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FROM THE ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2020

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 AND THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC ON ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH, LONG-TERM CARE AND THE BRAIN

CHICAGO, JULY 29, 2020 — COVID-19 and the global pandemic have caused significant disruption to all aspects of life including Alzheimer's clinical research worldwide. The impact of COVID, quarantine, and the resulting fear and isolation are causing problems, but also driving unprecedented innovation. Yet the urgency to make scientific advances in Alzheimer's and other dementia is so high that we must look at how we can safely resume, continue and even accelerate clinical research. The environment we are in is allowing us to establish creative and innovative ways to safely move some studies forward.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, U.S., long-term care facilities, their staff and residents are experiencing a crisis due to a lack of transparency, and an inability to access the necessary testing, accurate data and information. According to some estimates, more than 59,000 residents and workers have died from the coronavirus at nursing homes and other long-term care communities. The Alzheimer's Association is advocating for important and accessible changes, through [policy recommendations](#), to help families as well as professional care providers.

A robust discussion at the [Alzheimer's Association International Conference](#)[®] (AAIC[®]) 2020 included experts from the Alzheimer's Association, University of Kentucky College of Medicine, Rush University Medical Center and University of Texas Health San Antonio discussing their professional experiences and viewpoints on these evolving, provocative topics:

- The impact of the pandemic on Alzheimer's research trials.
- What we know about the impact of coronavirus on the brain and cognition.
- The devastating effects on people with dementia in residential care facilities, and the Alzheimer's Association's long-term care policy recommendations.
- Health disparities the pandemic is putting in high relief, that also strongly impact people with dementia and their families.

There was an **announcement from the Alzheimer's Association of a [new research study](#)** to globally track and understand the long-term impact of exposure to the novel coronavirus on the brain.

“The Alzheimer's Association is proud to announce 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,” said Maria C. Carrillo, Ph.D., Alzheimer’s Association chief science officer. “Scientists from more than 30 countries are eager to participate, and the World Health Organization is providing technical assistance as we move this important collaboration forward. To build a strong foundation for this research, we 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, we will consider cross-study collaborations.”

Additional quotes from Maria C. Carrillo, Ph.D., Alzheimer’s Association chief science officer

“Most likely, dementia does not increase risk for COVID-19, just like dementia does not increase risk for the flu. However, dementia-related behaviors, difficulty following safety protocols, increased age and common health conditions that often accompany dementia may increase risk.”

“There are the range of behavioral, social, biological and environmental factors that influence health status. The following determinants are heightening the impact of the COVID-19 crisis:

- Lack of access to stable housing, transportation, and health-enhancing resources may make it difficult to follow the necessary precautions to prevent contracting COVID-19 or to seek treatment if they get sick.
- Types of work, as well as the policies of work environments, can influence risk for COVID-19. Workers without paid leave might be more likely to continue working when they are sick. This can increase exposure to COVID-19 or expose others to the virus.
- Lack of access to insurance, and affordable health care.”

“The COVID-19 pandemic continues to create additional challenges for people living with Alzheimer’s and all dementia, their families and caregivers. Long-term care settings are especially impacted. According to some estimates, more than 59,000 residents and workers have died from the coronavirus at nursing homes and other long-term care communities. The Alzheimer’s Association is urging state and federal policymakers to implement new policy solutions that will address the immediate and long-term issues impacting care facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

The Impact of COVID-19 and the Global Pandemic on Alzheimer’s Research, Long-Term Care and the Brain: A panel discussion at AAIC 2020 for journalists about COVID-19, the global pandemic, and its impact on Alzheimer’s and other dementia. The event featured:

- Maria C. Carrillo, Ph.D., Chief Science Officer, Alzheimer’s Association.
- Gregory A. Jicha, M.D., Ph.D., University of Kentucky College of Medicine. Director, Alzheimer’s Disease Center Clinical Trials Unit; Associate Director & Clinical Core Director, UK Alzheimer’s Disease Center.
- Neelum T. Aggarwal, M.D., Senior Neurologist, Rush Alzheimer’s Disease Center Clinical Core; Research Director, Rush Heart Center for Women at Rush University Medical Center.
- Beth Kallmyer, M.S.W., Vice President, Care and Support, Alzheimer’s Association.
- Gabriel A. de Erausquin, M.D., Ph.D., M.Sc., Long School of Medicine, UT Health San Antonio. Zachry Foundation Distinguished Professor of Neurology, The Glenn Biggs Institute of Alzheimer’s & Neurodegenerative Disorders.

Links to COVID-19-related Resources from the Alzheimer's Association

- [COVID-19 resources page](#)
- [COVID-19 tips for dementia caregivers](#)
- [Recommendations for protecting people in long-term care settings](#)
- [COVID-19: health disparities exposed](#)
- [Webinars for researchers: COVID-19 impact](#)

The Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC) is the world's largest gathering of researchers from around the world focused on Alzheimer's and other dementias. As a part of the Alzheimer's Association's research program, AAIC serves as a catalyst for generating new knowledge about dementia and fostering a vital, collegial research community.

AAIC 2020 home page: www.alz.org/aaic/

AAIC 2020 newsroom: www.alz.org/aaic/pressroom.asp

AAIC 2020 hashtag: #AAIC20

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 is a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia. Visit www.alz.org or call the 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900.

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