

The United States Needs a National Alzheimer's Prevention Goal

The United States should set an ambitious national goal to prevent Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

It is time to replace despair and disappointment with determination and hope. It is time to show there are steps that our nation can take to reduce the risk of Alzheimer's and dementia, delay onset, and promote brain health. And most importantly, it is time to rally Americans to take action.

Alzheimer's disease is a public health crisis that is expanding as our nation ages, with a projected increase to nearly 14 million people in the U.S. with the disease by 2050. Communities of color and women bear a disproportionate burden. Without early intervention and treatment, the cumulative care costs are projected to exceed \$20 trillion over the next 30 years.

Our nation must do more to change the course of this disease. Emerging science points to the ability to reduce dementia risk and slow the rate of cognitive decline as people age through early detection and non-pharmacological and pharmacological interventions across the lifespan, particularly in midlife and at the earliest pre-dementia stages. Studies indicate more than a third of dementia cases are potentially preventable by addressing risk factors including education, treatment of hypertension, exercise, social engagement, smoking, hearing loss, depression, diabetes, and obesity.

It will take a new national commitment, new partners, new approaches, and new attitudes to get in front of this disease. Cognitive decline is *not* inevitable. And, while deaths from other major causes such as heart disease have decreased, the number of deaths from Alzheimer's disease have increased exponentially. As a nation, we must take a new approach to focus not only on curing Alzheimer's disease and related dementias but preventing it in the first place.

For too long, people living with dementia their families and caregivers have heard of the disappointments of drug trials and the difficulty of finding an Alzheimer's cure. That must change – now.

Make no mistake, research must continue into promising disease-modifying drug therapies to treat Alzheimer's and its symptoms for patients in the early stages of dementia. But to truly reduce the number of people impacted by this devastating disease, our nation must build on the concrete research findings showing that public health interventions and lifestyle modifications may prevent or delay the onset of Alzheimer's and related dementias and disrupt progression of mild cognitive impairment.

A growing number of government organizations and advisory groups are increasingly aligned in the position that it is possible to reduce the risk of dementia, including the World Health Organization, the Lancet Commission, the American Heart Association, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

There are far-reaching benefits of this effort, as research shows dementia seems to be tightly connected to other chronic conditions. A national prevention strategy to reduce dementia risk offers a unique opportunity to mobilize clinical, policy, and public health efforts to reduce diabetes, hypertension, tobacco use, and depression, particularly among communities of color.

The U.S. should set a national prevention goal that is ambitious and achievable. This goal must include dates to strive for, a roadmap to guide the efforts, metrics to measure progress along the way, and a focus on healthcare equity that recognizes the disproportionate impact of Alzheimer's and related dementias on communities of color and women. Establishing dementia prevention as a clinical and research priority with measurable, time-bound targets will build on current efforts and drive changes in clinical practice, public health, research and innovation - just as our nation has done for heart disease and other health challenges.

A clear prevention "north star" will benefit families, society, economy and our nation. Preventing or delaying dementia will

- Reduce financial pressure on the healthcare system and lower costs to public programs such as Medicare and Medicaid,
- Decrease the cognitive, physical, psychological and economic burdens on those living with symptoms that often last more than a decade and their families,
- Improve quality of life for individuals of all ages, and
- Increase the likelihood that adults can thrive and remain independent into their later years.

We call on leaders, organizations, colleagues, and partners in government and the private sector, in public and clinical health, chronic disease prevention, wellness, and health equity to join in this call for the United States to adopt a national, measurable, time-bound impact prevention goal to reduce the number of people with Alzheimer's and related dementias.

Signatories:

1. AARP
2. Alzheimer's of Central Alabama
3. Alzheimer's Disease Discovery Foundation (ADDF)
4. Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA)
5. Alzheimer's Los Angeles
6. Alzheimer's Orange County
7. Rebecca Ailes-Fine, Co-Founder Women Against Alzheimer's & Co-Founder WISP
8. American Medical Women's Association
9. American Public Health Association (APHA)
10. Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)
11. Rhoda Au, PhD Professor, Boston University School of Medicine and Public Health
12. The Balm in Gilead, Inc.

13. Biogen
14. Soo Borson MD, Dementia Care Research and Consulting; Prof Emerita, University of Washington
15. Brain Health Institute
16. Malaz Boustani, MD, Richard M. Fairbanks Professor of Aging Research Indiana University School of Medicine
17. Care & Thrive Foundation
18. Center for BrainHealth at The University of Texas at Dallas
19. Center for Health Innovation and Implementation Science
20. Sandra Bond Chapman, PhD, Center for BrainHealth at The University of Texas at Dallas
21. Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health
22. Coalition for Better Health at Lower Cost
23. Jeffrey L Cummings, MD, ScD, Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health
24. Dementia Alliance of North Carolina
25. The Emory Goizueta Alzheimer's Disease Research Center
26. Eisai Inc.
27. Lynda Everman, Alzheimer's Advocate and Former Care Partner
28. Fuerza Contra Alzheimer's
29. Adam Gazzaley, MD, PhD Professor, Neurology - UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences; Founding Director of Neuroscape University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine
30. Genworth Financial
31. The Gerontological Society of America
32. Global Neuroscience Institute
33. Guadalupe Centers
34. HADASSAH, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.
35. HealthyWomen
36. The John A. Hartford Foundation
37. HFC (formerly Hilarity for Charity)
38. Hispanic Neuropsychological Society
39. David P. Hoffman, DPS, CCE, Associate Professor of Ethics and Health Policy and Associate Dean for Academic Initiatives, Maria College
40. Innovation Center on Sex Differences in Medicine, Massachusetts General Hospital
41. Melora Jackson, MS, Virtual Dementia Tour, Clinical Manager at Second Wind Dreams
42. Jill M. Goldstein, Ph.D. Professor of Psychiatry & Medicine, Harvard Medical School; Founder and Exec. Director, Innovation Center on Sex Differences in Medicine, Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH); and the Helen T. Moershner MGH Research Institute Chair in Women's Health
43. Latino Alzheimer's and Memory Disorders Alliance
44. LEAD Coalition (Leaders Engaged on Alzheimer's Disease)
45. Livpact Inc.
46. Dr. Kristine Lokken, Brain Health Institute
47. MANA, A National Latina Organization
48. Massachusetts Alzheimer's Disease Research Center

49. Mattie Rhodes Center
50. Thomas J. McInerney, President & CEO, Genworth Financial
51. Milken Institute Center for the Future of Aging
52. National Association for Female Executives (NAFE)
53. National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD)
54. National Consumers League
55. National Kidney Foundation
56. National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices
57. Thomas O. Obisesan, M.D., MPH, Professor of Medicine, Howard University
58. Carmen Pastor, President/Founder, Fuerza Contra Alzheimer's
59. Adriana Perez, PhD, CRNP, ANP-BC, FAAN, FGSA, Assistant Professor of Nursing, Senior Fellow, Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing
60. Miller Piggot, Executive Director, Alzheimer's of Central Alabama
61. Posit Science
62. Judi Pritchard, ED, Founder, President, Care & Thrive Foundation
63. ProVention Health Foundation
64. Diane Rojas, Vice President of Health & Human Services, Associate Director Social Services at Guadalupe Centers, Inc.
65. Sandra Eskenazi Center for Brain Care Innovation
66. June Sanson, Senior Director, Patient Advocacy and Industry Relations at ACADIA Pharmaceuticals Inc.
67. David Satcher, MD, PhD Founding Director and Senior Advisor; (former) 16th Surgeon General of the United States Satcher Health Leadership Institute, Morehouse School of Medicine
68. Kathleen Sebelius, 21st United States Secretary of Health and Human Services; 44th Governor of Kansas
69. Second Wind Dreams, Inc./ Virtual Dementia Tour
70. Betty Spence, President, National Association for Female Executives (NAFE)
71. Dr. Suzanne Steinbaum, MD, President at SRS Heart, Center for Women's Prevention, Health and Wellness
72. Diane Stephenson, Executive Director, Critical Path for Parkinson's at Critical Path Institute (C-Path)
73. MaryAnne Sterling, LivPact Inc.
74. Rudolph Tanzi, PhD, Department of Neurology, MGH/Harvard Medical School
75. Pierre N. Tariot, MD, Director, Banner Alzheimer's Institute
76. Anne Tumlinson, President and Chief Executive Officer Anne Tumlinson Innovations
77. UnidosNow, Inc.
78. UsAgainstAlzheimer's
79. William Vega, PhD, Board Member, UsAgainstAlzheimer's; Emeritus Provost Professor, University of Southern California
80. Anand Viswanathan, MD, PhD, Massachusetts General Hospital, Massachusetts Alzheimer's Disease Research Center
81. Victoria Walker, MD, CEO CodaCare Consulting

82. The Women's Alzheimer's Movement
83. Women Inspiring Scientific Progress (WISP)
84. Kristine Yaffe, MD, Professor of Psychiatry, Neurology and Epidemiology, Psychiatry, UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences; Roy and Marie Scola Endowed Chair; Vice Chair of Research in Psychiatry UCFS School of Medicine
85. YMCA of the USA

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For more information and/or to sign on to this statement, contact Kelly O'Brien at UsAgainstAlzheimer's @ kobrien@usagainstalzheimers.org