

AN ADAPTIVE EXERCISE PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE WITH EARLY-STAGE ALZHEIMER'S  
DISEASE: A GRANT PROPOSAL

Heather Pantages

California State University, Long Beach

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# INTRODUCTION

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- Alzheimer's Disease creates challenges for the person with the diagnosis and their caregiver (often a family member).
- As the disease progresses, the person with the diagnosis will experience physical and cognitive decay.
- It is important to provide those diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers intervention tools and education of support before the difficult time to come.
- The purpose of this project was to find funding source for the Alzheimer's Association to create a program that will enhance the quality of life for those living with Alzheimer's disease through the utilization of adaptive exercise.

# SOCIAL WORK RELEVANCE

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- The social worker has an essential role in assisting people with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers in maintaining or enhancing their quality of life.
- The proposed program requires the social worker to also utilize NASW's code of ethics and values such as:
  - dignity
  - value of a person
  - Service
  - Social justice
  - Importance of human relationships
  - Competence (NASW,2013)
  - These values will enable the social worker to manage the group of participants, encourage effective change, and promote healthy and positive lifestyles.

# CROSS-CULTURAL RELEVANCE

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- Currently the majority of the population suffering with AD are Caucasian (Alzheimer's Association, 2014).
- African Americans and Latinos are more commonly diagnosed with Vascular dementia related to hypertension and diabetes (Fernando & Ince, 2004).
- Currently there is a larger population of women living with AD compared to men (Alzheimer's Association, 2014).
- These women range from 65 years of age and older, altogether about 3.2 million.
- There is also a larger population of female caregivers.
- The program will acknowledge the extra support needed by women, by setting a goal to increase outreach to women.

# METHODS

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- Target Population

- The target population aimed to be served by the adaptive exercise group are people diagnosed with early-stage Alzheimer's disease (AD) and their caregivers.
  - 55 years and older

- Identifying a Funding Source

- The following web sites were used to gather resources of inquiry regarding funding available for the proposed program
  - Grants.gov ([www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov))
  - Center for Disease Control and Prevention ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov))
  - Funds net ([www.fundsnet.com](http://www.fundsnet.com))
- The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation was selected for funding of the Program

# METHODS

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- Sources Used for Needs Assessment
  - Primary resources were gathered from:
    - Alzheimer's Association
    - Extensive review of research/literature
- Projected Budget Range and Categories
  - The projected program cost is \$53,850 for a seven week adaptive exercise program.
- Personnel Cost:
  - Total=\$50,250
- Direct Program Cost :
  - Total=\$3,600
- In-Direct Program Cost:
  - \$0 All Facilities Services In-Kind from the Alzheimer's Association Southland Chapter

# GRANT PROPOSAL

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- Program Summary & Description

- This program will equip people with early-stage Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers with education and exercise techniques that can be utilized as a behavioral and physical intervention to relieve symptoms associated with the disease.
- The program will reduce caregiver burden by presenting adaptive physical exercise as a behavioral management technique/strategy education.

- Population Served

- The program aims to serve people diagnosed with early-stage Alzheimer's disease.
- The program will serve people 55 years and older.

- Sustainability

- The program will sustain for seven weeks as a trial run.
- The group director will continue to check in with participants as a care consultant.
- Check-ins will conclude if exercise has in fact, been an effective behavioral management tool and slowed the process of deterioration Person with the disease. When this data is gathered the program can be proposed as a longer more substantial program.

# GRANT PROPOSAL

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- Program Objectives

- Objective 1: To increase knowledge of the PWD and caregiver on the ongoing benefits of exercise when living with Alzheimer's disease.
- Objective 2: PWD will increase physical endurance by implementing various types of exercise for 30 minutes once a week with group and 2-3 times independently.
- Objective 3: Caregiver will increase use of physical exercise as a behavioral intervention when PWD becomes irritable, restless, anxious or agitated in order to improve mood, brighten affect or decrease agitation.

- Program Evaluation

- The program director will measure success through a survey of improved physical fitness abilities of the participants.
- The measurement tool that will identify improvements of the participants and evaluate the success of the program will be an open-ended Likert scale post-test survey conducted by the MSW.
- The evaluation will be distributed during the last class after the check-in. There will be two evaluations, one for the PWD and another for the caregiver.

# LESSONS LEARNED & IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK

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- Needs Assessment
  - The author found a lack of exercise opportunities and programs offered to the mid-city Los Angeles Alzheimer's population.
- Grant Writing Process
  - The grant writing process was a challenging yet, rewarding task that identified the needs and issues associated with Alzheimer's disease.
- Social Work Implications
  - Due to few advancements in medical treatment for Alzheimer's disease, social workers make up the majority of practitioners providing the Alzheimer's population with supportive treatment.
  - The role requires commitment, passion and empathy of the social worker

# References

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Alzheimer's Association (2014), 2014 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures. *Alzheimer's & Dementia*. 10(2), 1-75.

Fernando, M.S., & Ince, P.G. (2004). MRC cognitive functioning and ageing neuropathology study group: Vascular pathologies and cognition in a population-Based cohort of elderly people. *J Neurol Sci*. 163(18), 2219-2229.

National Association of Social Workers. (2013). Code of ethics of National Association of Social worker. Retrieved from: <https://www.socialworkers.org/code.asp>.