

BECOME AN ADVOCACY VOLUNTEER



Our advocacy volunteers work with their elected officials at the local, state and federal level to:

- Cultivate relationships
- Educate them about Alzheimer's disease
- Engage them in supporting the Alzheimer's Association's public policy priorities

Advocacy volunteers work with other local volunteers and Association staff to strategize, plan, organize and participate in a wide range of activities to educate and engage their elected representatives, including:

- Meeting with elected officials
- Raising awareness through local media
- Sparking social media conversations
- Coordinating events and volunteers
- Reaching out to partner organizations

Do you have a personal relationship to Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia, and a passion for improving research, care and support for others affected by this disease?

If so, please consider volunteering to help us engage your elected officials in the movement to end Alzheimer's disease.

Conquering Alzheimer's disease is as much a matter of public policy as scientific discovery.

The Alzheimer's Association is leading the fight to end Alzheimer's by advocating for public policies to increase the federal investment in research and improve care and support for people with the disease and their families.

By educating and engaging your elected representatives on Alzheimer's, YOU can save lives.

No prior policy experience is required, and we will give you all the information, training and support you need to be a great advocate!

The time commitment can be small but the rewards can be huge!

To learn more about opportunities for advocacy volunteers in your area, please contact Mary Suarez, msuarez@alz.org, 408.372.9901

Our public policy advocacy program has a proven track record of success.

- **Accelerating research.** Thanks to the relentless efforts of Alzheimer's advocacy volunteers in all 50 states, the federal government has more than doubled its funding for Alzheimer's research since 2012. No disease has been singled out by Congress for increases this way since HIV/AIDS funding more than 20 years ago. Federal funding for Alzheimer's research at the NIH now stands at \$1.4 billion and we are working hard to raise it by another \$414 million in FY18.



- **Improving care & support.** Individuals with Alzheimer's need care planning services to ensure high quality medical care and better health outcomes. Alzheimer's Association advocates led the way on the HOPE for Alzheimer's Act to provide Medicare coverage for comprehensive care planning services for those living with Alzheimer's and other cognitive impairments. Through grassroots advocacy, we built overwhelming support for the legislation in Congress and, on January 1, 2017, Medicare began paying for cognitive and functional assessments and care planning.

Our current public policy priorities:

- **Research funding:** The path to a world without Alzheimer's is research, and to move down that path as quickly as possible, we need the federal government to be fully invested in the fight. Thanks to the work of our advocacy volunteers, the federal government has committed to a goal to prevent and effectively treat Alzheimer's disease by 2025. But achieving this goal requires quickly ramping up research funding at a scale that only the federal government can provide. We are seeking an increase of \$414 million for federal funding of Alzheimer's research in Fiscal Year 2018.
- **Palliative care,** which focuses on managing and easing symptoms, reducing pain and distress, and increasing comfort – can improve both the quality of care and quality of life for those with advanced dementia. The Palliative Care and Hospice Education & Training Act (PCHETA) would ensure an adequate, well-trained palliative care workforce through workforce training, education and awareness, and enhanced research. We are seeking Congressional passage of PCHETA as a top priority.
- **State policy is also vital to improving care and support for individuals living with Alzheimer's and their families.** State officials set standards for dementia care and training of health providers and professional caregivers, and determine the quality, availability and affordability of long-term services and supports such as adult day care, in-home care, respite care and financial aid.
- **Public health:** To achieve meaningful progress against Alzheimer's disease, it must be considered and addressed as a public health crisis. The tools of public health give us the ability to intervene and improve the quality of life for those with the disease and their caregivers. We work with state and local policymakers and public health officials to call for surveillance of cognitive impairment and caregiving; promotion of healthy lifestyles that may improve or maintain cognitive function; and expanded efforts at early detection.

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