

# Coalition of New York State Alzheimer's Association Chapters 2009 Legislative Agenda

alzheimer's  association

## Top Legislative Priorities

Enhance Funding for Alzheimer's Community Services  
Maintain Medicaid Funding for Home Care  
Adopt the Omnibus Alzheimer's Services Act of 2009  
Adopt the Uniform Adult Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act

## Enhanced Funding for Alzheimer's Community Services

**T**he Alzheimer's Coalition has long been advocating for increased funding for programs specifically designed to keep individuals with Alzheimer's or dementia in their homes, thereby minimizing premature placement into an institution.

As a result of being directly involved with supporting families and individuals struggling with Alzheimer's disease, the Coalition is keenly aware of the potential implications this disease could have on New York's aging population. Inclusion of funding for programs related to Alzheimer's disease will not only generate significant cost savings for the state but will improve the coordination of care for individuals suffering from dementia related illnesses. Despite the scarcity of resources in this fiscal climate, the rate of Alzheimer's diagnosis continues to rise. The Coalition urges New York State to continue its investment of funding in community based programs for Alzheimer's disease.

During this tight fiscal time we would urge that funding for these programs remain at the FY2008-09 level. This level of resources allows Chapters to provide caregiver supports and a broad array of home

and community based care during the early stages of Alzheimer's and dementia. Access to such services helps family members remain in their roles for a longer period of time and reduces the need for premature institutional services. To ensure that this critical safety net is available for those individuals most in need, it is necessary to fund Chapter programs that support community based care.

## Maintain Medicaid Funding for Home Care

The Coalition supports maintaining Medicaid funding for long term services in the home and community settings. In addition, the Coalition supports initiatives designed to encourage the development of Medicaid financed respite care models designed to help caregivers remain in their role for as long as possible.

Individuals with dementia represent a significant portion of the users of Medicaid home and community care programs. Their families help them remain at home by willingly providing care, often in the face of many challenges, including behavioral symptoms and increased dependency as dementia progresses. People with disabilities, including those with dementia, and their caregivers benefit from participation in consumer-directed programs. Research supports that when supportive programs and services are

**The Coalition requests that the following appropriations be included in the SFY 2009-10 budget:**

- \$351,000 for the Alzheimer's Disease Community Assistance Programs (AlzCAP)
- \$250,000 for education, support services and early diagnosis related to Alzheimer's with language as is from 2008-09 budget
- \$250,000 for the services and expenses of the Alzheimer's Association chapters
- \$225,000 for the Alzheimer's Disease Coordinating Council

put into place, families can keep loved ones in their home for more than 550 days – avoiding premature placement in an institution and thus reducing costs for New York State. Allowing family caregivers to have input into the care of their loved one provides a benefit in quality of life to both the individual and the family.

## Omnibus Alzheimer's Services Act of 2009

The Coalition urges the passage of the Omnibus Alzheimer Service Act of 2009. This legislation comes about in response to legislation that was vetoed in 2008 (Veto # 179). Significantly, the Omnibus Act would create a statewide Silver Alert system; this is a prompt response and notification program

*Agenda continued on reverse side*

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## Our Mission

To eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health.

## Our Vision

The Coalition of New York State Alzheimer's Association Chapters is a recognized leader to effect systems change through ensuring that every political door is open, every voice is heard, and every legislative initiative contains the Association's voice to benefit people with Alzheimer's disease, their families and caregivers.

*Omnibus Alzheimer's Services Act of 2009 (continued)*

used by law enforcement to help locate cognitively impaired citizens who have been reported as missing. Among its other provisions this legislation would allow for the education and training of police officers with regard to individuals with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. This legislation is necessary to implement statewide protocols aimed at returning individuals with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias to their home as soon as possible. National statistics have shown that individuals suffering from these diseases, who are missing for over 24 hours, have a 60% chance of not

**Uniform Adult Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act**

being found alive. For these reasons this omnibus bill is critically important to these individuals, their families and caregivers.

Often, jurisdiction in adult guardianship cases is complicated because multiple states, each with its own adult guardianship system, may have an interest in the case. Consequently, it may be unclear which state court has jurisdiction to decide the guardianship issue. In response to this common jurisdictional confusion, the Uniform Law Commission developed the Uniform Adult Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act (UAGPPJA). The legislation establishes a uniform set of rules for determining jurisdiction, and thus, simplifies the process for determining jurisdiction between multiple states in adult guardianship cases. It also establishes a framework that allows state court judges in different states to communicate with each other about adult guardianship cases.

Due to the impact of dementia on a person's ability to make decisions and in the absence of other advanced directives, people with Alzheimer's disease may need the assistance of a guardian. Advocating for the adoption of a more uniform and efficient adult guardianship system will help remove uncertainty for individuals with dementia in crisis and help them reach appropriate resolution faster. For this reason the Coalition urges the adoption of this important legislation.

**Alzheimer's Disease By The Numbers**

- There are 5.2 million people with Alzheimer's in the United States.
- Alzheimer's disease is the 6th leading cause of death in America.
- 330,000 New Yorkers have Alzheimer's.
- New York caregivers provided more than 555 million hours of unpaid care last year at a market value of over \$5.8 billion.
- 66 percent of New York nursing home residents have a cognitive impairment.

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the compassion to care, the leadership to conquer