

# Support Hawaii's Families Living With Alzheimer's

2016 Policy Priorities

alz.org/hawaii

## Growing Public Health Crisis

Alzheimer's disease is a growing public health crisis, in Hawaii and across the nation.

- It is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States and affects **26,000 Hawaii residents**.
- **By the year 2025**, 35,000 Hawaii residents will be living with Alzheimer's disease, **an increase of 35%**.
- According to the **2011 Cognitive Module of the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)**, in Hawaii 9% of those aged 60 and older are experiencing increased confusion or memory loss and 38% said it interfered with their daily life. Of those reporting memory issues, 34% live alone and **88% have not discussed their symptoms with a health care provider**.
- The average per-person Medicaid spending across the nation for seniors with Alzheimer's is 19 times more than for seniors without Alzheimer's and there are nearly **65,000 family caregivers** in Hawaii providing **74 million hours of unpaid cared** for their loved ones living with Alzheimer's disease, valued at more than **\$901 million**.
- A study released by the *New England Journal of Medicine* reports that **Alzheimer's disease is now the most expensive disease in America**, surpassing both cancer and heart disease, and the costs are expected to skyrocket.
- It is the only cause of death among the top 10 in America without a way to prevent it, cure it or even slow its progression.

## WHAT Can Hawaii's Legislators Do?

Given the sweeping economic, social, and psychological impact Alzheimer's disease has on Hawaii, the state needs a proactive response to this issue.

Legislators can implement the following recommendations provided in Hawaii's State Alzheimer's Disease Plan:

- 1.) **Support the Alzheimer's disease and related dementia services coordinator position. Funding request: \$70,000**
  - This position is housed within the Executive Office on Aging and is responsible for working with key stakeholders to implement the recommendations in Hawaii 2025: State Plan on Alzheimer Disease and Related Dementias.
- 2.) **Support an Alzheimer's disease and related dementias public awareness campaign. Funding request: \$200,000**
  - A public awareness campaign focused solely on Alzheimer's disease and related dementias can reduce stigma and increase early and accurate diagnosis by educating the public about risk factors, the 10 warning signs, brain health, difficult behaviors and the importance of advance care planning and caregiver coping strategies.

## Support the Implementation of Hawaii's State Alzheimer's Disease Plan

The Hawaii Executive Office on Aging, in partnership with the Alzheimer's Association, Aloha Chapter, formed a special Task Force to develop a State Plan on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD).

To address this public health issue locally, the State Task Force assessed the current and future impact on the residents of Hawaii. The final report, Hawaii 2025: State Plan on Alzheimer Disease and Related Dementias, was presented to Hawaii's Legislature in 2014. This document is a blueprint that was created to improve the way individuals with ADRD and their families will live in and be served by their communities. The plan is the culmination of recommendations and discussions from (1) seven work groups of the Hawaii ADRD Task Force, (2) caregiver and key informant surveys conducted in Hawaii, (3) interviews with Hawaii experts and leaders, and (4) the recommendations from the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease, which was released in May, 2012. The Hawaii plan is aligned with the National Plan goals and strategies.

***Hawaii 2025: State Plan on Alzheimer Disease and Related Dementias* was published, with the following GOALS:**

1. Prevent and Effectively Treat Alzheimer's Disease by 2025.
2. Enhance Care Quality and Efficiency.
3. Expand Supports for People with Alzheimer's Disease and Their Families.
4. Enhance Public Awareness and Engagement.
5. Improve Data to Track Progress.

***To download a copy of the Hawaii State Plan on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias, visit [alz.org/stateplans](http://alz.org/stateplans).***

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*The Alzheimer's Association provides vital services and support to individuals, caregivers and families across Hawaii.*