

5th Annual State Dementia Services Coordinator (DSC) Summit October 27-28, 2026 – Washington, D.C.

****DRAFT as of August 1st - Subject to Change Without Notice****

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2026	
ALL DAY	Travel Day
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2026	
7:00am	Registration and Meeting Room Setup
7:30am	Registration Opens
7:30am	Breakfast Buffet Opens
8:30am	Opening Session: Five Years of the DSC Summit
9:15am	The State of the Science: 2026 Alzheimer's Research Update Alzheimer's research is advancing on multiple fronts, rapidly reshaping how the disease is prevented, detected, diagnosed, and treated. Every breakthrough carries direct implications for state government—from coverage mandates to long-term program planning. Drawing from the latest findings at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference and anticipated FDA actions, this session reviews the current state of the field. Presenters will examine the trajectory of blood-based biomarker testing, evaluate treatments that address symptoms or slow progression, and map out state-by-state coverage decisions for emerging diagnostics and therapeutics.
10:15am	BREAK
10:30am	A Mammogram Moment for Alzheimer's: The ASAP Act and the Future of Early Detection Early detection and diagnosis form the foundation of any meaningful response to Alzheimer's. For years, states have led efforts to educate the public on warning signs and cognitive changes. Now, breakthrough blood-based biomarkers present a "mammogram moment"—giving clinicians the ability to detect disease markers years before symptoms appear, opening doors to early intervention, lifestyle changes, and disease-modifying therapies. This session reviews current early detection approaches and explores the federal ASAP Act, which proposes Medicare coverage for Alzheimer's blood tests. An interactive discussion will follow to examine how widespread blood testing will impact state programs, health care providers, and policy.
11:15am	The Cost of Fear: How States Can Protect Workers from Biomarker Discrimination to Increase Diagnosis While blood-based biomarker tests offer revolutionary potential for early diagnosis, a critical protection gap remains: no federal law prevents biomarker discrimination in employment. Because the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) applies strictly to genetic data, individuals are increasingly avoiding diagnostic testing for fear of job loss and financial destabilization. This session explores the decision-making process patients undergo, analyzes the current state protection landscape, and highlights Illinois—the first state to enact statutory workplace protections for biomarker test results.
11:35am	Demonstrated Success: Five Summits of Progress As central leaders in state responses to Alzheimer's, Dementia Services Coordinators (DSCs) have driven

	landmark progress since the inaugural Summit in 2022. Veteran DSCs have modernized state plans, established new programs, and built dementia-capable infrastructure while navigating agency transitions, budget constraints, and political shifts. Bringing together past Summit participants, this panel reflects on the evolution of the DSC role, metrics for success, and strategies for sustaining momentum amid institutional change. Panelists will offer actionable advice, key partnership models, and strategic insights for new DSCs and states establishing initial responses.
12:20pm	Group Photo Gather in back near step and repeat
12:30pm	Networking Lunch
1:30pm	Caring for People Living with Dementia: Defining Quality in a New Era State Alzheimer's plans consistently call for improved care, yet a unified definition of "quality dementia care" remains elusive. Though individuals living with dementia represent a significant portion of long-term care populations, their unique needs are often overlooked in care delivery and oversight. This gap manifests in high direct-care worker turnover, improper use of antipsychotics, involuntary discharges, and improper placements. This discussion investigates how states can define and enforce quality care across licensure, professional boards, quality metrics, and coverage policies.
2:30pm	From Plan to Progress: Cross-Agency Coordination for DSCs State Alzheimer's plans set ambitious priorities that require cross-departmental execution. DSCs sit at the center of this work, coordinating across agencies to transform strategic objectives into measurable progress. This panel explores successful multi-agency collaboration, tactics for leveraging state advisory councils, and methods for keeping initiatives on track during leadership and budget shifts.
3:15pm	BREAK
3:30pm	BREAKOUT 1 Building the Foundation: State Plans and Councils for Emerging States A comprehensive state Alzheimer's plan serves as the primary roadmap for action. Designed for emerging state programs, this session breaks down how up-to-date plans spark statewide progress and how to engage stakeholders for maximum impact during creation and execution. Participants will analyze common policy roadblocks, develop targeted problem-solving strategies, and learn how an actionable plan positions a state to secure BOLD and other grant opportunities.
3:30pm	BREAKOUT 2 Scaling the Response: Funding the Next Phase of Your State Plan Translating state plan priorities into reality requires robust grant acquisition and management. This breakout demystifies the grant ecosystem: identifying overlapping federal funding streams, engaging agency partners, and mastering core grant administration skills. Attendees will workshop proposal ideas for future funding windows and outline readiness strategies for BOLD and other grant opportunities.
5:00pm	BREAK
6:00pm	Networking Reception
7:00pm	Dinner + Trivia
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2026	

7:30am	Breakfast Buffet Opens
8:30am	Opening Day 2
9:00am	Building the Path to Diagnosis: Closing Gaps in Access and Workforce Readiness Timely diagnosis is essential for care planning and treatment access, yet geographic isolation, specialist shortages, extended wait times, and clinical workforce gaps create major barriers. Innovative care models are breaking down these barriers to reimagine clinical preparation and diagnostic delivery. Featuring a state case study, this session demonstrates how provider education and community partnerships increase diagnostic rates. Additionally, speakers will highlight strategies for leveraging Rural Health Transformation Program funds to fortify dementia-capable workforces.
10:00am	BREAK
10:15am	Brain Health in Action: Turning Risk Reduction Findings into State Progress Following landmark U.S. POINTER Study findings proving structured lifestyle interventions protect cognitive health, states are tasked with embedding these practices into public health systems. This session reviews how states are capitalizing on federal alignment and available resources to drive public health adoption. Highlights include a state case study demonstrating how a Medicaid waiver and new Office of Nutrition embedded brain health into state infrastructure, alongside an interactive workshop translating the 10 Healthy Habits into public outreach.
11:45am	Networking Lunch
12:45pm	From Fragmented to Connected: How StARS Is Reshaping State Dementia Data Reliable data infrastructure is vital for modern public health, yet legacy state systems often remain siloed. The State Alzheimer's and Related Dementias (StARS) grant empowers states to modernize data networks to improve dementia services. This session introduces the StARS framework followed by two state implementation models: Virginia's unified data system across state agencies, universities, and health systems; and Maryland's integration of community aging providers with the state Health Information Exchange.
1:15pm	The DPRIT Effect: How States Are Leading in Dementia Research The establishment of the Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (DPRIT) marks a paradigm shift in state-funded research initiatives. As other states follow suit, DSCs are moving beyond traditional council roles to actively shape statewide research strategies. This session examines why the DSC-research connection is vital and details effective collaboration practices—from building academic partnerships to guiding state research investments.
2:00pm	Closing Session Brief reflection, "what you're taking back," mic-pass around the room, and Association follow-up commitments.
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