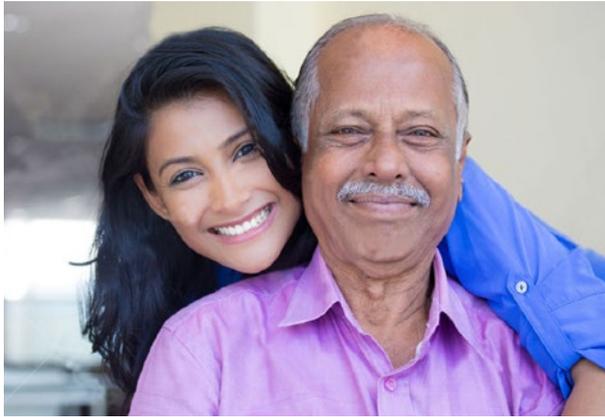


# Empowering caregivers



- 1) A caregiver refers to an unpaid individual such as family member, friend or neighbor, who are involved in assisting a family with day-to-day activities or medical task.
- 2) Based on Alzheimer's Association (2016), approximately 60% of Alzheimer's and dementia caregivers reported high level of emotional stress while delivering care and around 40% of them suffered from depression.
- 3) Taking care of a person with Alzheimer's can have high physical, emotional, and financial expenses. The everyday care, changes in family roles, and choices about situation in a care facility can be troublesome. It is a full time commitment.
- 4) Things to look out for while caring for the patient:
  - Behavior changes: agitation, delusions, aggression etc.
  - Everyday care: bathing, grooming, healthy eating etc.
  - Communication: Decline of understanding and responding.
  - Safety: Home safety, driving safety etc.
  - Legal and financial issues.
  - Middle and Late stage care: End of life care.

## Alzheimer's Disease Foundation Malaysia (ADFM)

Alzheimer's Disease Foundation Malaysia (ADFM) is a non-profit organization formed in 1997 with the objective of helping people with dementia and their caregivers in the country. ADFM supports a wide network of support groups throughout Malaysia to empower them to promote and offer care and support for people with dementia and their carers. ADFM's vision is an improved quality of life for people with dementia and their families in the country. Besides that, ADFM plays the role of promoting greater awareness of dementia, besides advocating for the dementia community in Malaysia.

For more information please visit:  
[www.adfm.org.my](http://www.adfm.org.my)

## IMU Cares

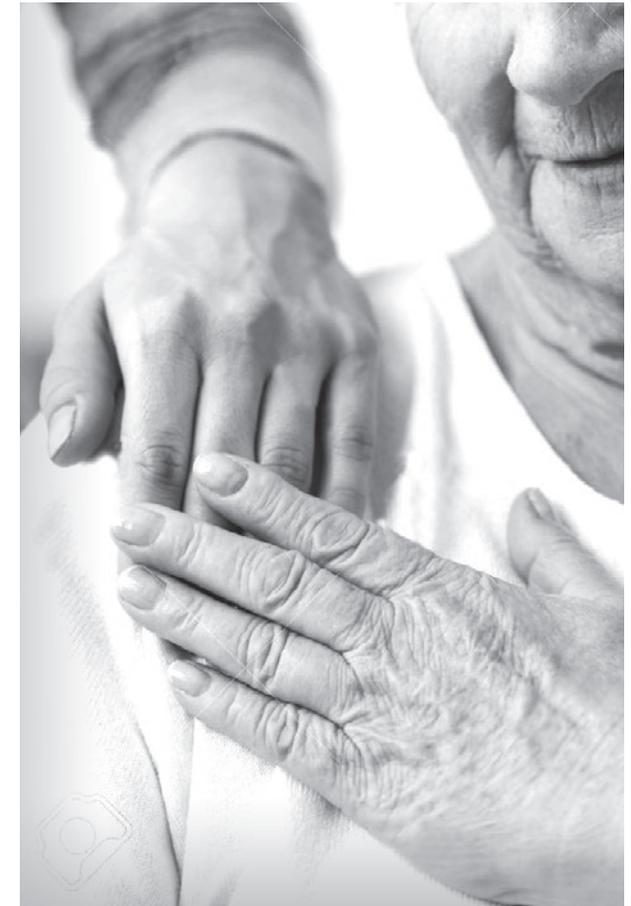
The philosophy of the IMU Cares programme is focused on making specific elements of the IMU Vision into reality. These include helping to create "a community of scholars and professionals committed to serving society, promoting the development of students to reach their true potential in becoming competent, ethical, caring and inquiring citizens and visionary leaders".

For more information please visit:  
[www.imu.edu.my/imucares](http://www.imu.edu.my/imucares)

Joint collaboration:



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# Empowering Caregivers



Serving the Community

5) Dealing with a loved one suffering from Alzheimer's is a challenging task and as a caregiver you might feel distress, you may be busy caring for the person with AD and don't take time to think about your emotional health. But, you need to. Caring for a person with AD takes a lot of time and effort. Your job as caregiver can become even harder when the person you're caring for gets angry with you, hurts your feelings, or forgets who you are. Sometimes, you may feel really discouraged, sad, lonely, frustrated, confused, or angry. These feelings are normal.

6) Taking care of yourself:

- Ask for help when you need it.
- Join a caregiver's support group.
- Take breaks each day.
- Spend time with friends.
- Keep up with your hobbies and interests.
- Eat Healthy foods.
- See your doctor on a regular basis.
- Get exercise as often as you can.
- Keep your health, legal and financial info. up-to-date.

7) Resilience training - Resilience, the ability to cope with pressure, underpins safe, high-quality, person-centered care and support. The core characteristics of this training are solving problems, leadership, spirituality and self-efficacy.



## Improving Alzheimer's Disease Patient's Quality of Life

Each person has a unique standard of what has value and what gives quality to life.

1) Definition: Dementia is a type of disease where the patient suffering from the problem experiences loss of mental ability and gradual death of brain cells. Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia which is caused by the death of brain cells, it is a neurodegenerative disease.

2) Each person's definition of quality of life may include different factors such as:

- The ability to think, make decisions and have control in one's daily life.
- Physical and mental health.
- Living arrangements.
- Social relationships.
- Religious beliefs and spirituality.
- Cultural values.
- A sense of community.
- Financial and economic circumstances.

3) People with Alzheimer's disease need to be treated with respect, compassion, dignity, and concern for their privacy and safety. People with mild to moderate symptoms may need support in finding opportunities to enhance their quality of life. As the disease progresses, preserving the quality of life of the person with the disease will require appropriate social and physical environments.



### For people who are diagnosed with AD

The disease, however, does not remove your ability to appreciate, respond to and experience feelings such as anger, fear, joy, love or sadness.

While your symptoms are mild to moderate, you will likely know what gives you pleasure and contributes to your sense of well-being. You might like to seek help to adapt to changing abilities and participate in meaningful activities. Remember that once you can no longer make choices or decisions, caregivers, family members or health-care providers will need to make decisions for you, so it is important to talk to them and let them know your wishes.

Aspects to focus on:

- Seeking help: early diagnosis leads to a higher chance of slowing down the disease through treatment.
- Active mental activity: engaging in playing games, puzzles, reading etc. to keep their mental abilities but extra pressure should not be added as this could stress out the patient even more.
- Good daily routine: consistent daily routine with least amount of changes.
- Quality caregivers: training the caregivers and preparing them emotionally is important as the environment around the patient has a strong influence.