



THE BRAINS BEHIND SAVING YOURS®

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ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES MILESTONE FOR CARE AND SUPPORT SERVICES ANNOUNCED BY CMS

The HOPE for Alzheimer's Act Takes Major Step Toward Implementation

WASHINGTON, D.C., July 12, 2016 – In a major milestone for the millions of Americans living with Alzheimer's disease, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has made it easier for physicians to provide critical care and support services for persons living with Alzheimer's disease. Following rapidly growing bipartisan support in Congress for the Health Outcomes, Planning, and Education (HOPE) for Alzheimer's Act (S. 857, H.R. 1559), CMS has proposed to begin paying for cognitive and functional assessment and care planning for patients with Alzheimer's disease and other cognitive impairments.

“Recognizing the fundamental importance of such a benefit, the Alzheimer's Association and our advocates have worked for years to advance the HOPE for Alzheimer's Act as a top legislative priority. We are very encouraged that CMS has taken this important step, reflecting strong bipartisan congressional support,” said Harry Johns, Alzheimer's Association President & CEO. “Now, those living with the disease will have access to much-needed information on treatments, services and support that can positively affect quality-of-life for the individual, their family and caregivers.”

“This announcement is hugely important to those living with Alzheimer's disease and the loved ones who help care for them every day,” said Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI). “My HOPE for Alzheimer's Act called for care planning sessions for Alzheimer's patients and their families and I'm pleased that CMS is now proposing to cover these vital services under Medicare. While there's more work to be done in the fight against Alzheimer's disease, this is a strong sign that additional support and services are on the way.”

Today, only about half of those with Alzheimer's disease have been diagnosed. And among those who *have* been diagnosed, only 45% of them or their caregivers are told of the diagnosis. One of the reasons physicians do not diagnose Alzheimer's disease – or do not disclose a diagnosis once it is made – is because of the lack of time and resources to provide information and support to patients and caregivers.

“I urge CMS to implement this much needed benefit, but not stop here. With over 5.4 million Americans suffering with this terrible disease and that number expected to climb as the baby boom population ages, I will continue to work with the Alzheimer's Association, a strong leader in advocating for care planning coverage, to ensure that all Alzheimer's patients are able to receive optimal care going forward,” said Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ), Co-Founder and Co-Chair of the House Alzheimer's Caucus.

“Understanding that access to care planning services leads to better outcomes for individuals with Alzheimer's as well as their caregivers, the Alzheimer's Association and our advocates have been steadfast supporters of the HOPE for Alzheimer's Act since its inception,” said Robert Egge, Chief Public Policy Officer of the Alzheimer's Association. “For too long there has been a critical gap in care planning

for those with Alzheimer’s disease, often leading to worse health outcomes, unnecessary hospitalizations, and a decreased quality of life for those with Alzheimer’s disease.”

Alzheimer’s Association grassroots advocates and staff have held thousands of congressional meetings to secure support for the HOPE for Alzheimer’s Act since the bill’s introduction, and have worked tirelessly to secure support for the benefit at CMS. The Alzheimer’s Association will continue to be actively engaged in ensuring the success of this new service as it advances through the regulatory process and into implementation. Following a period of public comment, CMS will finalize the rule and implement the new service starting January 1, 2017.

For more information on Alzheimer’s disease, visit alz.org.

Alzheimer’s Association®

The Alzheimer’s Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer’s care, support and research. Our 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. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer’s. For more information, visit alz.org.

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