

# factsheet

NOVEMBER 2011

alz.org

## The National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA)

### What is NAPA?

- The National Alzheimer's Project Act (Public Law 111-375) was passed unanimously by both houses of Congress and signed into law by President Obama on January 4, 2011.
- The law will create a national strategic plan to address the rapidly escalating Alzheimer's crisis and will coordinate Alzheimer's disease efforts across the federal government.
- This national strategic framework will include outcome-driven objectives, recommendations, implementation steps and accountability in the fight to overcome Alzheimer's.

### What does the law require?

- An annually updated national plan submitted to Congress on how to overcome Alzheimer's.
- Annual recommendations for priority actions to both improve health outcomes for individuals with Alzheimer's and lower costs to families and government programs.
- The annual evaluation of all federally funded efforts in Alzheimer's research, care and services – along with their outcomes.
- The creation of an *Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services* to assist in coordinating the work of federal agencies as well as in developing and evaluating the national plan.

### Why is NAPA Important?

- For too many individuals with Alzheimer's and their families, the system has failed them, and today we are unnecessarily losing the battle against this devastating disease. The government must make a meaningful commitment to overcome Alzheimer's.
- Individuals with Alzheimer's disease are high users of government-funded health care programs. Federal leadership specific to Alzheimer's has the potential to both lower costs and improve care for these individuals.
- Alzheimer's is the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in the United States and is the only cause of death among the top 10 in America without a way to prevent, cure or even slow its progression.
- By making Alzheimer's a national priority, we have the potential to create the same success that has been demonstrated in the fights against other diseases. Leadership from the federal government has helped lower the number of deaths from other major diseases such as HIV/AIDS, influenza and pneumonia, and stroke.
- NAPA will allow Congress to assess whether the nation is meeting the challenges of this disease for families, communities and the economy. Through its annual review process, NAPA will, for the first time, enable Congress and the American people to answer this simple question: *Did we make satisfactory progress this past year in the fight against Alzheimer's?*

## What should the National Plan include?

The Alzheimer's Association held 132 public input sessions across the country and solicited comments on its NAPA website to provide the government with the perspectives of individuals in the Alzheimer's community. Over 43,000 people participated in this process, from which emerged 10 challenges that must be addressed in a National Alzheimer's Plan. Based on these challenges, the Association believes the National Alzheimer's Plan should:

- immediately **increase Alzheimer's research funding to \$2 billion annually**, which scientists say can be productively and strategically invested in pursuit of breakthroughs
- **launch a nationwide Alzheimer's public awareness campaign**
- **improve the detection and diagnosis of Alzheimer's** and ensure that each diagnosis is followed with care planning
- **establish quality care indicators for dementia** and embed these measures throughout the health care system
- **include Alzheimer's in the Food and Drug Administration's accelerated review processes** and remove barriers to the aggressive pursuit of treatments
- ensure that federal efforts to **address health disparities** include steps to meet the challenges that Alzheimer's poses to diverse communities
- create Medicare demonstration projects to **expand adult day health services and home health care**
- **ensure greater access to custodial care** (getting dressed, bathing, etc) by allowing individuals to receive such services without having to exhaust all of their savings first
- widely **implement evidence-based caregiver support services and interventions**
- **ensure full and equal access for those with younger-onset Alzheimer's** to all Alzheimer's programs and services

To read the full public input report – *Alzheimer's from the Frontlines* – visit [www.alz.org/napa](http://www.alz.org/napa).

## Membership of the Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services

### Federal Representation:

Administration on Aging  
 Agency of Healthcare Research and Quality  
 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services  
 Department of Veterans Affairs  
 Food and Drug Administration  
 Indian Health Service  
 National Institutes of Health  
 National Science Foundation  
 The Surgeon General

### Non-Federal Representation:

Dr. Ronald Petersen (Chair)  
 Anita Albright  
 Dr. Laurel Coleman  
 Eric J. Hall  
 David P. Hoffman  
 Harry M. Johns  
 Dr. Jennifer J. Manly  
 Helen M. Matheny  
 David Hyde Pierce  
 Laura Trejo  
 George Vradenburg  
 Geraldine Woolfolk