

## **DEMENTIA SCRIPT**

Introduce yourself and any visitors. Explain that you are visiting to see how the older adult is doing.

Ask the older adult (or family member if the older adult is unable to respond) if he/she has been having any problems with memory or other functioning. If so, how long has it been going on? Is it getting worse? What kinds of memory problems does the older adult or family member notice? Trouble remembering people's names? Trouble recognizing family members? Forgetting words? Forgetting where he/she is or is going?

Is the older adult still able to care for herself/himself? What kinds of things does he/she need help with?

Has the family member noticed any changes in personality or behavior?

Is he/she being followed for any medical problems? Taking any medications?

Give the SIDA exam. Based on the results, and in the context of the history you obtained, do you think the person has dementia? Is it mild, moderate, or severe? (See About Dementia)

Discuss ways for the family to support the older adult. Try to keep the older adult with mild to moderate dementia as involved with the family and community as possible. Discuss how to keep the older adult with moderate or severe dementia safe. Discuss how the caregiver is doing a difficult job, and that it's important to take care of herself/himself. Discuss possibilities for caregiver support, including follow-up visits, teaching about dementia, or group meetings.