

Alzheimer's and Dementia Care Program

SUPPORT FOR ALZHEIMER'S AND DEMENTIA PATIENTS AND CAREGIVERS

November 2018



New Grants

- **Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)** to compare the effectiveness of health-system-based and community-based care
- **National Institute on Aging** to gauge efficacy and cost-effectiveness of the program
- **UniHealth Foundation** to optimize efficiency and cost of care
- **RECALL Foundation** to create an information and referral system for those without serious symptoms
- **The Eisner Foundation** to increase the number of participants and begin dissemination to other health systems
- **The Arthur N. Rupe Foundation** to increase the number of participants and promote dissemination of the program

Our Mission

- Maximize patient function, independence and dignity
- Minimize caregiver strain and burnout
- Reduce unnecessary costs

Our Team

Our core team includes four nurse practitioner dementia care managers and a geriatrician medical director, who are supported by staff and health professionals.

What We Do

Care in the Alzheimer's and Dementia Program begins with a 90-minute appointment for patients and their caregivers with a dementia care manager. This initial assessment, along with input from the patient's own physician, results in an individualized care plan. Caregiver education, support, and referral begin immediately. The program optimizes the patient's medical treatment plan to slow further decline in cognition, manage dementia symptoms, and reduce side effects. The dementia care manager continues to follow the patient, providing

ongoing advice and services as needed. Many patients are referred to our community partners.

The Program's Impact

As of November 2018, the program has served over 2,600 patients and their caregivers.

Prior to entering our program, many caregivers were poorly informed about dementia caregiving and felt they were fighting this battle alone.

- 13 percent of caregivers were depressed and 33 percent had high stress
- 62 percent felt that they didn't know where to turn for answers and 76 percent believed that they had no healthcare professional to help with dementia issues

After entering the program, 94 percent of caregivers felt that their role was supported and 92 percent would recommend the program to others. By the end of a year:

- Confidence in handling problems and complications of Alzheimer's disease and dementia improved by 72 percent
- Strain was reduced by 12 percent
- Depressive symptoms and distress were reduced by 24 and 23 percent, respectively

Awards

- **2017 SCAN Foundation Innovations in Health Care award**
- **2018 Edge Runner award from the American Academy of Nursing**

Although the program cannot prevent the progression of dementia, it improves patients' health:

- Problem behaviors (e.g., agitation, irritability, apathy) were reduced by 12 percent
- Depressive symptoms were reduced by 24 percent

At 1-year, the program prevented or improved symptoms for 61 percent of persons with dementia and 65 percent of caregivers.

The program reduced admissions to nursing homes for long-term care by 40 percent.

During the past year, the program has:

- Added new evening support groups
- Created additional training videos on managing behavioral problems and other challenges
- Developed dementia care manager curriculum with the Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association (GAPNA)

UCLA Alzheimer's and Dementia Care Program
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Support from our friends helps our program thrive. For more information or to make a gift to the Alzheimer's and Dementia Care Program, go to: uclahealth.org/geriatrics/giving or contact us at 310-794-7620 or bloew@support.ucla.edu



Frannie Rutstein (left) and Robbie Rutstein (second from right) with their friends Theresa and Sheila.

A Journey in Caregiving

We recently sat down with our 1,767th patient, Robbie Rutstein, and her sister, Frannie Rutstein, to discuss how our program has affected their lives. Robbie enrolled in the program in 2015 and has been followed by dementia care manager, Mihae Kim ever since.

Tell us a little bit about Robbie.

Robbie is from Chicago, Illinois. After graduating from high school, she began work as a receptionist at a major telecommunications company. In 1998, Robbie was asked to transfer to Los Angeles. She rose to Vice President of Customer Service before retiring in 2012.

During her retirement years, she traveled extensively and became involved with charities.

In late 2015, a friend noticed that Robbie was becoming very forgetful and often getting lost in familiar places. Robbie's primary care doctor referred her to the UCLA Neurology Department. In early 2016, she was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's. Robbie still lives in her apartment, but now she has wonderful caregivers by her side. Robbie loves all animals, including her five cats and the beautiful birds on her patio. She still exercises every day, and takes nature walks. Robbie is living a fulfilling life due in great part to her great support system, which includes her dear friends, loving sisters, and the staff at UCLA.

How was the referral process to our program?

Dr. Mario Mendez referred us to the program in 2015 and in no time, we met with Mihae Kim. Robbie had an instant connection with Mihae and since then, they have formed a very close bond.

How is your relationship with your Dementia Care Manager?

Mihae is heaven-sent and I would be lost without her. Mihae has helped me in so many

ways and is always available whenever I have any problems or questions. Even when she is busy and cannot take my call, as soon as she has a moment she calls me right away. Mihae goes above and beyond, and will routinely provide me with many excellent resources for caregiving, social work support, web page links and articles.

How have you benefited from being in the program?

The program has truly been immensely beneficial and helpful for me. One example is when speaking to Mihae, I casually mentioned an issue I was experiencing with a medication. Unbeknownst to me, Mihae went out of her way to speak with Dr. Mendez, then she contacted me and instructed me on what to do. Things like this have made me a better and more knowledgeable caregiver.

What is your wish for the program?

To continue to flourish. I do wish for the program to develop a focus on early-onset dementia, possibly having a day program exclusively for early-onset patients.

2019 Goals

- Increase the number of participants served at UCLA
- Begin to disseminate the program outside UCLA
- Train nurse practitioners who want to become dementia care managers
- Work with other groups and Medicare to provide coverage for UCLA Alzheimer's and Dementia Care program and similar comprehensive dementia care services
- Test the effectiveness of the program in a national clinical trial