

Alzheimer's Association New Mexico Chapter

ALZHEIMER'S  ASSOCIATION[®]

Vision

A world without
Alzheimer's and all other
dementia[®].

The Alzheimer's Association's mission is to lead the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia. This is achieved by: accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support.



Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia

Alzheimer's disease is defined as a degenerative brain disease and the most common form of dementia. Alzheimer's falls under the Dementia *umbrella*.

- Alzheimer's accounts for an estimated 60% - 80% of dementia cases.
- 1 in 3 seniors die with some form of dementia.

Alzheimer's Disease in New Mexico 2025 Facts & Figures

- 46,000 – people 65 and older with Alzheimer's
- 67,000 – people who identify as caregivers
 - \$120M in unpaid value for caregiving hours
 - Caregivers often have or develop other chronic health conditions
- \$303M – Medicaid cost of caring for people with Alzheimer's and climbing
- 20.6% Hospital re-admission rate
 - Typical re-admission rate under 5%

New Mexicans Among Most at Risk

New Mexico's aging population faces a higher risk for developing Alzheimer's disease than almost every other state

- Ethnicity/race, gender, and pre-existing health issues create elevated risk factors



Research shows that older Hispanics/Latinos are about 1.5x as likely as older whites to develop AD, while older Native Americans and African-Americans have an even higher likelihood for the disease

State Level Policy Priorities

- Advance Risk Reduction and Care Planning
- Enhance Care and Support in Community
- Ensure Access to Diagnostics and Treatment
 - AD drugs and blood test coverage in State Employee Group Benefits Plan and Medicaid
- Support Quality Care

Federal Level Policy Priorities

- Increase Congressional Funding for NIH Research and the BOLD Act
- Alzheimer's Screening and Prevention Act
- Accelerating Access to Dementia and Alzheimer's Provider Training Act
- Credit for Caring Act

Collaboration with State is Key to Tackling Burden of Alzheimer's and Dementia

State government has a critical role in leading the charge to tackle the costly and broad burden of dementia. Public policy solutions are the most effective levers, in addition to public-private partnerships.

- The Alzheimer's Association, NM Chapter continues to help serve the State with expertise, policy development and implementation, advocacy, and care and support.

AA & ALTSD Public Awareness Campaign Received National Attention

Take Action. Talk.

Major national media reported on a robust statewide public awareness campaign developed collaboratively by the Aging and Long-Term Services Department and the Alzheimer's Association.

The PA campaign was delivered using billboard, radio, social media, transit, newspapers and magazines.



House Memorial 53 – 2025 Legislation

Rep. Herndon

HM 53 requests collaboration among ALTSD, DOH and AA to grow public understanding and awareness of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, focusing on risk reduction, early detection, and the relationship between chronic diseases and cognitive decline.

The workgroup will have its first planning meeting on July 30, 2025, and expects to have several meetings to develop and submit policy recommendations and report on agency-led initiatives relating to the requests of HM53.

Establishing a Dementia Care Specialist Program

An evidence-based policy solution

The Dementia Care Specialist (DCS) program model and how could it look in NM:

- Wisconsin established the first DCS program in 2013; GA, IN, MD, ND, LA have since adopted similar programs
- A DCS program could be administered by New Mexico's Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) or other established entity
- At least one DCS worker could be placed in each of New Mexico's AAA service areas

DCS Program Aligns with ALTSD and AAAs

AAAs have an existing strategic community presence and statewide footprint

Strengthens the AAA network, and better supports family caregivers, a core function of AAAs

Would advance local efforts to build dementia-friendly communities across the state

DCS Scope of Work

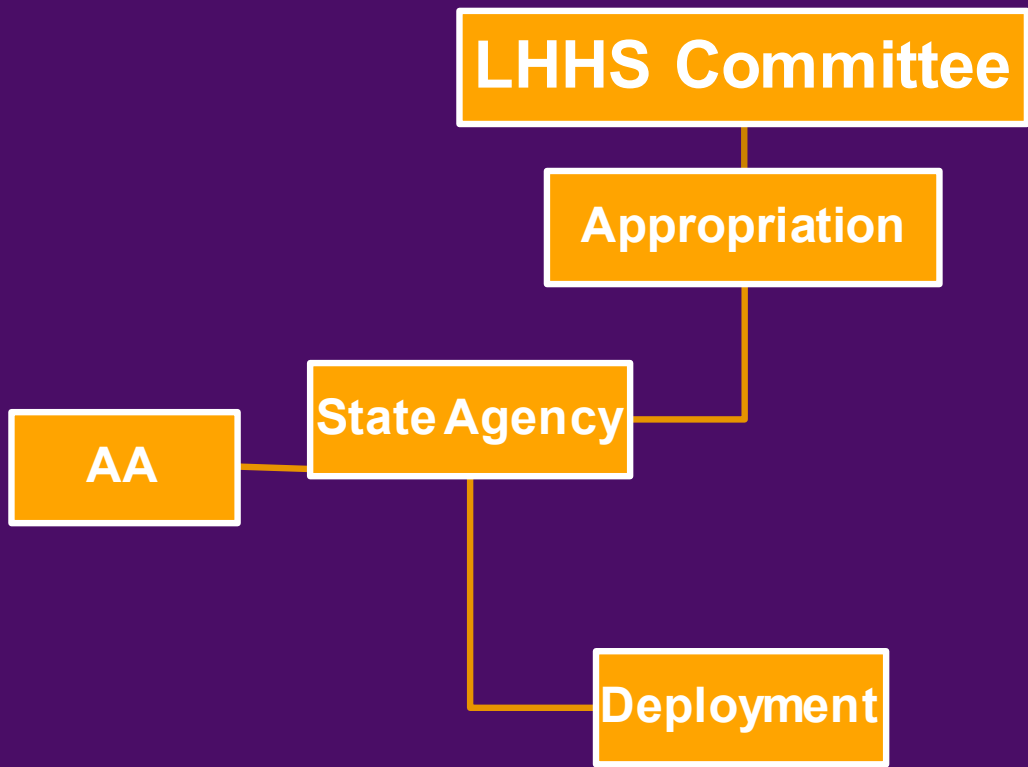
Caregiver education and support

Community-wide education and awareness

Facilitation of relationships with local health care providers and related stakeholders

Basic direct care worker education opportunities

Dementia Care Specialist program



Alzheimer's Association New Mexico Chapter

Donald Smithburg
Executive Director
DSmithburg@alz.org

Tommy Hernandez
Public Policy Director
TJHernandez@alz.org

Office of Alzheimer's and Dementia Care Update

Lifespan Respite Grant

- Education, training, respite services (family caregivers and professional workers)
- Dementia Care Specialist training

Office of Alzheimer's and Dementia State Plan 2026-2031

- Education, Workforce, Caregiving, Service, and Policy

HM 53 2025

- Dementia Task Force July 30th

