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New Alzheimer's Association Report Shows Growing Cost and Impact of Alzheimer's Disease on Nation's Families and Economy

- *Total annual payments for Alzheimer's care surpass a quarter of a trillion dollars -*
- *Deaths from Alzheimer's increase dramatically while deaths from other major causes decrease -*
- *Strain of providing Alzheimer's care harms caregivers' mental and physical health -*

CHICAGO, March 7, 2017 – For the first time, total payments exceeded a quarter of a trillion dollars (\$259 billion) for caring for individuals living with Alzheimer's or other dementias, according to data reported in the *2017 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures* report, released today by the Alzheimer's Association.

The report also includes new research on the disease's impact on caregivers, such as family members. “This report details the physical and mental damage many people experience when caring for someone with Alzheimer's,” said Beth Kallmyer, MSW, Vice President of Constituent Services for the Alzheimer's Association. “It also reveals how this burden disproportionately affects women, who tend to spend more time caregiving, take on more caregiving tasks and care for individuals with more cognitive, functional and behavioral problems.”

More than 15 million Americans provide unpaid care in the form of physical, emotional and financial support for the estimated 5.5 million Americans of all ages living with Alzheimer's dementia. In 2016, Alzheimer's caregivers provided an estimated 18.2 billion hours of unpaid care – a contribution to the nation valued at \$230.1 billion.

The *Facts and Figures* report illustrates that the strain of caregiving produces serious physical and mental health consequences. For instance, more than one out of three (35 percent) caregivers for people with Alzheimer's or another dementia report that their health has gotten worse due to care responsibilities, compared with one out of five (19 percent) caregivers for older people without dementia. Also, depression and anxiety are more common among dementia caregivers than among people providing care for individuals with certain other conditions.

“As the number of people with Alzheimer's continues to grow, so do the impact and cost of providing care,” said Kallmyer. “While we've seen recent increases in federal research funding and access to critical care planning and support services, there's still an urgent need to support research that can bring us closer to effective treatment options and, ultimately, a cure.”

Caring for someone living with dementia often falls on women, who make up two-thirds of Alzheimer's caregivers. New findings highlighted in the report show that of all dementia caregivers who provided care for more than 40 hours a week, 69 percent are women. Of those providing care to someone with dementia for more than five years, 63 percent are women.

Soaring Cost, Prevalence and Mortality

The report provides an in-depth look at the latest national statistics and information on Alzheimer's prevalence, incidence, use and costs of care, caregiving and mortality.

The report shows that, for the first time, total annual payments for health care, long-term care and hospice care for people with Alzheimer's and other dementias have surpassed a quarter of a trillion dollars (\$259 billion). Additionally, despite support from Medicare, Medicaid and other sources of financial assistance, individuals with Alzheimer's or other dementias still incur high out-of-pocket costs. The average per-person out-of-pocket costs for seniors with Alzheimer's and other dementias are almost five times higher than average per-person payments for seniors without these conditions (\$10,315 versus \$2,232).

Although deaths from other major causes have decreased, new data from the report shows that deaths from Alzheimer's have increased significantly. Between 2000 and 2014, deaths from heart disease decreased 14 percent, while deaths from Alzheimer's increased 89 percent.

Prevalence, Incidence and Mortality

- Of the estimated 5.5 million Americans with Alzheimer's dementia in 2017, 5.3 million people are age 65 and older and approximately 200,000 are under age 65 (younger-onset Alzheimer's).
- Barring the development of medical breakthroughs, the number of people age 65 and older with Alzheimer's dementia may nearly triple from 5.3 million to 13.8 million by 2050.
- Every 66 seconds, someone in the U.S. develops Alzheimer's dementia. By mid-century, someone in the U.S. will develop the disease every 33 seconds.
- Approximately 480,000 people—almost half a million—age 65 or older will develop Alzheimer's dementia in the U.S. in 2017.
- Two-thirds of Americans over age 65 with Alzheimer's dementia (3.3 million) are women.
- Alzheimer's is the sixth-leading cause of death in the U.S. and the fifth-leading cause of death for those ages 65 and older.
- Alzheimer's remains the only disease among the top 10 causes of death in America that cannot be prevented, cured or even slowed.

Cost of Paid and Unpaid Care

- Total national cost of caring for those with Alzheimer's and other dementias is estimated at \$259 billion (excludes unpaid caregiving), of which \$175 billion is the cost to Medicare and Medicaid alone.
- Total payments for health care, long-term care and hospice care for people with Alzheimer's and other dementias are projected to increase to more than \$1.1 trillion in 2050 (in 2017 dollars).

The 2017 *Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures* special report, titled “*Alzheimer's Disease: The Next Frontier*,” highlights advances in research that may allow for the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease before symptoms of Alzheimer's begin. By using biomarkers, researchers and clinicians will be able to improve how we identify and diagnose Alzheimer's disease. (View special report [news release here](#)). Full text of the *Facts and Figures* report, including the accompanying special report can be viewed [here](#). The Special Report will also appear in the April 2017 issue of *Alzheimer's & Dementia: The Journal of the Alzheimer's Association*.

About 2017 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures

The Alzheimer's Association 2017 *Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures* report is a comprehensive compilation of national statistics and information on Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. The report conveys the impact of Alzheimer's on individuals, families, government and the nation's health care system. Since its 2007 inaugural release, the report has become the preeminent source covering the broad spectrum of Alzheimer's issues. The *Facts and Figures* report is an official publication of the Alzheimer's Association.

About the Alzheimer's Association

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is 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 is a world without Alzheimer's. For more information, visit the Alzheimer's Association at alz.org or call the 24/7 helpline at 800-272-3900.

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