5th Annual State Dementia Services Coordinator (DSC) Summit

October 27-28, 2026 | Washington, D.C.

Agenda at a Glance

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2026	
7:30 a.m.	Registration & Breakfast Buffet Open
8:30 a.m.	Opening Session: Five Years of the State DSC Summit
9:15 a.m.	The State of the Science: 2026 Alzheimer's Research Update
10:15 a.m.	BREAK
10:30 a.m.	A Mammogram Moment for Alzheimer's: The ASAP Act and the Future of Early Detection
11:15 a.m.	The Cost of Fear: How States Can Protect Workers from Biomarker Discrimination to Increase Diagnosis
11:35 a.m.	Demonstrated Success: Five Summits of Progress
12:20 p.m.	Group Photo
12:30 p.m.	Networking Lunch
1:30 p.m.	Dementia Training in the States: What's Required, What's Working, What's Missing
2:30 p.m.	From Plan to Progress: Cross-Agency Coordination for DSCs
3:15 p.m.	BREAK
3:30 p.m.	Breakouts: Real Talk on State Plans: What Is Moving and What Is Stuck
5:00 p.m.	BREAK
6:00 p.m.	Networking Reception
7:00 p.m.	Dinner + Trivia
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2026	
7:30 a.m.	Breakfast Buffet Opens
8:30 a.m.	Opening Day 2
9:00 a.m.	Building the Path to Diagnosis: Closing Gaps in Access and Workforce Readiness
10:00 a.m.	BREAK
10:15 a.m.	Brain Health in Action: Turning Risk Reduction Findings into State Progress
11:45 a.m.	Networking Lunch
12:45 p.m.	From Fragmented to Connected: How StARS Is Reshaping State Dementia Data
1:15 p.m.	The DPRIT Effect: How States Are Leading in Dementia Research
2:00 p.m.	Closing Session
2:30 p.m.	ADJOURN

Session Details

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2026

7:30 a.m.	**Registration & Breakfast Buffet Open**
8:30 a.m.	**Opening Session: Five Years of the State DSC Summit** **Jennifer Rosen** Vice President, State Government Relations Alzheimer's Association/AIM
9:15 a.m.	**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. **Carter Harrison** Senior Director, State Regulatory & Legislative Affairs Alzheimer's Association/AIM **Courtney Kloske, Ph.D.** Director, Scientific Engagement Alzheimer's Association
10:15 a.m.	**BREAK**
10:30 a.m.	**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. **Robert Egge** Chief Public Policy Officer Alzheimer's Association/AIM **Carter Harrison**
11:15 a.m.	**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 individuals undergo, analyzes the current state protection landscape, and highlights Illinois—the first state to enact statutory workplace protections for biomarker test results. **Carter Harrison**

11:35 a.m. **Demonstrated Success: Five Summits of Progress**

As central leaders in a state's response 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.

Mike Splaine
Principal, Splaine Consulting

Heather G. Carter, DCM, MA, CDP, CSGF
Dementia Services Coordinator, Division of Aging, Care Navigation
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Jennifer Craig, MBA
Dementia Services Coordinator, Department for Aging and Independent Living
Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services

Patty Takawira, MPH
Dementia Services Coordinator, Center for Health Promotion
Minnesota Department of Health

12:20 p.m. **Group Photo**

12:30 p.m. **Networking Lunch**

StARS Cohort Table
*State agency attendees from **Virginia, Maryland, Florida, Georgia, Minnesota, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin** are asked to join Carter Harrison at **Tables 13 & 14** for a table-top discussion over lunch regarding their state's StARS work and/or interest in future funding opportunities.*

1:30 p.m. **Dementia Training in the States: What's Required, What's Working, What's Missing**

Dementia shows up across state government in community settings, in care settings and in crisis, and the workforce that meets people living with the disease has to recognize it and respond. A dementia-capable workforce is a dementia-trained workforce. This session reviews the national landscape of dementia training requirements profession by profession and examines best practices across training policies. Coordinators will share how they have advanced dementia training in their own states, with and without a mandate.

Andrew Ross, MPA
Director, State Policy
Alzheimer's Association/AIM

2:30 p.m. **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.

Jennifer Brewton, LMSW
Caregiver and Alzheimer's Resource Division Director
South Carolina Department on Aging

Mike Splaine
Principal, Splaine Consulting

Kristy Russell, MHL, CHES
Dementia Services Coordinator
Utah Department of Health and Human Services

3:15 p.m.	**BREAK**
3:30 p.m.	**Breakouts: Real Talk on State Plans: What Is Moving and What Is Stuck** A comprehensive state Alzheimer's plan serves as the primary roadmap for action. This breakout discussion examines 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.
5:00 p.m.	**BREAK**
6:00 p.m.	**Networking Reception**
7:00 p.m.	**Dinner + Trivia**

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2026

7:30 a.m.	**Breakfast Buffet Opens**
8:30 a.m.	**Opening Day 2**
9:00 a.m.	**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. **Alexis Bender, PhD** Associate Professor, Emory University School of Medicine Process Evaluation Lead, Georgia Memory Net **Dina P. McDonald, M.S., MATS, CADC-II** Dementia Team Lead, Division of Aging Services Georgia Department of Human Services **Rochelle Roberts, MOL** Dementia Director, Office of Healthy Aging Tennessee Department of Health **Michael Bruhn**
10:00 a.m.	**BREAK**
10:15 a.m.	**Brain Health in Action: Turning Risk Reduction Findings into State Progress** Following landmark U.S. POINTER Study findings showing structured lifestyle interventions can protect cognitive health, states are tasked with embedding these practices into public health systems. This session focuses on how states can advance that work through partnerships and existing infrastructure. Highlights include a case study showcasing how Louisiana is prioritizing dementia risk reduction, alongside an extended interactive workshop translating risk reduction strategies into public outreach. **Lacie Tillman, PhD, MPH** Chronic Disease Program Manager, Public Health & Policy New Orleans Department of Health & Human Services **Shelby Roberts, MPH** Senior Director, Public Health Alzheimer's Association **Tatiana Gonzalez Quiroga** Territory Government Relations Director, Southeast Alzheimer's Association

11:45 a.m.	**Networking Lunch**
12:45 p.m.	**From Fragmented to Connected: How StARS Is Reshaping State Dementia Data** Most states cannot say how many people with dementia touch their services, or what happens to them afterward. The data exists, but it sits in separate systems that were never built to talk to each other. The State Alzheimer's Research Support (StARS) grant gives states funding and technical assistance to change that. This session introduces StARS, followed by four states at different stages of the work: Virginia linking care coordination data with its statewide registry; Maryland connecting aging providers to the state health information exchange; Wisconsin measuring the return on its Dementia Care Specialist program; and Georgia following a single client from diagnosis into community supports. **Carter Harrison**
1:15 p.m.	**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. **Megan Graf Rowe, MPS** Alzheimer's Disease Program Manager, Health Promotion & Chronic Disease Prevention Section Texas Department of State Health Services **Jennifer Belkov** National Director, State Government Relations Alzheimer's Association/AIM **Andrew Ross, MPA**
2:00 p.m.	**Closing Session**
2:30 p.m.	**ADJOURN**