

Responding to Alzheimer's Disease:

Techniques for Law Enforcement and First Responder Interactions with Persons with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias

Alzheimer's disease is a community problem, especially when a person with Alzheimer's disease is missing. Searches are exhaustive, expensive, and not always successful. As the population of persons with Alzheimer's grows, the need for law enforcement intervention, to assist this vulnerable population and their caregivers, is also expected to increase dramatically.

In partnership with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, and the U.S. Department of Justice, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) launched its Alzheimer's Initiatives program with the goal to enhance the capacity of law enforcement to respond to missing persons with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

This discussion guide is designed to reinforce key information contained in the roll call training video and to assist officers in applying this knowledge within their local community.

The following questions are intended to create discussion after viewing each segment of the video.

SCENARIO ONE: Assessing the Driver

1. What did you notice about the driver's *appearance*?
2. What did you notice about how the driver *behaved*?
3. What questions did the officer ask?
4. When asked for his driver's license, what did the driver hand over instead?
5. What was the driver wearing on his wrist?
6. What actions did the officer take?
7. Why is it important to write a citation for a driver suspected of having Alzheimer's disease?
8. In a traffic stop, how can you decipher between someone who is intoxicated/drug induced or has Alzheimer's disease and/or dementia?

For resources and more information about the signs of Alzheimer's disease, please visit the Alzheimer's Association website at alz.org or call 800.272.3900

SCENARIO TWO: Elderly Woman Missing on Foot

1. How was the interview with the caretakers conducted?
2. What questions were asked?
3. What would you do first? (ex. Initial search locations? Who would you call? What resources might you bring in?)
4. How would you structure the search taking into account what you've learned about the grandmother (and her caregivers)?
5. Why do you think a person with Alzheimer's disease would avoid rescuers?
6. What are some obstacles you need to consider when searching for a missing person with Alzheimer's disease?
7. Once the grandmother was located, what type of follow up could an officer take to prevent this from happening again? Does your agency do any follow-up reporting of these types of incidents to other agencies?

SCENARIO THREE: Elderly Man Missing in Car

1. What are some of the dangers if someone with Alzheimer's disease goes missing in a car versus on foot?
2. What questions did the officer ask the caregiver?
3. What are some health conditions, other than an Alzheimer's disease or dementia diagnosis, that may be of concern?
4. What kind of state and local resources can be used to find someone, who went missing in a vehicle?
5. What indicators were there that the man in the car might have Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia?
6. What actions did the officer take?
7. What advice would you give the caregiver to prevent this type of incident from happening again?

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