



The Caregiver Club[®]

Welcome to The Caregiver Club's Dementia-Friendly Dining Program

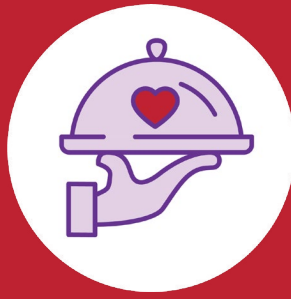
The Caregiver Club's Dementia-Friendly Dining program works to combat the societal stigmas associated with dementia. It partners with local restaurants in the St. Louis area to provide training and support so that they can provide a more friendly and supportive dining experience for those in the community.

Restaurants that receive Dementia-Friendly Certification:

- Support the relationship between individuals with dementia and their caregivers.
- Foster socialization has proven to support brain function.
- Give caregivers the courage to have more social dining experiences with their companion.



Cognitive ability declines **70% more slowly** in individuals with dementia who have frequent **social connections**.



For both individuals with dementia and their caregivers, **supportive social environments** can **reduce stress, combat anxiety and depression**, and **give them courage** to get back out into the community.



Your Role

As a server at a Dementia-Friendly dining establishment, you play a vital role in fulfilling the mission of this program. You will be asked to assist with the following interactions:

- Taking an order
- Serving the meal
- Presenting the bill



Successful Communication

Communicating with someone with dementia can be challenging because the disease affects their ability to process information, find the right words, understand complex conversations, and follow a logical train of thought. This makes it difficult for them to comprehend what is being said to them or to express themselves clearly. This can also be compounded by potential hearing or vision problems that often accompany the aging process.

Both what you say and how you say it are important.

When communicating with a person with dementia and their caregiver:

- 1 Acknowledge their situation.
- 2 Be patient, understanding and supportive.
- 3 Speak clearly, slowly, and in a friendly tone.
- 4 Follow the caregivers' directions, but acknowledge their companion's thoughts and ideas.
- 5 Do not judge their behaviors or choices.
- 6 Smile and maintain eye contact.
- 7 Be aware of your non-verbal communication.

DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY: Dementia is a disease that removes an individual's filter and affects their ability to communicate effectively. They may use insulting or embarrassing language, gibberish, nonsensical speech, or engage in rambling conversations. Try not to take offence to this behavior.



Taking an Order

THE ISSUE: The process of meeting a new person, such as a server, and ordering a meal can be confusing or intimidating for an individual with dementia.

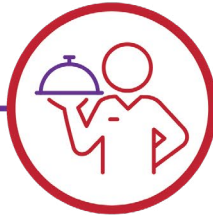
THE GOAL OF TAKING AN ORDER: To establish a rapport with the individual and their caregiver, and to make the ordering process as easy as possible.

Here are some best practices for taking an order:

- If possible, use a Dementia-Friendly Dining Intake Sheet to acquaint yourself with the individual and their needs.
- Introduce yourself and wear a name tag.
- Tell the individual what is going to happen. For example, “Let’s order your dinner now.” or “I’m going to remove your plate.”
- Ask closed, limited, or yes-or-no questions instead of open-ended, free-response questions. For example, asking “Would you like water or a soda?” rather than “What would you like to drink?”
- Do not judge their behaviors or choices.
- Use eye contact and non-verbal cues to communicate with the caregiver.
- Don’t take any odd behavior or statements personally.

Your restaurant may use The Caregiver Club's Dementia-Friendly Dining Intakes Sheets when taking a reservation or seating a caregiver and their companion. If so, your host or hostess will give this sheet prior to serving the dementia-friendly dining table. Intake sheets contain vital information about your guest's unique situation that will make the dining experience more successful for both you and them.





Serving the Meal

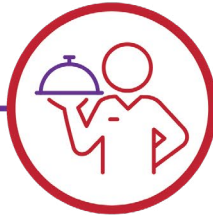
THE ISSUE: Individuals with memory loss may face challenges eating their meals due to a variety of physical, psychological, and environmental factors.

THE GOAL OF SERVING THE MEAL: To create an environment that encourages the individual to eat as much of their meal as possible.

This may require:

- Serving the meal with a simplified table setting that simplifies the number of plates, glasses and utensils, and eliminate clutter, such as table tents, condiments, and other items.
- Simplifying or eliminating some steps in your traditional table service, such as continuously refilling drinks.
- Overlooking the mess on the table or the floor. It is more important for the person to eat than to be tidy.





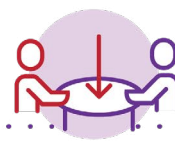
Presenting the Bill

THE ISSUE: Individuals with memory loss may struggle to pay the bill due to cognitive impairments, difficulties with complex calculations, and impaired judgment. Additionally, some individuals who consider it their “role” to pay the bill may become upset if this task is taken away from them.

THE GOAL OF PRESENTING THE BILL: To eliminate frustration or confusion associated with paying the bill.

Approaches to tackling these challenges include:

- Have the host or hostess ask the caregiver about bill paying preferences while making a reservation or seating the customer.
- Using eye contact with the caregiver and non-verbal cues to determine where to set the bill.
- Placing the bill in between the individual and their caregiver.





Be on the lookout for Caregiver Cards!

If guests seat themselves at your establishment, you may be presented with a **Caregiver Card**. These cards allow a caregiver to communicate with you about their unique situation without having to say anything or potentially upset their companion.



Thank You for Your Support and Participation

When implementing The Caregiver Club's Dementia-Friendly Dining Program, it is important to recognize that individuals with memory loss have varying symptoms, progression rates, and personal challenges. Therefore, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to providing a positive dementia-friendly dining experience.

While the personal interactions outlined in training are designed to address and support common challenges associated with dementia and memory loss, individual needs and preferences will vary.

Good luck and we thank you for participating in our mission.



For more information, visit: thecaregiverclub.org