

The Honorable Brian Higgins  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Darin LaHood  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Paul Tonko  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Brett Guthrie  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

May 24, 2021

Dear Representatives Higgins, LaHood, Tonko and Guthrie:

On behalf of the undersigned individuals and organizations, thank you for your continued bipartisan leadership on issues important to Americans living with Alzheimer's and other dementia, and their caregivers. We write in strong support of the Comprehensive Care for Alzheimer's Act (S. 1125/H.R. 2517) which would ask the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) to implement a dementia care management model.

Caring for an individual with Alzheimer's or other dementias poses unique challenges. According to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, more than 95% of individuals with dementia have one or more other chronic conditions, such as hypertension, heart disease, and diabetes. A person with dementia is 4.4 times more likely to have six or more other chronic conditions as someone without dementia.

Managing these chronic conditions is impeded by an individual's cognitive impairment. As a consequence, health care utilization is significantly higher among seniors with dementia than among seniors without dementia. The annual hospitalization rate is twice as high; the use of skilled nursing facilities is nearly four times higher; and hospital/skilled nursing facility stays are nearly four times longer. In addition, on average, a senior with dementia will visit the emergency room more than once each year.

Many of these costs are simply unnecessary and could be avoided – if care was properly managed including better coordination of care, seamless navigation across the multitude of providers, and timely access to care and interventions. There are proven ways to improve the quality of care and quality of life – and reduce Medicare spending – if the payment barriers standing in the way are broken down. In light of the growing demand for comprehensive care for these vulnerable beneficiaries and appropriate reimbursement, we appreciate your interest in alternative payment and coordinated care models.

The Comprehensive Care for Alzheimer's Act would ask CMMI to implement a dementia care management model to test the effectiveness of comprehensive care management services for persons with dementia. The model would establish high standards of care, pay providers a monthly amount based on the complexity and quality of patient care, ensure caregivers are supported, and require outreach to underrepresented populations.

We deeply appreciate your leadership on behalf of all Americans living with Alzheimer's and other dementia. We look forward to working with you in a bipartisan manner to address these important issues.

Sincerely,

Alzheimer's Association  
Alzheimer's Impact Movement  
Alliance for Aging Research  
Alzheimer's Los Angeles  
American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry  
Association of California Caregiver Resource Centers (ACCRC)  
Baylor Scott and White Health  
Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging  
Biogen  
Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC)  
Education Development Center  
Eli Lilly & Company  
Gerontological Society of America  
Hackensack Meridian Health (New Jersey)  
Jewish Family & Community Services East Bay  
Lewy Body Dementia Association  
Livpact  
Milken Institute Alliance to Improve Dementia Care  
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)  
National PACE Association  
Rush University Medical Center  
USAgainstAlzheimer's

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