

alzheimer's  association®

**a call to states:
make alzheimer's
a policy priority**



the compassion to care, the leadership to conquer®

Alzheimer's is a public health crisis.

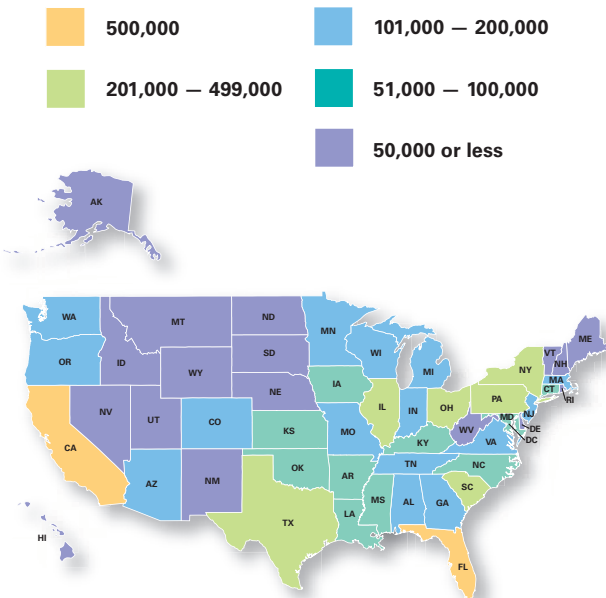
One in eight Americans aged 65 and older have Alzheimer's disease — and another American develops Alzheimer's every 68 seconds. With the baby boomers now having begun to reach the age at greater risk for Alzheimer's, this number is expected to dramatically escalate in the future. By 2050, someone will develop Alzheimer's every 33 seconds.

Alzheimer's is a national crisis, affecting Americans across all walks of life and across all regions of the country. State policymakers cannot ignore this devastating disease.

- In 2012, state and federal governments are expected to spend an estimated \$35.5 billion in Medicaid costs to care for people with Alzheimer's and other dementias.
- Medicaid costs of caring for people with Alzheimer's and other dementias are projected to increase nearly 400 percent, before inflation, by 2050.
- In 39 states in 2011, caregivers of people with Alzheimer's and other dementias provided unpaid care valued at more than \$1 billion. Unpaid caregiving in California, Florida, New York and Texas was valued at more than \$13 billion in each state.

Prepare your state for the future of Alzheimer's.

Estimated number of people with Alzheimer's by state in 2025



Hebert, LE; Scherr, PA; Bienias, JL; et al. "State-Specific projections through 2025 of Alzheimer's disease prevalence." *Neurology* 2004; 62:1645.

Source: Alzheimer's Association (www.alz.org)

For in-depth, state-specific information, see our *Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures* report at alz.org/facts.

State policymakers cannot ignore Alzheimer's.

Alzheimer's disease is the most under-recognized public health crisis of the 21st century. Today, an estimated 5.4 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease — the most common form of dementia — and that number will rise to as many as 16 million by 2050. While the number of deaths from heart disease, prostate cancer and stroke are declining, the number of deaths from Alzheimer's are rising.

To achieve meaningful progress, every state must tackle Alzheimer's not only as an aging issue, but also as a public health crisis. The disease steals a person's memories, judgment and independence. It robs spouses of lifetime companions and children of parents and grandparents. It destroys the security of families and depletes millions of dollars annually from state budgets.

Alzheimer's is a pivotal public health battle, and state governments stand on the front line. The Alzheimer's Association calls on state policymakers to take bold action to confront this epidemic.

Preserve Medicaid

Among individuals with Alzheimer's, 75 percent will be admitted to a nursing home by the age of 80 (compared to only 4 percent of the overall population). As a result, Medicaid is critical for many people with Alzheimer's. While Medicaid spending constitutes one of the largest items in most state budgets — and most states continue to face severe fiscal constraints — state policymakers must ensure that critical benefits are preserved.

action 1

Develop a comprehensive state government Alzheimer's disease plan.

Most states have a strategic plan to address cancer, diabetes or pandemic flu. States must be equally prepared for the projected 50 percent increase in Alzheimer's disease during the next 20 years. State Alzheimer's Disease Plans create the infrastructure and accountability necessary to confront the sweeping economic and social impact of this disease.

By bringing together essential stakeholders — such as state agency officials, legislators, care providers, family caregivers and people with Alzheimer's — the state planning process is able to identify critical issues, explore solutions and construct a roadmap to guide a state's development into a dementia-capable state.

Common recommendations include:

- Increasing public awareness and encouraging early diagnosis.
- Delivery of community-based and residential dementia care services in a cost-effective manner.
- Support for family caregivers.

Even in states with completed Alzheimer's Disease Plans, it is critical for policymakers to ensure that the plan's recommendations are translated into actual policies. Only then will the burden on state budgets and families be reduced.

action 2 **Adopt the Uniform Adult Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act (UAGPPJA).**

States must work to adopt policies on advance directives and care planning that reduce the complexity of end-of-life decision making, particularly with respect to the complicated adult guardianship issues that often occur when there is a failure to engage in end-of-life planning. One important action is to enact the budget-neutral Uniform Adult Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act (UAGPPJA), which establishes a framework for courts in different states to communicate about adult guardianship issues.

action 3 **Improve dementia training.**

People with Alzheimer’s deserve to receive quality care throughout the course of the disease — and they deserve to receive it from knowledgeable professionals. Ensuring that those with Alzheimer’s receive the best care means, at a minimum, that all individuals employed in the delivery of care in residential, home and adult day settings are properly trained in dementia care.

States must not only require dementia training for all involved in the delivery of care, they must also ensure that those providing care are capable of working with people with Alzheimer’s and other dementias. Historically, mandatory training laws have required a minimum number of hours of training, which has not always guaranteed competence. States must shift from an hours-of-training model to a model based on individuals achieving and demonstrating competency.

action 4 Increase surveillance through the BRFSS.

Obtaining a more definitive picture of Alzheimer's is essential to any successful strategy to combat the disease. Recent work by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) now enables states to collect data on the impact of Alzheimer's disease using the existing state Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey.

Two modules are available:

- The Cognitive Impairment Module — providing extensive demographic, geographic and socio-economic data regarding cognitive impairment.
- The Caregiver Module — providing data regarding characteristics of caregivers as well as the problems they face.

Including these modules in the state BRFSS will (1) provide the research, caregiving and public health communities a better understanding of people with cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's; and (2) identify opportunities for reducing the impact of this devastating disease. In addition, it will enable state and federal lawmakers to make better decisions in developing Alzheimer's-related policies.

Make an impact in the fight against Alzheimer's.

To learn more about how state policymakers can assist people with Alzheimer's, please visit alz.org/join_the_cause_state_legislation.asp.

To reach Alzheimer's policy experts in your state, please contact Randi.Chapman@alz.org.

For more information on constituent services of the Alzheimer's Association, such as our 24/7 Helpline, please visit alz.org.

The Alzheimer's Association is the world's leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health.

Alzheimer's Association
Public Policy Office
1212 New York Ave., NW, Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20005-6105

800.272.3900
alz.org

© 2012 Alzheimer's Association. All rights reserved.
This is an official publication of the Alzheimer's Association but may be distributed by unaffiliated organizations and individuals. Such distribution does not constitute an endorsement of these parties or their activities by the Alzheimer's Association.