Opportunities



Upcoming Project ECHO® Series *Team-Based Educational Series*

Alzheimer's and Dementia Care ECHO Program for Professional Care Providers in **Assisted Living**

Starting in January 2026, the Alzheimer's Association Project ECHO® programs will continue with an assisted living focus. The other Project ECHOs have either already begun or are at max capacity. More Project ECHOs are planned to launch in 2026.

Project ECHOs are collaborative, virtual learning communities designed to build capacity among healthcare professionals and care providers working with individuals affected by Alzheimer's and other dementias. Through expert-led sessions, case-based discussions and peer learning, participants gain practical knowledge and evidence-informed strategies to improve dementia care across various settings. These programs foster a supportive network that empowers professionals to deliver person-centered, high-quality care.

Who can participate?

This program is open to professional care provider *teams* for people living with Alzheimer's and other dementia in Assisted Living or Lifeplan Communities. Ideal participants include Nursing Home Administrators, Licensed Vocational Nurses, Social Workers, Activity Coordinators and Resident Care Coordinators.

If you are interested, please complete the survey below, and specifically select "Alzheimer's Association® Project ECHO®"

[Project ECHO Survey](#)

Free Educational Series

[SWIRCA & More](#) in Evansville, IN would like to invite you, your staff, and your clients to their upcoming Brain Health Series session exploring the surprising link between oral health and dementia. Research indicates that bacteria, like *Porphyromonas gingivalis* in the mouth, can travel to the brain releasing toxins that may damage neurons and contribute to dementia. Join them for an insightful presentation by Emily Holt, USI Clinical Professor of Dental Hygiene and Dental Assisting. Mrs. Holt will share her expertise on how oral health impacts brain health and offer practical tips for caregivers to manage oral care for loved ones.



Session 2: Oral Health

- When: Wednesday, October 29, from 1:30 - 3 p.m. CT
- Where: SWIRCA & More Activity Center
- What: Brain Health Event – No reservation needed, drop by and join! ([flyer](#))



Dementia Friendly Indiana Communities

Age- and Dementia-Friendly Initiatives

Upcoming Meeting

There will be a Dementia Friendly Indiana Communities (DFIC) breakfast meeting on Wednesday, January 28, 2026, 8 - 10 a.m. CT located at the University of Southern Indiana on the 3rd floor of the Health Professions building. All DFIC members are welcome to attend. Please email Dr. Kevin Valadares at kvaladar@usi.edu if you are interested in attending.

[More about Dementia Friendly Indiana Communities](#)

Fall Festival October 2025

On Wednesday, October 8th, the Dementia Friendly Indianapolis action team hosted their 3rd Annual Fall Festival! Hosted by UIIndy, students, caregivers and community members came together for a day of fun and community resources.

Dementia Friendly Indianapolis is a part of Dementia Friendly Indiana Communities Area 8, which serves Marion, Boone, Hamilton, Hendricks, Hancock, Morgan, Johnson and Shelby counties.



[Champions | Dementia Friends Indiana](#)



Administrator-In-Training (AIT) Preceptor Training

Synchronous Online Training

Become a [Certified Administrator-in-Training \(AIT\) Preceptor](#) in just one day! Join the training [online](#) on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET for a dynamic, IPLA board-approved training designed for Health Facility Administrators. If you're

an HFA today, someone once precepted you - now it's your chance to pay it forward and support the next generation of administrators. This interactive, virtual course fulfills the state-required educational hours for nursing home preceptors and **awards 8 continuing education credits upon completion**. The training goes beyond lectures - expect group work, problem-solving and engaging activities throughout the day. Residential facilities may opt in, though training is not required for them. Don't miss this opportunity to meet your preceptor eligibility requirements in just eight hours!

Event Details:

- When: Wednesday, January 28, from 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. ET
- Where: Online
- What: AIT Preceptor Training – become certified to precept future HFAs!

If you are interested, please complete the survey below, and specifically select "Administrator-in-Training Preceptor Training for Staff."

AIT Preceptor Training Survey

essentiALZ® Staff Training and Certification



Alzheimer's Association essentiALZ® dementia care training and certification, is a three-hour, online, self-paced training that educates professional care providers on current evidence-based, person-centered practices to care for individuals living with dementia.

[More about AA's essentiALZ® Staff Training and Certification](#)

If you are interested, please complete the survey below, and specifically select "Alzheimer's Association essentiALZ® Dementia Care Training and Certification."

essentiALZ Survey



Dementia Friends Indiana Training *Host an In-Person Training*

Host a Dementia Friends Indiana training session at your facility! A certified *Dementia Friends Champion* from our partner AAAs Generations and SWIRCA & More will lead an informational discussion on what dementia is, what it's like to live

with the disease, and some tips for communicating with those who have it. Attendees are then asked to turn their new understanding of dementia into practical action that can help someone in their community. The *Dementia Friends Champions* will provide the materials needed.

Note: Dementia Friends Champions *can travel to any facility within their service areas of Daviess, Dubois, Knox, Martin, Pike, Vanderburgh, Warrick, Spencer, Gibson, Perry and Posey counties in Indiana.*

[More about Dementia Friends Indiana Training](#)

If you are interested, please complete the survey below, and specifically select "Dementia Friends Indiana Training Sessions Host."

[Dementia Friends Indiana Training Survey](#)

Scholarly Article

"Raise Your Voice: How to Increase the Effectiveness of Resident and Family Councils in Long-Term Care Homes"

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed how the voices of residents and families were often missing in long-term care (LTC) decision-making. Family and resident councils can help strengthen these voices, but little is known about how to make them more effective. Researchers in British Columbia held five focus groups and two interviews with LTC leaders, residents, family members and advocates to explore this issue. Check out the study below.

[Read More](#)

Recent Activities

October 2025 - Teepa Snow's Positive Approach to Care® In-Service

USI STELLAR members and GERO 215 students participated in an educational session led by a Positive Approach to Care® (PAC) Trainer. Following Teepa Snow's methodology, this training allows trainees to gain a deep, person-centered understanding of dementia and how it affects brain function and behavior. The training emphasizes practical, compassionate strategies for improving communication, reducing distress and enhancing care outcomes for individuals living with dementia. Trainees will learn to recognize and respond to different stages of cognitive change, apply various PAC techniques for safe and respectful physical assistance, and foster positive interactions that preserve dignity and autonomy. This knowledge equips caregivers, professionals, and family members to provide more empathetic, effective and individualized support.



September 2025 - Dementia Live® Dementia Simulation

USI 101 and GERO 215 students participated in Dementia Live®, an immersive simulation led by certified Dementia Live® coaches. Participants gain a powerful, immersive experience that fosters a deeper understanding of what it's like to live with dementia. Through the use of sensory tools and guided activities, participants simulate the cognitive and sensory challenges commonly faced by those with dementia - such as impaired processing, tunnel vision and

DEMENTIA Live®

*"Because it's frightening to care for
someone you don't understand"*

Dementia Simulation and Awareness Training

by



altered touch. This firsthand experience cultivates empathy, enhances emotional intelligence, and equips participants with practical tools to improve communication, care processes, and relationship-building. Ultimately, the training empowers caregivers, professionals, and community members to provide more compassionate, respectful and person-centered care to those living with dementia.

September 2025 - Geriatric Simulations



The GWEP team led geriatric simulations for future health professionals in both GERO 215 and USI 101 classes. These kits emulated arthritis, hemiplegia, cataracts, polypharmacy, medication management, age-related hearing impairment and various geriatric eye disorders.

[More about USI Geriatric Simulation Kits](#)

What is STELLAR?

STudents and **EL**ders **L**inking **A**round **R**elationships (STELLAR) is a community-based program that fosters positive connections between students and older adults. Its mission is to replace negative stereotypes about both groups with mutual respect and understanding. Through interactive community activities, STELLAR promotes awareness of elders' needs and highlights career opportunities for students interested in working with older adults.



[More about USI STELLAR](#)

What is GERO 215?



Introduction to Global Aging and Health Care is a USI CORE 39 course that examines aging from a global, cross-cultural perspective. It explores how factors like demographics, economics, environment and health care shape the aging experience worldwide. Designed for students of all majors, the course promotes understanding of age-friendly environments and global aging issues, making it valuable for those exploring career options or interested in health-related fields.

[More about USI GERO 215](#)

For additional information or any inquiries regarding the AIM Nursing Home Consortium, please contact Gracie Money, the USI GWEP

USI® GWEP

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