



February 7, 2012

Subject: Re' Draft Framework for the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease

I was informed by our national affiliate, the Assisted Living Federation of America, that the recently released "Draft Framework for the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease" omitted Assisted Living from all strategies and recommendations, with the exception of the strategy on elder abuse. We fully agree with their comments submitted on January 20, 2012.

In addition, I am writing on behalf of LeadingAge Colorado. We are the state affiliate of ALFA and LeadingAge. We represent the full spectrum of aging services and senior housing providers, including assisted living residences and nursing homes. In Colorado we have worked with providers, regulators, legislators, consumers, and other advocates to ensure that there are care options for seniors as their needs change over time. We have particularly looked at initiatives to allow more individuals with Alzheimer's Disease and related disorders to have home- and community-based options through our Medicaid Waiver program.

In coalition with the Colorado Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association we have spent a great deal of time in recent years educating policy makers about the important role that Assisted Living Residences play in providing an alternative to expensive nursing home care. The state chapter has been particularly helpful in our efforts to increase Medicaid waiver funding for assisted living residences in Colorado. We know that Medicaid recipients have been inappropriately placed in nursing homes when their diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders did not require twenty-four hour nursing care. We also know that demographic projections for our state include a higher than average projection for individuals who will be diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease and related disorders. Not only does it not make fiscal sense to omit this residential option from a national plan, consumers and their family members prefer the home-like environment and resident centered philosophy of care provided in Assisted Living residences.

I urge you to include Assisted Living Residences in this draft framework for the national plan. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura Landwirth".

Laura Landwirth
President & CEO