

6.3.2 QUICK START GUIDE (FIRST 60–90 DAYS)

This fillable checklist helps communities track progress when launching a dementia support group. Each section includes the primary goal and helpful tips to guide implementation.

DAYS 1–30: EXPLORE & PREPARE

Primary Goal: Confirm interest and lay a strong foundation for the support group.

- ☐ Identify a lead organization, staff member, or community champion
- ☐ Talk with caregivers or community members to gauge interest and needs
- ☐ Decide which type of support group to start (caregiver, early-stage, memory café)
- ☐ Identify potential facilitators (volunteer, peer, staff, or external)
- ☐ Decide on meeting format (in-person, virtual, or hybrid)
- ☐ Identify possible meeting locations or technology platforms
- ☐ Compile a short list of trusted dementia-related resources

Helpful Tip: A group can begin with as few as 3–5 participants. Trust and consistency matter more than size.

DAYS 31–60: DESIGN & LAUNCH

Primary Goal: Finalize structure and hold initial meetings.

- ☐ Confirm meeting schedule, frequency, and length
- ☐ Invite participants and confirm attendance
- ☐ Prepare draft ground rules for the first meeting
- ☐ Develop a simple meeting agenda focused on check-ins and sharing
- ☐ Hold the first support group meeting
- ☐ Collect informal feedback from participants

Helpful Tip: Early meetings should focus on relationship-building and shared experience rather than education or problem-solving.

DAYS 61–90: STABILIZE & STRENGTHEN

Primary Goal: Refine the group and plan for sustainability.

- ☐ Hold at least two additional meetings
- ☐ Finalize group-developed ground rules
- ☐ Adjust facilitation, structure, or format based on feedback
- ☐ Share additional resources based on participant needs
- ☐ Decide whether the group will remain open or closed
- ☐ Confirm next meeting dates and facilitation plans

Helpful Tip: Groups evolve over time. Revisit decisions regularly and adapt to participant needs.

AFTER 90 DAYS: SUSTAIN & GROW (OPTIONAL)

Primary Goal: Maintain momentum and deepen community impact.

- ☐ Check in with participants about ongoing needs
- ☐ Rotate or support facilitators as needed
- ☐ Strengthen connections to local dementia and caregiver resources
- ☐ Share successes with partners or community leaders
- ☐ Consider expanding to additional groups or formats

Helpful Tip: Sustainability often depends on shared leadership and strong community partnerships.