COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE

alzheimer's association®

2020/2021 DEMENTIA INFORMATION & SUPPORT

alzheimer's association®
MICHIGAN CHAPTER

Alzheimer's disease can be overwhelming, but you are not alone. WE ARE HERE TO HELP.

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A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

Dear friend,

Whether you're a person living with dementia, a caregiver, family member or friend of someone living with dementia, COVID-19 no doubt has made your journey even more challenging this year. Here at the Alzheimer's Association Michigan Chapter, we've seen an increased need for the programs and services we provide and have adapted programming to reach residents across Michigan in virtual and telephonic formats. We remain here to help you navigate all areas of this devastating disease and hope this guide serves as a useful resource in linking you with the information you need.

Enclosed, you will find information about our programs and services, the early signs and symptoms of Alzheimer's and benefits of an early diagnosis, tips for caregiver self-care, promising research, volunteer opportunities, how to get involved with Alzheimer's advocacy, tips for legal and financial planning of an Alzheimer's diagnosis, fundraising events and much more! Our programs and events help raise awareness about Alzheimer's and dementia in communities across the state and aim to reduce the associated stigma.

Throughout this booklet, you will also see advertisements from our generous community partners. Thanks to their support of the Walk to End Alzheimer's, we can continue to provide our services across the state while helping to fund Alzheimer's research locally and around the world.

Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia®. Until that day comes, the Alzheimer's Association is here every step of the way to connect you and your family and friends to vital resources.

If you have questions or need assistance, don't hesitate to reach out to our 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900 or visit us online at **alz.org/gmc**. Together we can and will end Alzheimer's disease.

Jennifer D. Lepard

Jennifer Lepard, President & CEO

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

At the Alzheimer's Association, diversity, equity and inclusion are vital to our mission. The Association leads strategic initiatives to support diversity and a culture of inclusivity. These strategic initiatives also strengthen outreach to all populations, providing communities with resources and support to address the Alzheimer's crisis. By partnering with organizations locally and nationally to advance diversity and inclusion, the Association can broaden its reach in all communities. The Michigan Chapter employs staff across the state to aid diverse communities and individuals in their unique challenges and offers resources to these populations.

AROUND-THE-CLOCK ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE INFORMATION & SUPPORT

24/7 HELPLINE: 800.272.3900

We’re here day or night — whenever you need us.

The free Alzheimer’s Association® 24/7 Helpline allows people living with Alzheimer’s disease or dementia, caregivers, families and the public to:

- Speak confidentially with master-level care consultants for decision-making support, crisis assistance and education on issues families face every day.
- Learn about the signs of Alzheimer’s and other dementias.
- Find out about local programs and services.
- Get general information about medications and other treatment options and legal, financial, and care decisions.
- Receive help in their preferred language through our bilingual staff or translation service, which accommodates more than 200 languages.
- Access support through our TTY service (TTY: 866.403.3073) if assistance is required via a teletype device.

TAKE THE FIRST STEP TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT ALZHEIMER’S

Join us for Walk to End Alzheimer’s — a celebratory community event where you’ll join your friends, family, co-workers and community members to help raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer’s care, support and research.

» **START A TEAM** by becoming a Team Captain or join an existing team

» **FUNDRAISE** by asking others to join you using social media or holding fundraising events

» **EARN PRIZES** as you raise funds — $100 gets you a Walk T-shirt!

» **NETWORK** with other walkers and use our online tools to help make fundraising fun and easy

» **HELP MICHIGAN FAMILIES** when you fundraise! Your dollars go directly toward providing care, support, advocacy and research

FIND YOUR WALK TODAY AT ALZ.ORG/WALK

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alzheimer's association

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	G-2509 Flushing	232-8100
	1440 S. Linden Rd	230-9030
	1059 S. Ballenger	232-9115
FLUSHING	201 E. Main St	659-7520
GRAND BLANC	3029 E. Hill Rd	695-5923
	12500 Saginaw	695-4680
MT. MORRIS	11958 N. Saginaw	687-6440
SWARTZ CREEK	9015 Miller Rd	635-2997

CONNECT WITH US VIRTUALLY

It's easier than ever to connect with us virtually, whether online or by phone. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are offering our support groups, education programs, social engagement programs, care consultations and events virtually. Visit us at **alz.org/gmc/virtual**, connect on social media at **@alzmichigan** or call our free 24/7 Helpline at **800.272.3900** from the safety and comfort of your home. We'll "see" you soon!

Tips for dementia caregivers amid a pandemic

Alzheimer's and dementia caregivers who provide care at home should follow Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance and consider following these tips to keep their loved ones and themselves safe and healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic:

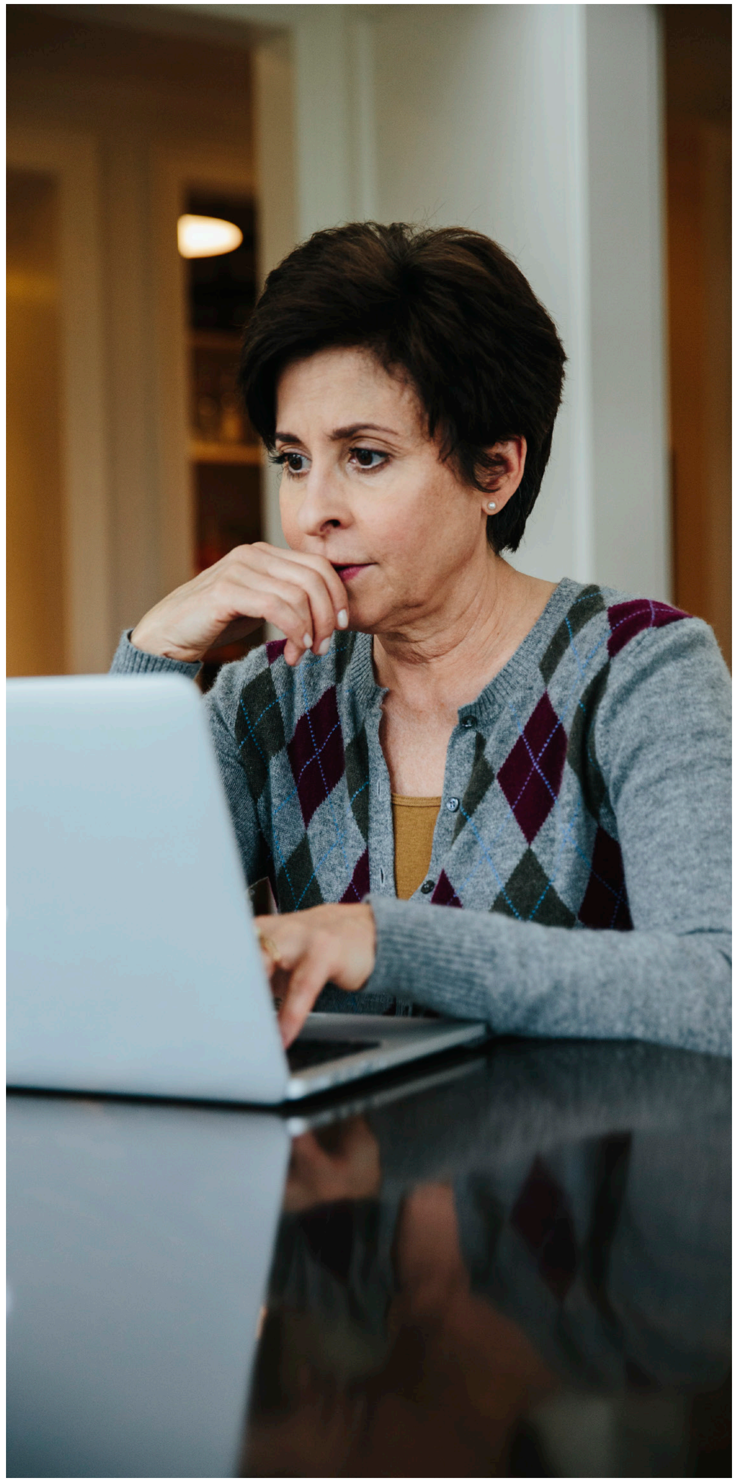
1. **Contact your health care provider if the person living with dementia shows rapidly increased confusion.** This is often the first symptom of illness in people living with Alzheimer's or another dementia, and it is recommended you call your health care provider. If the person is experiencing difficulty breathing or very high fever, they should be taken to an emergency room immediately.

2. **Provide extra and/or written reminders and support to remember important hygienic practices.** Quick ways to give extra support include placing signs in the bathroom and elsewhere to remind people with dementia to wash their hands with soap for 20 seconds, demonstrating thorough hand-washing and purchasing alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol as an alternative to hand-washing if the individual cannot get to a sink or wash their hands easily.

3. **Ask your pharmacist or doctor about filling prescriptions for a greater number of days.** This way, you can reduce trips to the pharmacy and your need to be outside of the home more than necessary.

4. **Think ahead and make alternative plans.** Exposure to the virus in shared spaces is becoming more common, so it is advised to plan ahead in the event of an outbreak at adult day care facilities, respite sites, etc. Additionally, it is a good idea to think about care management plans for the individual living with dementia in case the primary caregiver becomes sick.

For more caregiver tips, resources and support, visit alz.org/care.



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WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S
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MSUFCU employees at Lansing's 2015 Walk to End Alzheimer's

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Building Dreams Together

Get the help YOU NEED

The Alzheimer's Association facilitates clinical research, educates and offers support. Below, you can find the programs that best address your needs. You can also contact us if you would like us to arrange a program in your area.

Due to the ongoing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, all of our programs are offered virtually online or by phone at this time, until further notice.

EDUCATE

Knowing what to expect

24/7 Helpline: 800.272.3900
The Helpline, accessible in more than 200 languages, provides confidential support, education and referral services to individuals seeking information about Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

Education programs
Education programs are designed to provide families and the general community with valuable information about Alzheimer's disease and other related dementias. Topics include, but are not limited to, Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia; Effective Communication Strategies; and COVID-19 and Caregiving.

Dementia and Disabilities Supportive Services Program
The Dementia and Disabilities Supportive Services Program offers educational programming to agencies and individuals caring for people with developmental disabilities and dementia or those at risk for developing dementia.

Respite Care Assistance
The Respite Care Assistance Program provides financial assistance to caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia for procurement of respite services, including home health care, overnight respite and adult day services. Please call Helpline to see if Respite Care Assistance is available in your area.

ENGAGE

Connecting with others who understand

Support Groups
Support Groups are a safe, confidential place for caregivers, family and friends of individuals with Alzheimer's or another dementia to share practical information and discuss feelings, needs and concerns with people who understand.

Early-Stage Services
Early-Stage Services are designed specifically for individuals living with dementia in the early stages and their care partners. Programs include early-stage support groups and early-stage social engagement programs that provide social connections and facilitate understanding of the disease.

Bruce H. and Rosalie N. Rosen Community Connect Program
The Community Connect program is designed to provide meaningful social and recreational opportunities for people with dementia and their care partners through local arts and cultural outings. Programs may include musical experiences, museum and art gallery exhibits, and sporting events. Specific social engagement programs are also available for individuals living in the early stages of the disease.

Detroit Symphony Orchestra virtual recital for Bruce H. and Rosalie N. Rosen Community Connect program participants.

EMPOWER

Giving you the tools you need

Care Counseling Programs
The Care Counseling program provides care and support in navigating through the disease process. It includes a comprehensive assessment of needs, the creation of a person-centered plan of care and the coordination of appropriate resources.

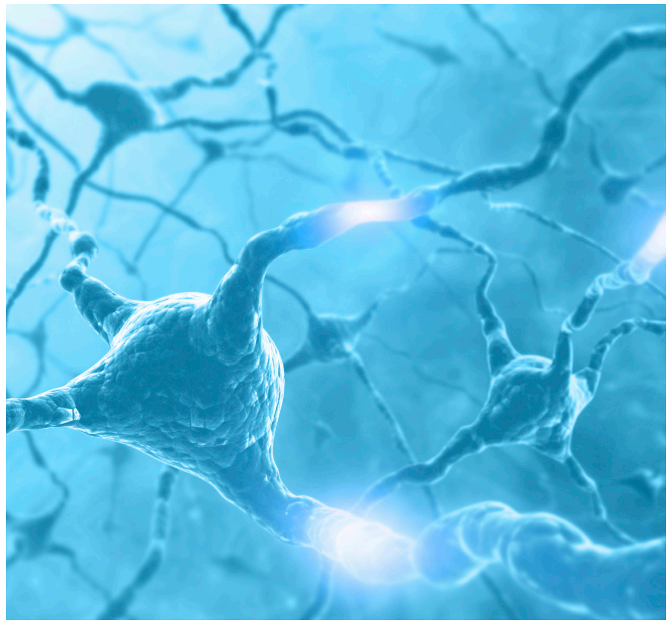
Volunteer Opportunities
Do you want to make a difference in the fight against Alzheimer's? Become a volunteer and help us reach every person affected by dementia. Whether you can spare a few hours a month or more, there are many opportunities to help. Volunteer areas include education, support groups, social engagement, advocacy, events, administrative support and more. Learn about how you can make a difference by visiting **volunteer.alz.org**.

While a small portion of our care and support programs are based on a sliding fee scale, most are free of charge.

COVID-19 Update: The health and safety of our constituents, volunteers and staff remain our driver as we address the COVID-19 outbreak and continue to pursue our mission, today and always. Our services are currently available by phone or online. Visit **alz.org/gmc/virtual** to learn more or call our 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900.

Highlights from the 2020
Alzheimer's Association International Conference

Research presented at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC) 2020 in July suggests that flu (influenza) and pneumonia vaccination after age 60, as well as lower early-life BMI, among other health factors, may be associated with a lower risk of Alzheimer's and other dementias.



At the conference, the Association announced the launch of a new international research study to globally track and understand the long-term impact of exposure to the novel coronavirus on the brain, including cognition, behavior and function. Scientists from more than 30 countries are eager to participate, and the World Health Organization is providing technical assistance as this important collaboration moves forward. To build a strong foundation for this research, the Alzheimer's Association will align with existing studies — such as the Framingham Heart Study — and clinicians from around the world on how the data is measured and collected. To better understand the impact of the virus on the brain, the Alzheimer's Association will consider cross-study collaborations.

Flu and Pneumonia Vaccination Tied to Lower Risk of Alzheimer's: New research suggests flu and pneumonia vaccination are associated with a reduced risk of Alzheimer's. Two studies of older adults found those who received either a flu or pneumonia vaccination were less likely to develop the disease. Those who received the flu vaccine more regularly had an even lower risk. For pneumonia vaccination, the largest risk reduction was observed in people who do not carry one of the known genetic risk factors for Alzheimer's — a variant of the TOMM40 gene. The reports provide some of the first large-scale studies investigating the relationship between vaccination and Alzheimer's risk, highlighting the potential of vaccination as an accessible intervention and supporting further research into the biological mechanisms underlying the observed protective effects of vaccination.

> **"The COVID-19 pandemic continues to create unanticipated challenges for people living with Alzheimer's and all dementia, their families and caregivers."**

Blood Test for Abnormal Brain Protein May Confirm Alzheimer's Disease Diagnosis: Several studies described advances in blood tests that may more easily and accurately detect Alzheimer's disease with greater certainty, and distinguish it from other degenerative brain disorders. The studies focused on biological markers that detect abnormal versions of the tau protein in blood or plasma, including a specific form of tau known as p-tau217 that seems to be the most specific to Alzheimer's. If the results are replicated and verified, this could be the first time that a diagnosis of Alzheimer's dementia, with this blood test, would be considered confirmatory — that is, not requiring autopsy examination, or both an amyloid and tau PET scan. Blood tests may offer a simpler and more accessible approach to improve diagnosis, monitor treatment and identify appropriate people for clinical trials.

COVID-19, Alzheimer's Research, Long-Term Care and the Brain: Experts from across the country discussed their experiences and viewpoints on evolving, provocative topics related to the impact of COVID-19 on Alzheimer's research, long-term care and the brain. The pandemic has further exposed the health differences that exist between racial and ethnic groups due to economic and social conditions. Many of these disparities are similarly apparent and well documented in Alzheimer's and other dementia. These conditions can isolate people from the resources needed to keep their families healthy and safe. "The COVID-19 pandemic continues to create unanticipated challenges for people living with Alzheimer's and all dementia, their families and caregivers. Long-term care settings are experiencing these challenges in particular," said Maria C. Carrillo, Ph.D., Alzheimer's Association chief science officer.

Early-Life Health Factors May Influence Alzheimer's and Dementia Risk: Three studies presented at AAIC 2020 identified several early-life factors that may influence late-life Alzheimer's risk, including cardiovascular health, BMI and quality of education.

- One study of more than 700 African Americans showed that high blood pressure and diabetes, or a combination of multiple heart health-related factors, are common in adolescence and are associated with worse late-life cognition.
- A second study of more than 5,100 older adults suggests that higher body mass index in early adulthood (age 20-49) is associated with higher late-life dementia risk. For women, dementia risk was 1.8 times higher among those who were overweight in early adulthood, and 2.5 times higher among those who were obese.
- A third study found that, in a diverse group of more than 2,400 people followed up to 21 years, higher quality early-life education was associated with better language and memory performance, and lower risk of late-life dementia..

Visit **alz.org/aaic** to view more highlights form the 2020 conference and learn more about AAIC 2021.

Collaborative Alzheimer's and dementia research in Michigan

Bruno Giordani, Ph.D., has long-known the strength of Michigan-based Alzheimer's and dementia research.

"We have some of the most knowledgeable, capable and creative minds here in Michigan," he said. "They are committed to dementia science and the idea of a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia. I'm proud to be a part of that," said Giordani, who is associate director of the Michigan Alzheimer's Disease Center, University of Michigan psychiatry department chief of psychology and a tenured professor in psychiatry, neurology, psychology and the School of Nursing.

The Michigan Alzheimer's Disease Center was established in 1984 in the department of neurology at Michigan Medicine and came to include the newly refunded Michigan Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (MADRC) in 2016 under the direction of Hank Paulson, M.D., with the goal of better understanding both Alzheimer's disease and the less common forms of the illness. It is funded by the National Institute on Aging (NIA), part of the U.S. National Institutes of Health.

> **"The only way forward in finding a prevention, treatment or cure for Alzheimer's and other dementia is through research and collaboration."**

As one of the 32 NIA Alzheimer's Disease Research Centers (ADRC) around the country, it is one of the nation's leading Alzheimer's disease and related disorders research centers and is a foremost leader in the area of underrepresented populations. Additionally, the Michigan ADRC is unique as a tri-university research center made up of the University of Michigan, Michigan State University and Wayne State University — the institutions that form Michigan's University Research Corridor, one of the nation's premier university innovation clusters.

"The MADRC is made up of a strong team of researchers from across the three universities," Giordani said. "It includes research cores with specialists in clinical evaluation and clinical trials; research on the latest imaging and biomarker discoveries; outreach, study recruitment and education teams; and investigators in neurochemistry and neuropathology."

Bruno Giordani, Ph.D. **Peter Lichtenberg, Ph.D.** **Irving Vega, Ph.D.**

As Michigan's Alzheimer's population continues to grow, the work of the overall MADRC is increasingly important, as is the work of researchers and institutions across the state. Today, 190,000 Michiganders age 65 and older live with Alzheimer's disease. By 2025, that number is expected to climb to 220,000.

The Alzheimer's Association works closely with the MADRC and its researchers, as well as with other groundbreaking innovators such as Peter A. Lichtenberg, Ph.D., at Wayne State University's Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute and the Institute of Gerontology, and Irving Vega, Ph.D., associate professor of translational neuroscience at Michigan State University, both leaders within the MADRC, as well.

At Wayne State, Lichtenberg said the university has a strong track record in community-engaged research.

"We focus on a lot of translational research so that what we learn can be employed in our communities and especially in Detroit," said Lichtenberg. "The leadership of MDC has done an amazing job of bringing dementia leaders together from the non-profit, clinical, advocacy and research sectors to help Michigan aid all who have dementias and all who are care partners."

Vega's research is directed toward the understanding of how neurons respond to the presence of pathological tau in different brain regions that are susceptible or resistant to tau-mediated neurodegeneration. His work also focuses on the identification of biomarkers with the potential to be used for the diagnosis of AD. He also leads work on a Michigan Center for Contextual Factors in Alzheimer's Disease (MCCFAD) grant focused on engaging underrepresented populations such as the Latino and Arab American communities in research.

Latinos are about 1.5 times as likely to have Alzheimer's or other dementias as older Whites, and older African-Americans are about 2 times as likely as older Whites. Vega's community outreach efforts are directed to empower individuals with scientific-based facts that can be used to reduce their risk of developing AD. He uses a community partnership approach to identify and assess institutional and community barriers that contribute to health disparities, promoting an inclusive environment based on cooperation to advance mutual interests.

According to Jennifer Lepard, president and CEO of the Alzheimer's Association Michigan Chapter, there's often a shared mission among those in the Alzheimer's and dementia community in Michigan, and collaboration helps leverage insights, foster innovation, increase participation in clinical trials and observational studies, and better communicate with Michigan residents about available programs and resources.

"The only way forward in finding a prevention, treatment or cure for Alzheimer's and other dementia is through research and collaboration. Collaboration between organizations such as ours and our research institutions is crucial," Lepard said. "The Alzheimer's Association currently funds 590 projects in 31 countries, which includes awards for promising research right here in Michigan."

Alzheimer's Association grant recipients at Michigan institutions are investigating Tau protein and misregulation of fast axonal transport directionality; RNA toxicity in frontotemporal dementia; hospital readmission rates in Alzheimer's disease and related dementia; biomarkers of Alzheimer's disease; and more.

Additionally, a host of other Michigan researchers are currently investigating Alzheimer's and dementia as related to hypertension, diabetes, biomarkers, lifestyle and genetic risk, stress, underrepresented and understudied populations, diagnosis disparities by race and ethnicity, caregiving needs, styles and techniques, genes and more.

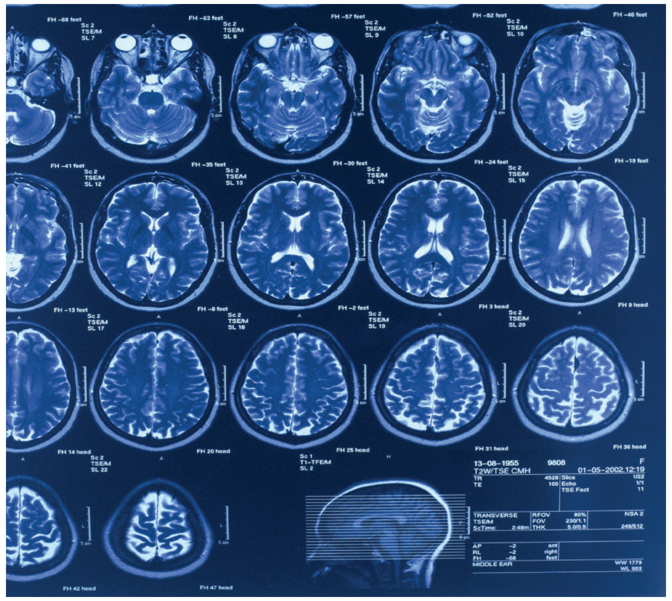
As the Alzheimer's epidemic continues to grow, Congress has made funding Alzheimer's and dementia research more of a priority in recent years.

Giordani says that, "Since Congress has increased the budgets for the NIA I have seen the growth of an important NIA effort in funding young researchers. The MADRC has been a critical resource in the funding of studies from a number of our younger researchers across the state. In addition, this funding increase has led the development of research and education programs in each ADRC, with the goal of influencing the education of younger faculty and enhancing their opportunities in research in AD and related dementias. Our MADRC has such younger faculty mentees across our research cores, many from underrepresented groups. The funding increase has also allowed for a new and exciting funding line by NIA for researchers who had not been pursuing work in AD and related dementias to demonstrate the opportunity of linkages in this area. Our center has been affiliated with five of these projects, representing new work from faculty in hearing, heart disease, psychiatry and gut bacteria. These funding increases bring us closer and closer to an end of Alzheimer's disease, as we attack it from all angles."

The Alzheimer's Association, which is the world's largest nonprofit funder of Alzheimer's disease research, has lobbied extensively for increased federal funding for Alzheimer's and related dementia research at the NIH. Since 2011, annual federal Alzheimer's research funding has increased from $448 million to $2.8 billion nationwide.

In addition, between 1994 and 2020, the Alzheimer's Association has funded about $7.5 million in Michigan research projects.

To learn more about Alzheimer's Association research, visit alz.org/research.



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KNOW the 10 SIGNS

EARLY DETECTION MATTERS

It may be hard to know the difference between age-related changes and the first signs of Alzheimer's disease. Some people may recognize changes in themselves before anyone else notices. Other times, friends and family will be the first to observe changes in memory, behavior or abilities.

To help identify problems early, the Alzheimer's Association® has created a list of warning signs for Alzheimer's and other dementias. Individuals may experience one or more of these in different degrees.

1 Memory loss that disrupts daily life

One of the most common signs of Alzheimer's disease, especially in the early stages, is forgetting recently learned information. Others include forgetting important dates or events, asking for the same information over and over, and increasingly needing to rely on memory aids (e.g., reminder notes or electronic devices) or family members for things they used to handle on their own.

What's a typical age-related change?
Sometimes forgetting names or appointments, but remembering them later.

2 Challenges in planning or solving problems

Some people may experience changes in their ability to develop and follow a plan or work with numbers. They may have trouble following a familiar recipe or keeping track of monthly bills. They may have difficulty concentrating and take much longer to do things than they did before.

What's a typical age-related change?
Making occasional errors when balancing a checkbook.

3 Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, at work or at leisure

People with Alzheimer's disease often find it hard to complete daily tasks. Sometimes, they may have trouble driving to a familiar location, managing a budget at work or remembering the rules of a favorite game.

What's a typical age-related change?
Occasionally needing help to use the settings on a microwave or to record a television show.

4 Confusion with time or place

People with Alzheimer's can lose track of dates, seasons and the passage of time. They may have trouble understanding something if it is not happening immediately. Sometimes they may forget where they are or how they got there.

What's a typical age-related change?
Getting confused about the day of the week but figuring it out later.

5 Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships

For some people, having vision problems is a sign of Alzheimer's. They may have difficulty reading, judging distance and determining color or contrast, which may cause problems with driving.

What's a typical age-related change?
Vision changes related to cataracts.

Continued on page 23

6 New problems with words in speaking or writing

People with Alzheimer's disease may have trouble following or joining a conversation. They may stop in the middle of a conversation and have no idea how to continue or they may repeat themselves. They may struggle with vocabulary, have problems finding the right word or call things by the wrong name (e.g., calling a "watch" a "hand-clock").

What's a typical age-related change?
Sometimes having trouble finding the right word.

7 Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps

A person with Alzheimer's may put things in unusual places. They may lose things and be unable to go back over their steps to find them again. Sometimes, they may accuse others of stealing. This may occur more frequently over time.

What's a typical age-related change?
Misplacing things from time to time and retracing steps to find them.

8 Decreased or poor judgment

People with Alzheimer's may experience changes in judgment or decision making. For example, they may use poor judgment when dealing with money, giving large amounts to telemarketers. They may pay less attention to grooming or keeping themselves clean.

What's a typical age-related change?
Making a bad decision once in a while.

9 Withdrawal from work or social activities

A person with Alzheimer's disease may start to remove themselves from hobbies, social activities, work projects or sports. They may have trouble keeping up with a favorite sports team or remembering how to complete a favorite hobby. They may also avoid being social because of the changes they have experienced.

What's a typical age-related change?
Sometimes feeling weary of work, family and social obligations.

10 Changes in mood and personality

The mood and personalities of people with Alzheimer's can change. They can become confused, suspicious, depressed, fearful or anxious. They may be easily upset at home, at work, with friends or in places where they are out of their comfort zone.

What's a typical age-related change?
Developing very specific ways of doing things and becoming irritable when a routine is disrupted.

Note: Mood changes with age may also be a sign of some other condition. Consult a doctor if you observe any changes.

If you or someone you care about is experiencing any of the 10 warning signs of Alzheimer's disease, please see a doctor to find the cause. Early diagnosis gives you a chance to seek treatment and plan for your future.

The Alzheimer's Association can help.
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Call: **800.272.3900**
Learn more: **alz.org/training**

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Libby W. **You are all heroes and angels!** Thank you for all that you do for my Grammy and all the residents and their families. Shirley M. Thank you, thank you [illegible] **our dedication and selfless sacrifice** during these [illegible] times! [illegible]dene S. Thank you for taking such go[illegible] Miss seeing Mom and ALL of you [illegible] da M. **Thanks for your tim[illegible]** [illegible] times. Terry F. Thank you [illegible] while she was a resid[illegible] art. Ginger H. **You all are** [illegible] **for the care you are givin[illegible]** Our family appreciates al[illegible] Praying for your health, st[illegible] **not give you all enough pr[illegible]** guys are **true heroes!** Thanks [illegible] of the residents! Penny O. On beh[illegible] **ate everything** you have done and [illegible] ficult time. **Thank you for all the pho[illegible] dated** on our loved ones. Denise N. Thank you [illegible] **onderful care** you provide for everyone! Nancy H. You are all heroes. Thank you for **taking the best care possible of our loved ones.** Denise N. You are the **best healthcare team there is!** May our Lord **bless you all with good health and safety!** Amanda H. Thank you for continuing to bring cheer to residents during [illegible] a trying time. Emma B. Thank you for taking care of my mom. Of course we miss her but I feel she is **safe in your hands.** [illegible] aides and everyone employed there. JoEllen [illegible] **es and staff.** Connie C. **You matter!** Your watch over our family so **we can safely sleep at** [illegible]

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THE BENEFITS OF an early diagnosis

If you or a loved one have concerns about memory loss or other symptoms of Alzheimer's, it's important to talk to your doctor.

Going to the doctor when you are worried there is something wrong with you or your loved one can be scary. Getting a correct and definitive diagnosis for Alzheimer's disease often takes time. The process includes visits to specialists and multiple tests and might require multiple doctors' visits to observe changes. There are, however, many benefits of getting an early diagnosis.

First of all, it's important to eliminate other conditions that might be causing the symptoms. Estimates vary by study, but as many as 30 percent of people showing symptoms of dementia might have another condition that can be treated. Some of the most common conditions are depression, infections and cardiovascular disease. There are also diseases that are non-reversible but have treatment options to alleviate symptoms and delay or stop progress, such as Parkinson's disease or vascular dementia. In these cases, it's crucial to get the correct diagnosis as early as possible and begin treatment quickly.

While there is currently no cure for Alzheimer's disease, an early diagnosis is still important. There are medications that might reduce symptoms or provide cognitive clarity for some, and making a treatment plan with your doctor early on will maximize the benefits. People in the early stage of Alzheimer's disease also have a better chance of participating in clinical drug trials that help advance our understanding of the disease and help work toward a cure.

An early diagnosis allows those living with Alzheimer's and their caregivers to plan ahead and make decisions about the future. Decisions about care, living arrangements and financial and legal matters can be demanding and time-consuming, so it's important to start thinking and talking about them as early as possible.

> **"An early diagnosis allows those living with Alzheimer's and their caregivers to plan ahead and make decisions about the future."**

The earlier the diagnosis, the more involved the person living with the disease can be in making decisions that will affect his or her life. A care consultation with an Alzheimer's Association social worker can clarify what decisions need to be made and how to make them.

Apart from making practical arrangements, an early diagnosis will allow you, whether a caregiver or a person living with Alzheimer's, to seek out the support you need. There are support groups for both caregivers and people with the disease, many support services and a wealth of educational materials with tips on how to live the best possible life with Alzheimer's.

Your dollar could be the one that FINDS A CURE

Whether you like to walk, golf, shop or dine in style, we have an event for you! There are plenty of year-round opportunities to raise funds and awareness for Alzheimer's care, support and research. Below are just some of the ways you can participate. Visit **alz.org/gmc**, subscribe to our e-newsletter or like us on social media to keep up with our latest events!

WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S
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The world's largest event to raise funds and awareness for Alzheimer's care, support and research, the Alzheimer's Association **Walk to End Alzheimer's**® takes place in more than 600 communities nationwide between mid-August and mid-October. With more than 20 Walks in the state of Michigan each year, it's easy to participate. Find a Michigan Walk near you at **alz.org/walk**. Interested in joining a volunteer planning committee or becoming a sponsor? Contact Steve Windom at scwindom@alz.org.

THE LONGEST DAY
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The Longest Day® is the day with the most light — the summer solstice. And it's the day the Alzheimer's Association calls on everyone to fight Alzheimer's disease by raising funds and awareness for care, support and research. On June 20, or any day throughout the year, join thousands of supporters across the world to fight the darkness of Alzheimer's with an activity or event of your choice. Visit **alz.org/thelongestday** to sign up and select an activity! If you would like to learn more or are interested in volunteering for The Longest Day, contact Shenise Foote-Vann at snfootevann@alz.org.

alzheimer's association
CHOCOLATE JUBILEE

The Michigan Chapter's annual **Chocolate Jubilee** celebrated its 36th anniversary in 2020. Typically held in October at the MGM Grand, Chocolate Jubilee features a delicious dinner, live music with dancing and chocolate exhibitors from around the Metro Detroit area. Chocolate Jubilee directly supports the critical care, support and research efforts of the Alzheimer's Association. For event details and sponsorship information, contact Maureen O'Reilly at moreilly@alz.org.

alzheimer's association
SPRING SOIRÉE

Spring Soirée is a fun and festive night out with friends that includes snacks, sips and, of course, shopping! Done in partnership with, and typically held at, The Somerset Collection's Neiman Marcus, Spring Soirée is now in its ninth year. Proceeds from the event directly support the Alzheimer's Association's programs and services. For more information, contact Maureen O'Reilly at moreilly@alz.org.

alzheimer's association
DAVID E. RUTLEDGE CHARITY GOLF OUTING

For nearly 25 years, the **David E. Rutledge Golf Outing** has been a staple of the Michigan Chapter. Drawing participants from across the state, this event has raised more than $1 million since its inception. This July event features music, trophies and a fun helicopter golf ball drop! For more information, contact Sue Prynn at smprynn@alz.org.

ROCKIN' FOR ALZ
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This event typically held in spring is in partnership with Par Rehab Services and brings rock music and Alzheimer's awareness together! Held in Lansing, *Dr. Fab and the Off the Couch Band* have been performing to benefit the Alzheimer's Association since 2016. Tickets and sponsorships are available each year for this evening of food, fun and rock 'n' roll. For more information about **Rockin' For Alz**, contact Cammi Robinson at crobinson@alz.org.

Mind Over Matter™

Mind Over Matter™ is an annual cycling event that raises funds for the Alzheimer's Association Michigan Chapter. Founded in 2005 by Kristine Korpal in memory of her father, Karl T. David, who passed away from Alzheimer's, the event has raised nearly $300,000 since its inception. With multiple routes and staggered start times, this family-friendly event welcomes riders of all ages* and abilities. Grab your helmet and peddle away to help end Alzheimer's with hundreds of other cyclists! After last year's virtual event, we hope we can be together once again on Aug. 7, 2021, at Stony Creek Metropark. *Discounted prices for children and seniors 62+. To learn more about Mind Over Matter, visit **mindovermatteralz.com**.

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Communicating with an individual living with Alzheimer's

Among its many effects, Alzheimer's disease makes communicating using language — talking, following conversations, reading and writing — challenging. As the disease progresses, both the caregiver and the person with Alzheimer's will need to adjust their communication strategies. Below are some tips for caregivers to communicate successfully with their loved ones during all stages of the disease.

In the early stage, the person with the disease might withdraw from conversations as he or she struggles to find the right words or needs longer to respond. Encourage participation in conversations by being patient, speaking directly to the person and keeping in mind that some people might prefer to communicate via email, others by phone and others face to face. Make sure to include your loved one in discussions that affect him or her, such as planning for the future. Keep sentences clear and avoid complex questions. It can help to break long questions or statements into several smaller parts. Humor goes a long way — remember to laugh together.

As the disease progresses, the person with Alzheimer's may struggle with words more. Use a smaller vocabulary than before, and invent new words to describe familiar things. He or she might start relying more on actions and behaviors to communicate. To engage your loved one in a conversation, approach him or her from the front, make eye contact, use his or her name and say who you are. Gentle touch helps get your loved one's attention, too. Use basic words and short sentences and eliminate distractions, such as a television in the background or multiple people speaking at once. Gestures and visual cues ranging from pointing at things to signs guiding the person to the bathroom are helpful. Be patient, repeat yourself if necessary and give the person living with Alzheimer's plenty of time to respond.

> **"Remember that a person with Alzheimer's retains a sense of self despite the losses of the disease."**

Remember that even as words fail, people with the disease often remain sensitive to body language and tone. Try not to show your frustration or other negative feelings and be responsive to the non-verbal messages from your loved one. Respond to the feelings behind words and behavior. Even if you can't understand the words or the words don't make sense to you, acknowledge that you understand how the person is feeling, whether it's sad, happy, frustrated or scared. Do not argue even if you think your loved one is getting the facts wrong and, if appropriate, try to guess the word or message he or she is struggling with and repeat it out loud.

In the late stage of the disease, communication is often reduced to a few words or sounds, and responses to what others are saying are similarly limited. Keep communicating in whatever way you can. With a calm and soothing tone of voice, treat your loved one with respect and respond to his or her emotions and needs. If you struggle to understand the reasons behind behaviors and feelings, keeping a journal might help. Does your loved one always get upset when it's been a few hours since a meal (he or she might be hungry) or when he or she is in the common room of a care center (the noise might be overwhelming)?

Use all five senses to communicate. Gently touch the person, listen to favorite songs, pet animals or touch different fabrics, look at photos or pieces of art and smell and taste their favorite foods and drinks. Touch can be especially soothing and allows you to connect with your loved one even if other contact is difficult.

Throughout the progression of the disease, keep talking to your loved one and remember that he or she retains a sense of self despite the losses of the disease. Speak directly to the person living with the disease and respond to what he or she is communicating, whether it is through words or actions. Accept that things change, but remember that you can change, too, and maintain contact with your loved one through the course of the disease.

For more tips on communication, visit **alz.org/care**.

How to help a family living with Alzheimer's

Many of us know a family living with Alzheimer's disease and want to help but don't quite know how. Here are some tips to get you started.

1 **Educate yourself about Alzheimer's disease.** This way you'll know what to expect and can respond to situations appropriately.

2 **Stay in touch.** Caregivers and people with Alzheimer's often report feeling isolated or alone. Keep reaching out and being emotionally supportive, even when you cannot be there in person.

3 **Spend time connecting with the person living with Alzheimer's.** Continue doing activities together, even if you need to make adjustments as the disease progresses and for safety reasons during the pandemic. Shift to virtual settings, talk on the phone and find new ways to connect. Being emotionally present and engaging the individual matters.

4 **Make concrete offers to help.** A family living with Alzheimer's may feel overwhelmed or they might feel timid about asking people for help. Instead of saying, "Let me know if there is anything I can do," ask if you can drop off a casserole on the porch or if you can mail a gift card to help with expenses or cover a night out for the caregiver. The online Care Team Calendar, provided by the Alzheimer's Association and available on alz.org, can help with scheduling, planning and dividing up tasks.

Keep reaching out and being emotionally supportive, even when you cannot be there in person.

5 **Involve the person living with Alzheimer's in the conversation.** Even as his or her ability to participate changes, it is important not to isolate or ignore the person living with the disease. If you worry about not having anything to say, you can brainstorm discussion topics and stories beforehand.

6 **Do not give unsolicited advice.** Every family and person has their own way of coping with the disease. Let them make their own decisions, medical and otherwise. Trust that they are capable of finding the resources and information they want and need, and only offer your advice if you are asked for it.

7 **Be flexible.** The family might need time to adjust to the diagnosis, they might be too tired to make plans or the needs and abilities of the person living with Alzheimer's might change. Keep offering your help even if you are turned down once, but don't pester.

8 **Get involved with the Alzheimer's Association.** Become an advocate, donate or participate in a Walk to End Alzheimer's.

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THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN COMPARING CARE FACILITY OPTIONS

The decision to place a loved one in a care facility is a difficult and personal one. When exploring options near you, keep these questions and tips in mind:

What is the ratio of residents to direct care staff?
What staff are included in that ratio? Make sure it is only direct care staff. Positions within departments such as maintenance or administration are not providing direct care and should not be included. The smaller the ratio, the better.

Do they give ongoing dementia care training to their staff? What staff attends?
Continued education can help keep skills fresh and ensure your loved one has the best care possible.

How often do they hold care conferences?
Care conferences are when the management team meets with you and your family to talk about your loved one and their care plan.

Observe the environment.
Take note of things like the smell of the building and facial expressions of staff and residents. Accidents happen, so understand that it's not always perfect in a memory care facility, but these things can be indications of good care.

Get an activity calendar.
How often are things scheduled and what are they? Is there a variety of activities that will engage your loved one at all levels of care?

Are they able to take care of your loved one until the end of life?
What does that look like? Is there a chance your loved one will have to leave in the late stages because their level of care is too high?

Get a breakdown of costs.
Understand what the fees are and how you might incur more.

Is it a secured community?
Sixty percent of people with Alzheimer's disease will wander, so investigating what each facility has in place to prevent it from happening is important.

Schedule a visit — or take a virtual tour if possible — to get a good feel and in-depth understanding for the community.
Ask about safety precautions and protocols in place to mitigate risk and exposure during the pandemic. Inquire about emergency procedures, notification processes and other ways residents and staff are kept safe during these difficult times when elderly populations are most at risk.

Visit during meal time, if possible. Meals occur three times a day and will be a large part of your loved one's memory care experience. Observe interactions with the staff, noise levels and if the residents are satisfied.

If something concerns you, schedule a follow-up visit or virtual tour and check to see if that's still the case.

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Volunteer for the Alzheimer's Association

At the Alzheimer's Association, all of our activities and events are made possible by the assistance of volunteers. Our volunteers are passionate, inspired and want to make a difference in the fight against Alzheimer's disease. Whether you can spare a few hours a week or make a more significant time commitment, we can find the right fit for your interests and skills.

Debra Archer Ross, support group facilitator and community educator.

Debra Archer Ross has been volunteering with the Alzheimer's Association for more than a decade. Partnering with the Alzheimer's Association made sense to her in her role as the director of a dedicated memory care community.

"It's a win-win situation when you're caring for individuals with dementia and have this dynamic organization available to you in your community," she said. "It was such a great match to support the Alzheimer's Association mission and work collaboratively."

As part of her volunteer efforts, Debra now facilitates four virtual support groups and provides various education programs to the community, including through the Dementia Care Certificate Program at Schoolcraft College, which allows community members and professionals to receive a certificate through Schoolcraft College for their dedication and understanding of the disease.

According to Debra, the knowledge that she's helping families navigate the dementia journey helps her maintain her momentum.

> **"What I give out I get back tenfold because I know I'm helping others."**

"Helping others understand the progression, what to expect and how to plan for this devastating disease gives me the greatest sense of contribution," she said. "It's truly a circle. What I give out I get back tenfold because I know I'm helping others."

Dawn Hoiem and Evan Koch volunteer as marketing co-chairs for the Grand Rapids Walk to End Alzheimer's. They have produced multiple videos and other marketing and communications collateral for the Walk and public policy initiatives.

Among their many projects, Hoiem and Koch rolled out "Walk Talk," a video series aimed at strengthening the Alzheimer's community through inspiration and humor. The series provides information on how West Michigan residents can access support services and how to get involved with the local walk.

"For those going through a battle with Alzheimer's right now, they should learn more about the Alzheimer's Association, because it's a great source of information and support and you'll need to be armed with a lot of both of those things in the days, weeks and months ahead," Hoiem said. "'Walk Talk can help with learning about some of those services and programs, as well as inspiring others to get involved."

Hoiem's commitment to the cause is personal. Her father, Bill Garner, passed away in 2014 of Alzheimer's after being diagnosed eight years prior. She is driven to volunteer by the hope of a world without Alzheimer's and all other forms of dementia for future generations.

"It took me several years after my father died before I was ready to get involved," Hoiem said. "When you live it day in and day out for so long, sometimes you need a little distance from it. As human beings, though, I think we gain strength from sharing our struggles with others and from being reminded that we aren't in this alone. Volunteering helps us support each other and give a voice to those going through it."

Koch is the owner and lead designer at Evan Koch Media Productions LLC, a video production and digital marketing agency. Though he doesn't have a personal connection to the disease, he's focused on using his skills to make a difference in the lives of Michigan residents through his involvement with the Alzheimer's Association.

Dawn Hoiem and Evan Koch, Grand Rapids Walk to End Alzheimer's marketing co-chairs.

"I know that when my time has come, I want to look back at my life and the world I live in and know that I've left it in a better place than where I found it," Koch said. "And I feel so blessed that I've found this opportunity to make a difference in a way I know how."

We need your help in the fight against Alzheimer's. The Michigan Chapter is always looking for event planning committee members, program presenters, support group facilitators, advocates, content creators and other volunteers to help further our cause. You can find more information about volunteering and sign up at **alz.org/gmc**!

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Your story is all you need to get involved in Alzheimer's Advocacy

Alzheimer's disease is a national public health crisis affecting more than 5 million Americans across all walks of life and all regions of the country. Conquering Alzheimer's is as much a matter of public policy as scientific discovery, and we need your help to change the future of this devastating disease.

The voices of those who have personally faced Alzheimer's disease are critical to building a case for support. Your story is all you need to assist in our public policy work, which aims to educate our policy makers about the disease and urge their support for more research funding and better systems for caring for people with Alzheimer's.

Join hundreds of thousands of Alzheimer's advocates who are making a difference by:

- Becoming an Ambassador, State Champion or Alzheimer's Congressional Team member.
- Attending the Alzheimer's Association Advocacy Forum. Dates to be announced.
- Attending the Michigan Alzheimer's Advocacy Day in Lansing, tentatively set for April 27, 2021.
- Learning more about the Alzheimer's Impact Movement (AIM), the advocacy arm of the Alzheimer's Association, at alzimpact.org.

To learn more about how you can make a difference through Alzheimer's advocacy, contact Matt Phelan at mephelan@alz.org.

Paving the way to a cure through clinical trials

Caring for someone with Alzheimer’s disease can feel hopeless at times. Currently, Alzheimer’s disease cannot be cured, prevented or slowed. You may help your loved one get dressed or cook their meals, but these tasks can feel trivial. But what if you were the answer to the cure? Research can help find that answer, and it all begins with clinical trials.

Clinical trials are research studies conducted to determine whether treatments are safe and effective. These studies can also help inform researchers about caregiving, life with Alzheimer’s, early detection, brain function and more. Such research can lead us closer to finding a way to cure, prevent or treat the disease. Anyone can participate in this research; whether you have dementia, are at risk of developing it, are a caregiver or a healthy volunteer with no dementia issues, you are needed today to help advance Alzheimer’s research.

Bertha Bullen and her husband Jim Kruse decided to get involved in research due to their passion to end Alzheimer’s. Throughout the couple’s marriage, they have been faced with the grief that comes with this disease too many times. Between the two of them, 10 family members have been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s or another dementia.

One in nine people over the age of 65 will be diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease, and Bertha and Jim knew they could not just stand by as Alzheimer’s and dementia continued to attack their families. “It’s one thing to sit around and say, ‘I wish they’d find a cure’ or ‘I wish they’d find a good treatment,’” says Bertha, “but it’s another to stand up and help make it happen.” The couple has participated in many trials over the years, ranging from simple interviews to attempting to map the brain through MRI scans.

For those that want to participate in research, it can seem like a daunting task to find the right trial. That is why the Alzheimer’s Association created TrialMatch®, a clinical studies matching service that connects individuals with Alzheimer’s, caregivers, healthy volunteers and physicians with current studies.

Participating is free, noninvasive and easy; there are hundreds of promising clinical studies being conducted right now across the country. Scientists are working constantly to find enhanced ways to treat diseases, but improved treatments can never become a reality without testing in clinical trials with human volunteers. Over 250,000 individuals have already visited the TrialMatch® website searching for information on clinical studies and you can, too.

Don’t just hope for a cure — help us find one. By participating in clinical trials, you can help people with Alzheimer’s and their caregivers play an even more active role, contributing to scientific discoveries benefiting themselves and future generations. **To learn more about TrialMatch®, visit alz.org/trialmatch.**

Being legally and financially prepared in the face of Alzheimer's

Receiving a diagnosis of Alzheimer's is never easy — it's life changing. In the early stages of Alzheimer's, especially after a recent diagnosis, most people are just trying to figure out how to manage day to day. However, putting financial and legal plans in place allows the person with dementia to express their wishes for future care and decisions. It also allows them time to work through the complex issues involved in long-term care. Here are our top tips for financial and legal planning in the face of an Alzheimer's diagnosis.

Financial Planning

As the disease progresses, so will a person's care needs. While medical insurance covers some costs of care, there are many things it does not cover. Here are some common costs to consider:

- Ongoing medical treatment for Alzheimer's-related symptoms, diagnosis and follow-up visits
- Treatment or medical equipment for other medical conditions
- Safety-related expenses, such as home safety modifications or safety services for a person who wanders
- Prescription drugs
- Personal care supplies
- Adult day care services
- In-home care services
- Full-time residential care services

In addition to planning for the cost of care, there are many ongoing financial duties to discuss, including:

- Paying bills
- Arranging for benefit claims
- Making investment decisions
- Preparing tax returns

Financial advisors, such as financial planners and estate planning attorneys, are valuable sources of information and assistance. They can help:

- Identify potential financial resources
- Identify tax deductions
- Analyze one's investment portfolio with long-term care needs in mind.

Legal Planning

Legal planning is another essential piece of planning for the future. In order to ensure that a person's wishes are met both financially and medically, legal assistance may be needed. This early planning prevents families from struggling to make medical and financial decisions before their loved ones are no longer able to participate in those decisions or from disagreements among family members about the wishes of their loved one.

The Alzheimer's Association recommends that every legal plan should include the following.

- Plans for health care and long-term care
- Plans for finances and property
- Identification of another person to make decisions on behalf of the person with dementia (i.e. Power of Attorney)

These strategies will ensure that a person's medical wishes and plans for finances and property are followed or that a designated person has the authority to make those decisions. A good place to start is talking to a care consultant who specializes in dementia. There are many community agencies that do care planning. The Alzheimer's Association can help start a care plan and connect families to local resources 24 hours a day at **800.272.3900** or **alz.org**. You can also visit the Eldercare Locator online at **Eldercare.gov** or by calling **800.677.1116**. The online directory of the Financial Planning Association is helpful and can be found at **www.plannersearch.org** or by phone at **800.322.4237**.

A few more key tips:

1. Talk about finances and future care wishes soon after a diagnosis
2. Organize and review important documents
3. Get help from well-qualified financial and legal advisors
4. Estimate possible costs for the entire disease process
5. Look at all insurance options
6. Consider work-related salary/benefits and personal property as potential income
7. Find out which government programs you may be eligible for
8. Learn about income tax breaks for which you may qualify
9. Explore additional financial assistance that can be provided
10. Take advantage of low-cost and free community services

An Alzheimer's or dementia diagnosis is not something that anyone is prepared for, but the sooner plans for the future are established, the better prepared the caregiver and the person living with dementia will be.

ABOUT THE ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION®

The Alzheimer's Association leads the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia — by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support.

Our vision: A world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia®.

alzheimer's association®

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