

RURAL HEALTH FACTS

Dementia Care Services Project Benefiting North Dakotans

December 2010

What is the North Dakota Dementia Care Project?

- This project, which spans January 2010 to June 2011, has a goal of informing people with dementia and their caregivers about dementia care issues which, in turn, may lead to increased family support, decreased depression, delays in nursing home placement, and reductions in unnecessary health service use.
- The project provides care consultations to persons with dementia and their caregivers. These consultations consist of assessing needs, identifying issues and concerns and resources, developing care plans, and referrals, providing education, and follow-up assistance.
- Created by the Dementia Care Services bill (North Dakota House Bill 1043), the project is being conducted by the Alzheimer's Association of Minnesota/ North Dakota and externally evaluated by the Center for Rural Health.

What has been the Project's effect on caregiving in North Dakota?

- From January to November 2010, 736 project contacts were made with 398 caregivers of 285 persons with dementia.
- Caregivers who had multiple contacts with project staff and services showed increases in completing important dementia care-related action steps (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Change in Completing Care-Related Action Steps

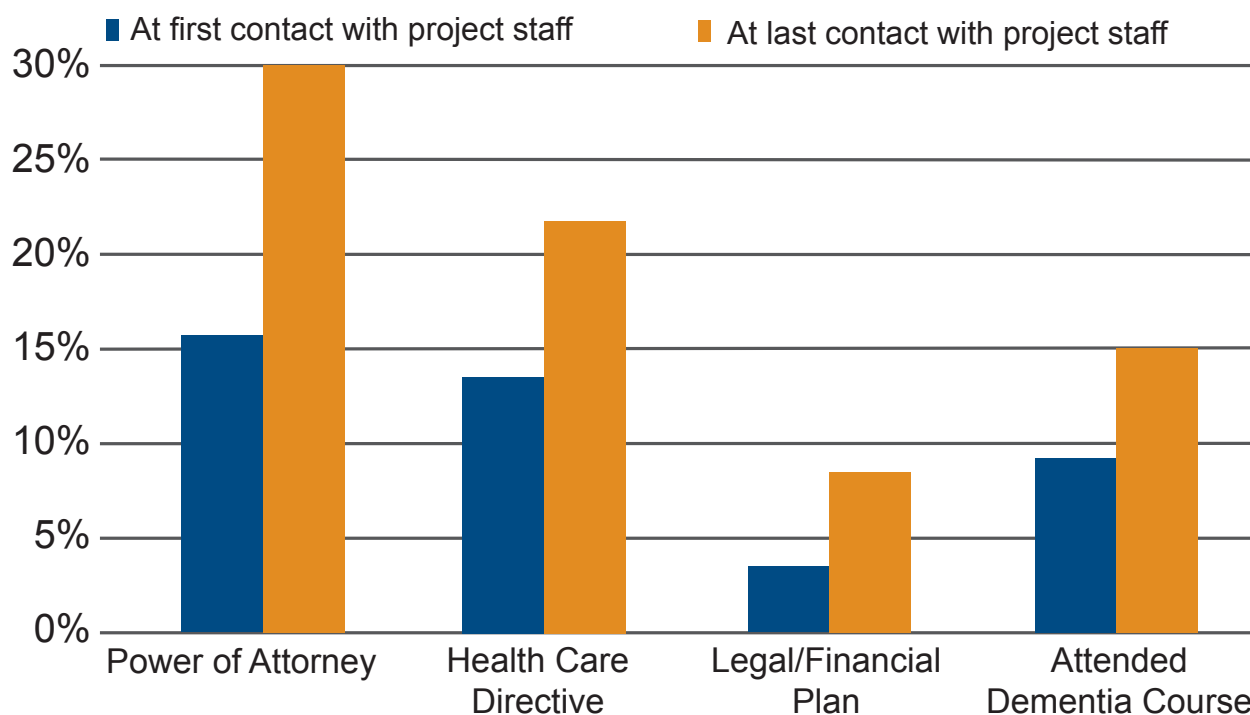
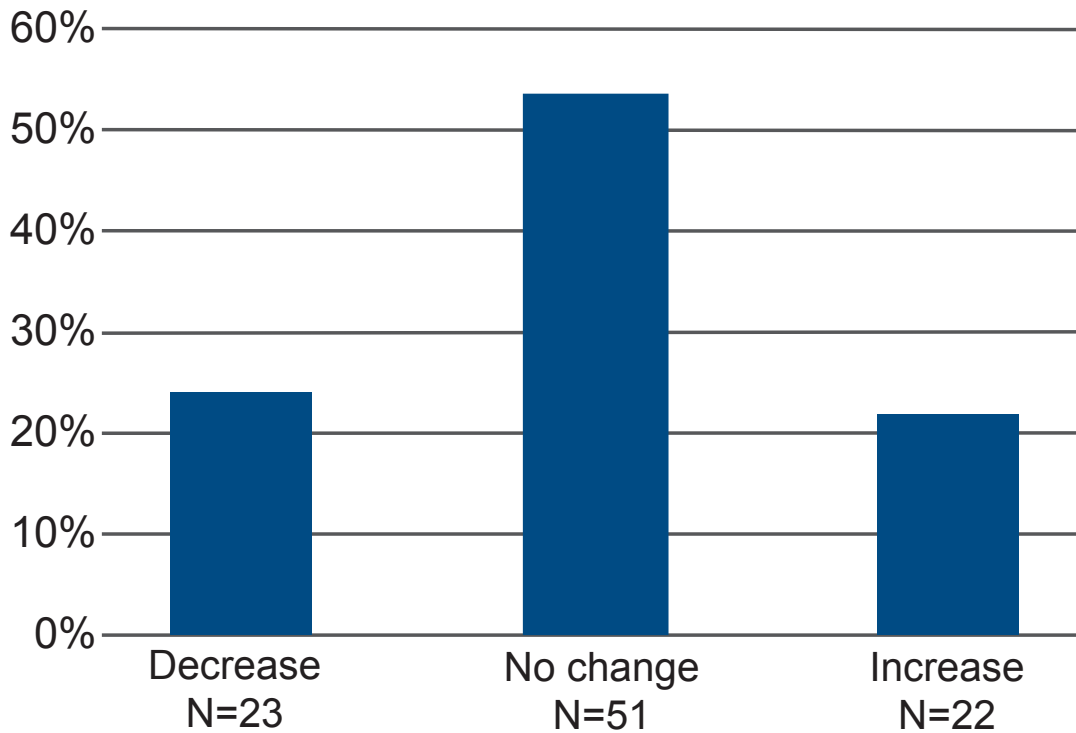


Figure 2. Change in Likelihood to Place Person with Dementia in LTC



- Nearly one in four caregivers who had multiple project contacts decreased their likelihood to place the person with dementia in a long term care facility (LTC; Figure 2).
- Persons with dementia who **showed a decrease** in likelihood to placement in LTC were all (100%) living in either their own home or assisted living, and 17% lived out in the country.
- Two out of three (66%) persons with dementia who **showed no decrease** in likelihood to placement in LTC lived in their own home or assisted living, and 11% lived out in the country
- The average amount of time before caregivers' change in LTC placement intention was noticed was two and one-half months.

Conclusion

- Preliminary results indicate the Dementia Care Services project is having positive impacts on the lives of persons with dementia and their caregivers, including enhanced support for caregivers and reduced intention for placement of persons with dementia in nursing homes.
- Important factors to consider when assessing care resources for persons with dementia include who the person lives with, (if they are independent or not), and if they live in a town (i.e., near a LTC facility) or out in the country.

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