Alzheimer’s Association Applauds Introduction of Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act

Senator Baldwin (D-WI) Legislation Seeks to Ensure a High-Quality Palliative Care and Hospice Workforce for Alzheimer’s and Other Patients

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Alzheimer’s Association and its nationwide network of advocates strongly supports the Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act (PCHETA) (S.2748), introduced in the Senate by Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI). PCHETA would ensure an adequate, well-trained palliative care workforce through training, education and awareness, and enhanced research.

People with Alzheimer’s and other dementias often rely heavily on hospice at the end of life. In fact, hospitalization and invasive treatment is not recommended given the life expectancy of the individual, the significant burdens of aggressive treatment, and the difficulty of pain management for those unable to communicate.

“I’m proud to lead the introduction of the Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act to help grow and sustain our healthcare workforce to safeguard and improve the quality of care for the growing number of patients with serious or life threatening illnesses,” said Senator Baldwin. “This issue is especially personal to me, as I was raised by my maternal grandparents and later served as my grandmother’s primary caretaker as she grew older. I know firsthand the importance of ensuring that there are enough trained health care professionals to provide quality care across the country and to fulfill the needs and wishes of patients and their families.”

The availability of palliative and hospice care is growing, but the need is growing faster, and the quality of the care remains a concern. A recent study shows, less than half of surveyed nursing homes report having some sort of palliative care program. And, of those nursing homes with a palliative care program, only 42 percent include consultation by a physician certified in hospice/palliative care, and only 28 percent had a designated director of palliative care.

“On behalf of the five million Americans currently living with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias, the Alzheimer’s Association thanks Senator Baldwin for her steadfast commitment to ensuring quality care and support for Americans in the advanced stages of this terminal disease,” said Robert Egge, Alzheimer’s Association Chief Public Policy Officer. “Palliative and hospice care can improve both the quality of care and quality of life, and through legislation such as PCHETA more Americans will have access to this high-quality care.”
A version of the PCHETA legislation (H.R. 3119) was introduced by Representative Eliot Engel (D-NY-16) and Representative Tom Reed (R-NY-23) in the U.S. House of Representatives in July, and currently has 99 co-sponsors. The legislation is consistent with findings and recommendations made by the Institute of Medicine expert panel on advanced dementia the Advisory Council on Alzheimer’s Care, Research, and Services.

**Alzheimer’s Association**

The Alzheimer’s Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer’s care, support and research. It is the largest nonprofit funder of Alzheimer’s research. The Association’s 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. Its vision is a world without Alzheimer’s. Visit [alz.org](http://alz.org) or call 800-272-3900.

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