

INCREASING FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND RELATED DEMENTIAS PROGRAMS

BACKGROUND

Alzheimer's disease is the biggest long-term public health crisis and the most expensive chronic disease in our nation. About 6.2 million people are living with Alzheimer's in the U.S. By 2050, 12.7 million Americans 65 and older will have Alzheimer's unless our nation finds effective treatments or a cure.

Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) can be emotionally and financially ruinous for people living with the disease, their caregivers and families, and society at large. **In 2021, the total national cost of caring for people living with Alzheimer's and other dementias is projected to reach \$355 billion.** This number does not include the estimated \$257 billion price of unpaid caregiving. Alzheimer's disease is also a crucial health equity issue. Blacks Americans are about twice as likely to have Alzheimer's or other dementias as White Americans, and Latinos are about one and one-half times more likely. In addition, 65 percent of people living with Alzheimer's are women.

Our nation must invest in programs that speed toward ending ADRD and help those living with the disease.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH ADRD RESEARCH

Much has been achieved in Alzheimer's research and there is reason for hope and optimism. For example, several different teams of NIH-supported scientists have reported advances in the development of blood-based tests that could enable rapid screening of research volunteers. Using a blood test to screen could reduce the number of research volunteers who undergo invasive spinal taps and expensive brain imaging with PET scans. NIH-supported studies of health disparities have identified risk factors that may influence the development of the disease. And NIH-funded research has deepened understanding of genetic risk factors for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

To ensure that the NIH has resources to achieve further discoveries and accelerate towards effective treatments and prevention, **Congress should increase funding for research by at least \$289 million – to \$3.4 billion – for FY22 to support Alzheimer's and dementia research.**

CDC'S ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND HEALTHY AGING PROGRAM (ADHAP)

The Alzheimer's Disease and Healthy Aging Program (ADHAP) is the only place within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that is dedicated specifically to promoting the health of older Americans across multiple chronic conditions and for addressing health equity challenges that share common risk. Increased funding will support the CDC's work to:

- Strengthen programs that reduce risk, promote health equity, and support populations with a high burden of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD).
- Build public health infrastructure as per the BOLD Act and Healthy Brain Initiative.
- Expand healthy aging work such as coordinating healthy aging efforts across the agency and implementing a public-private initiative to reduce dementia risk.
- Fund applied research and translation for public health practice.
- Support public health strategies for addressing the social determinants of health that contribute to disparities in healthy aging and brain health.

We urge Congress to triple funding for this crucial program to \$60 million.