

2025 MARYLAND STATE PRIORITIES

The Alzheimer's Association is championing legislation sponsored by Senator Kramer (Montgomery County) and Delegate Martinez (Prince George's County) that will establish an annual data report on Maryland's dementia prevalence, and will also require that certain public health outreach programs include information on Alzheimer's treatment.

Establish data reporting on dementia prevalence.



Dementia is a growing public health crisis in Maryland that needs to be addressed. **Maryland has the highest estimated prevalence of Alzheimer's in the nation.**

However, *we do not* collect state-specific data on dementia prevalence that could inform our programs and policies.

We support legislation in 2025 to establish an online dashboard, updated annually, with data on dementia prevalence and other dementia-related data points.

This legislation aligns with Goal 5 of the State Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias - to enhance data capabilities related to dementia.

WHY IS COLLECTING DATA IMPORTANT?

Data on dementia will allow researchers, public health officials, healthcare workers, policymakers, and others to make progress towards a future without dementia. Data will provide opportunities to monitor trends, understand needs in specific groups or regions, create targeted services, and assess the effectiveness of programs and policies.



Provide information on treatments in public health outreach programs.

NEW FDA-APPROVED TREATMENTS CAN CHANGE DISEASE PROGRESSION, NOT JUST EASE SYMPTOMS.

Early intervention can provide more time to plan for the future, adopt lifestyle changes, participate in clinical trials, and live more fully with a higher quality of life for as long as possible.

Maryland has taken important steps to increase awareness of dementia among the public and our health care providers.

In 2021, the General Assembly passed HB 119/SB 313 to increase access to information on dementia risk reduction and the importance of early detection and diagnosis within existing outreach efforts.

We support legislation to ensure existing state-led dementia outreach efforts include information on treatments to ensure Marylanders are informed of their options after a diagnosis.

2025 MARYLAND STATE PRIORITIES

Restore funding to the Long-Term Care and Dementia Navigation Program.



Navigating dementia care is complex, and it is critical to restore funding to Maryland's Long-Term Care and Dementia Navigation Program. The number of Marylanders living with dementia is increasing and this Program, created in 2023, aims to help the growing number of caregivers navigate the complex maze of dementia care with trained navigators across the state.



The governing statute for this Program mandates \$2.4 million be allocated annually to the Maryland Department of Aging to manage the Program and fund it locally through Maryland's Area Agency on Aging (AAA) network. AAAs are using the funding to develop or strengthen services for dementia caregivers, including referrals to services, cognitive screenings, educational programs, and more.

Dementia navigation programs have been shown to reduce health care costs (reduce emergency room visits, lower hospital readmissions), improve quality of life for people living with dementia, and reduce caregiver stress.

With Maryland spending over \$1.23 billion caring for people living with Alzheimer's on Medicaid (2020), the Long-Term Care and Dementia Navigation Program can help families continue caring for their loved ones and reduce the strain on Medicaid.

Maryland's estimated 247,000 dementia caregivers need our help. These caregivers provide an estimated 405 million hours of unpaid care each year.

The Alzheimer's Association thanks the Department of Aging and AAAs on their efforts to date, and we urge the General Assembly to restore funding so this Program can reach as many Maryland caregivers as possible.

State budget cuts in 2024 cut the mandated funding for Maryland's Long-Term Care and Dementia Navigation Program in half to \$1.2 million.

The Alzheimer's Association urges the General Assembly to restore full funding to \$2.4 million.