Dementia Friendly Manhattan:
An Initiative of the Flint Hills Wellness Coalition

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KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY | Master of Public Health Interdisciplinary Program

FLINT HILLS WELLNESS COALITION

The *What, Why,* and *How* of Dementia Friendly Communities

What:

Dementia Friendly Communities:

Areas where multiple sectors of a community are taking action to stay informed, safe, and respectful of individuals with dementia as well as their care partners to provide supportive options that foster their independence and quality of life.[1]

There are currently 39 States in the U.S. with dementia friendly communities, but Kansas is not one of them. The Flint Hills Wellness Coalition (FHWC) has stepped up to champion the initiative and work toward making Manhattan the first dementia friendly community in the State of Kansas. Having begun in March 2021, Manhattan is now in the "Engage" phase of becoming dementia friendly.

Dementia friendly communities involve all sectors of a community taking actions such as training employees to recognize signs of dementia and responding appropriately, providing support for caregivers through educational and respite services, and ensuring access to early diagnosis and post-diagnosis guidance and support.

Learning Objectives:

1. Discuss impacts of dementia on individuals and communities
2. Describe the ways in which dementia friendly communities provide a public health solution
3. Understand the phases involved in a community becoming more dementia friendly
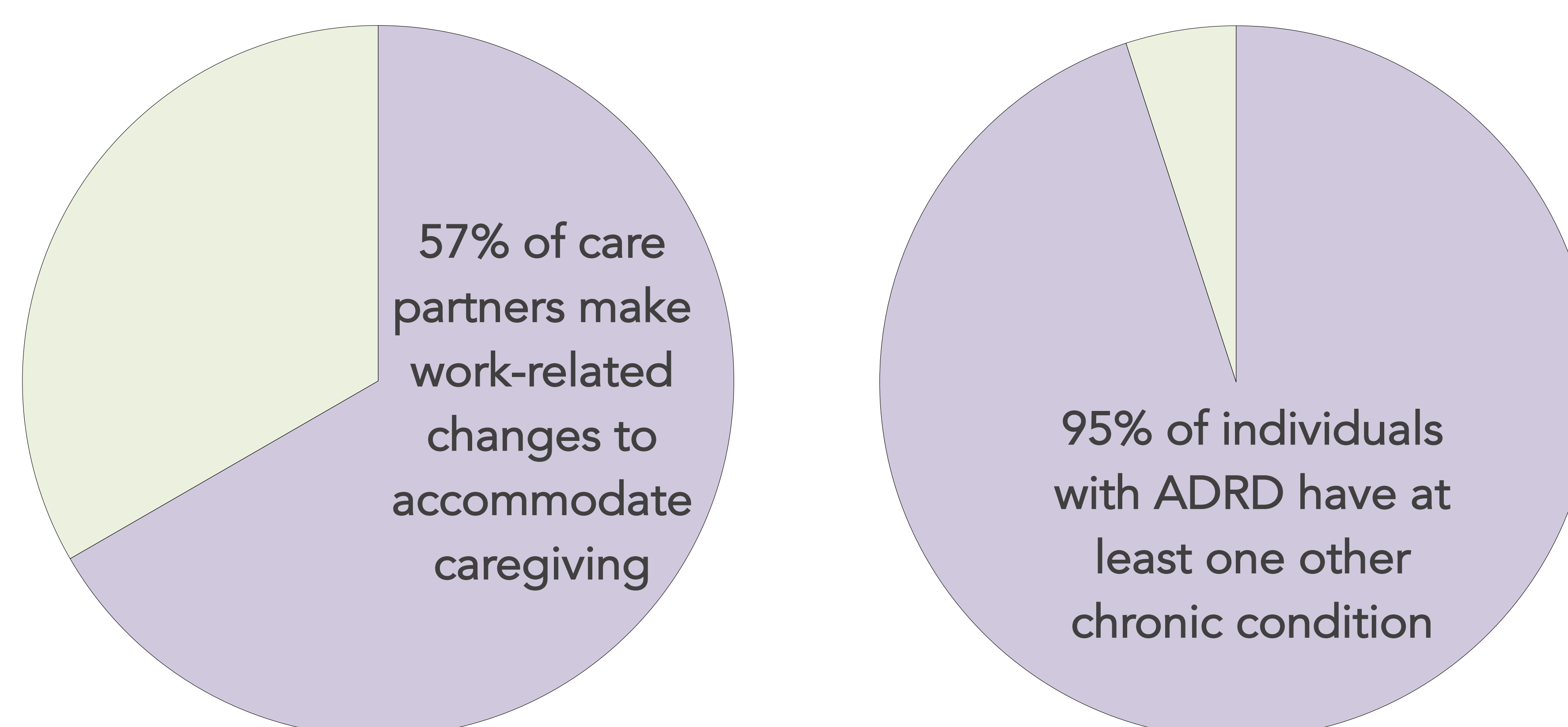
Why:

Alzheimer's Disease has been described as "the most under-recognized threat to public health in the 21st century."[3] An online survey conducted in April 2021 (n=193) suggested that the Riley County community is in support of the Dementia Friendly Manhattan initiative (99% in favor or unsure), but only 17% were aware of the concept of dementia friendly communities.
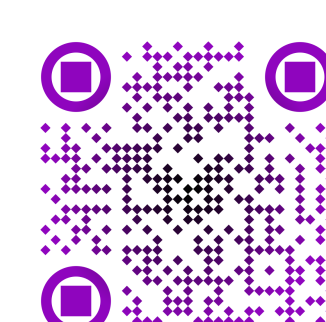
In Kansas:

- An estimated 805 individuals with Alzheimer's Disease or related dementia (ADRD) in Riley County[4]
- An estimated 1,800 unpaid care partners in Riley County[4]
- An estimated value of $2.3 million of unpaid care in the state of Kansas[5]

In the United States[5]:

57% of care partners make work-related changes to accommodate caregiving

95% of individuals with ADRD have at least one other chronic condition

$244 billion

Economic value of caregiving in 2019

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How:

Convene	• Build an action team of community members across sectors
Engage	• Conduct community assessment survey • Identify strengths and gaps within services in our community
Analyze	• Identify measurable dementia-friendly priorities for action based on results of community assessment
Act	• Share results of community assessment with stakeholders • Create and implement community action plan of dementia-friendly efforts across sectors
Evaluate	• Assess and adjust action plan • Monitor and evaluate progress on goals and communicate findings to stakeholders

Progress to Date:

Conducted initial community interest survey among Riley County residents	March 2021
Analyzed data and communicated results with stakeholders	April 2021
Held informational sessions with Riley County Seniors' Services Center and Meadowlark Hills	April – June 2021
Developed Community Assessment Plan to identify current strengths and gaps	Aug. – Sep. 2021

References:

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4. U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Riley County, Kansas. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/rileycountykansas
5. Alzheimer's Association. (2020). 2020 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures. *Alzheimer's & Dementia, 16*(3), 391–460. https://doi.org/10.1002/alz.12068

Contact:

To learn more about the Flint Hills Wellness Coalition's Dementia Friendly Manhattan initiative or find out how your organization can be involved or take action, please contact Anna Biggins (abiggins15@ksu.edu).

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