



Office for the Study of Aging
Arnold School of Public Health
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Dear Prospective Volunteer:

The Office for the Study of Aging (OSA), housed in the Arnold School of Public Health at the University of South Carolina, is committed to advancing research and education in aging issues. In the coming decades, older adults will reach record numbers in our state and nation. Many of those individuals will face the risks of age-related disease, frailty, and dependence. This growing population presents unique opportunities and challenges in both healthcare and long-term care.

It is estimated over 50 million people worldwide are living with dementia, including over 6 million in the United States. This number is projected to rise to nearly 13 million in the USA and 152 million globally by 2050. The [South Carolina Alzheimer's Disease Registry](#) (2022) reports that 11% of South Carolinians 65 or older and 53% 85 or older have Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD).

Although much research has been conducted on the cause and cure of ADRD, little information is available about hands-on care. [Dementia Dialogues®](#) provides the most current and practical information about how to care for people with dementia. This 5-module, evidence-informed, nationally registered, intervention training course is designed to educate community members and caregivers for persons who exhibit signs and symptoms of ADRD, free of charge. Since 2011, over 21,000 individuals have been trained in at least one module and over 10,000 individuals have completed the entire course.

The OSA is seeking volunteers to teach the Dementia Dialogues® program to the public. If you are interested in becoming a Certified Dementia Dialogues® Instructor, please read the volunteer requirements and complete the enclosed application. Applications may be mailed or e-mailed to the OSA.

If you have any questions regarding the application process, please contact the OSA at OSA@sc.edu. We look forward to welcoming you as one of our newest volunteers.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

Megan Byers

Megan Byers, LMSW
Co-Director
Office for the Study of Aging
Arnold School of Public Health
University of South Carolina

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

for Dementia Dialogues Certified Instructors

Minimum Age: 21

Number of Hours Required:

Certified Dementia Dialogues® Instructors (hereon referred to as “volunteer”) are expected to teach all 5-modules per calendar year, at a minimum. However, the quantity or number of hours may be subject to change depending on the needs of the Office for the Study of Aging (OSA) and the volunteer.

Orientation and Training:

Once the application is submitted and approved by the OSA, the prospective volunteer must enroll in the required *Train-the-Trainer* course. Training topics include a general overview of the program, review of the curriculum, best practices for delivering the material, and expectations. The training course is offered in-person or as an interactive webinar. Upon completion of the *Train-the-Trainer*, the volunteer will receive a certificate of completion and officially become a Certified Dementia Dialogues® Instructor.

Attendance:

Volunteers are required to attend the *Train-the-Trainer* course and are expected to attend an annual meeting hosted by the OSA or program designee to remain an active volunteer. The annual meeting includes important updates regarding the OSA and the Dementia Dialogues® program, such as curriculum revisions and overall program changes. Annual meetings will be offered as a webinar, and a recording shared on the instructor website.

Evaluation:

All volunteers should demonstrate a good understanding of the program curriculum. The OSA may schedule monitoring reviews to ensure volunteers are maintaining the program’s fidelity, administering the tools appropriately, exhibiting competency of the material, and utilizing effective presentation and communication skills.

Communication:

Volunteers are expected to maintain ongoing communication with the OSA or program designee and to provide updated information, as appropriate, such as contact information. The OSA maintains the authority to withdraw a volunteer’s application approval at any time based on the volunteer’s inability to adhere to the program’s requirements and expectations.