

Executive Summary: What Connects Us~Ce qui nous lie

What You Need to Know

The What Connects Us~Ce qui nous lie program was an intersectoral initiative that united healthcare, community organizations, government, media, and academia to enhance the quality of life for people living with dementia, their care partners, and the broader community. Social and cultural activities (delivered virtually and in-person) created meaningful connections, and addressed stigma to promote a sense of belonging and social inclusion. The heart of the initiative lay in its collaborative approach, which emphasized listening to community needs and tailoring interventions to enhance engagement and quality of life.

Program Goals

- Improve the quality of life for people living with dementia and their care partners.
- Establish a comprehensive network of resources to support individuals living with dementia and foster connection.
- Enrich social and cultural environments by leveraging partnerships across arts, mental health, academia, and community sectors.

Achievements and Impact

From 2019 to 2023, the program offered social and cultural activities like creative dance, laughter yoga, and museum and art therapy. Virtual and in-person events, such as film screenings and discussions, helped to reduce stigma surrounding dementia and promote inclusion and awareness.

The initiative established the Community Care Network to reduce social isolation through volunteer-driven phone calls and created a virtual map of resources for individuals living with dementia and their care partners. Additionally, it built an in-house library of personal narratives and developed publications and presentations to share insights gained through the initiative.

Key Outcomes

- Improved attitudes toward dementia among participants.
- Reduced feelings of loneliness and enhanced quality of life for people living with dementia and care partners.

Lessons Learned

- Building sustainable partnerships requires a collaborative, relationship-focused approach that centers on listening to community needs.
- Emerging research approaches are most effective when they emphasize first-person perspectives and experiences.
- It is essential to invest time in maintaining relationships to sustain project momentum, as staff turnover in partner organizations can be a challenge.

Why It Matters

What Connects Us~Ce qui nous lie demonstrates how collaboration and creativity can improve the lives of people living with dementia and their care partners. By connecting diverse sectors and delivering meaningful activities, this initiative highlights the importance of fostering connection, reducing stigma, and promoting inclusion in communities.

Visit the website to learn more:

- [What Connects Us~Ce qui nous lie](#)
- Browse other community-based dementia initiatives in the [Dementia Interventions Playbook](#).