

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HHS Secretary Burwell Announces New Members of Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services

HHS Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell today announced six new members to serve on the Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services. The Council was established in 2011 and convenes quarterly to continue development and progress on the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease by HHS, Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, and the National Science Foundation to address the disease. The new members will replace the members whose terms had expired and those that retired in September and will advise the secretary on federal programs that affect people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and they will serve overlapping four-year terms.

The new member slate includes a patient advocate who is living with dementia. "It is critical, as we do this important work, that the consumer voice be represented on the Council," said Secretary Burwell.

The new members are as follows:

Myriam Marquez (Patient Advocate)

Ms. Marquez was diagnosed with young-onset Alzheimer's in 2009 and has been a fierce advocate ever since. Prior to her diagnosis, she served as a public defender in Washington State. Her legal background in county, state and federal public policy and her personal experience living with dementia has made her a deeply committed advocate for advancing dementia research, care and services.

Sowande Tichawonna (Caregiver)

Mr. Tichawonna is an award-winning independent filmmaker and actor from Washington, D.C. He was a caregiver for his mother, who suffered from dementia, and is currently caring for his son with Down Syndrome. His experiences will keep the concerns of the millions of caregivers around the country at the forefront of the Council's conversation.

Gary Epstein-Lubow (Health care Provider)

Dr. Lubow is an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Human Behavior at the Warren Alpert Medical School at Brown University. He is a geriatric psychiatrist with research, teaching, policy, clinical, and administrative experience related to treating persons with dementia in collaborative shared decision-making models with family caregivers.

Laura Gitlin (Researcher)

Dr. Gitlin is a professor and the Director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Innovative Care in Aging. She is nationally and internationally recognized in the areas of nonpharmacologic approaches in dementia care, family caregiving, functional disability and aging in place.

Angela Taylor (Voluntary Health Association)

Ms. Taylor serves as the Director of Programs at the Lewy Body Dementia Association (LBDA), and has the responsibility to oversee LBDA's national programs and services, including outreach, education, awareness programming, and research initiatives.

Donna Walberg (State Public Health Department)

Ms. Walberg provides Alzheimer's disease expertise and project development and management for the Minnesota Board on Aging, where she worked to draft and pass the legislation to create Minnesota's Alzheimer's Plan and served on the state-wide workgroup to develop the plan.

"We are pleased to have this group of experienced members who will continue the great work of the Advisory Council in assisting HHS with further progress on the national plan for Alzheimer's disease," said Secretary Burwell. "We received nearly a hundred nominations for this round of new members, which clearly demonstrates the level of engagement and continued passion towards making progress on this disease."

The full Advisory Council also includes federal members and meets quarterly to continue development and progress on the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease by HHS, Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, and the National Science Foundation to address the disease.

Alzheimer's disease currently affects 5.1 million Americans and is expected to affect more than 20 million by 2050. The National Alzheimer's Project Act, pledges to help people and families across the country whose lives are touched by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. The Act continues to help strengthen dementia research, clinical care, and long-term care services and supports for affected individuals and their families.

The next meeting of the Advisory Committee will be October 26, 2015. For more information on the Advisory Committee, please visit <http://aspe.hhs.gov/national-alzheimers-project-act>.

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Note: All HHS press releases, fact sheets and other press materials are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/news>.

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