

Federal Agency Updates

Facilitated by Maria-Theresa Okafor, PhD, MCG



ASPE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
PLANNING AND EVALUATION

OFFICE OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH,
DISABILITY, AND AGING POLICY

August 2026 Updates



Maria-Theresa Okafor, PhD, MCG
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Public Engagement Is Informing the 2026 National Plan Update

HHS is gathering live and written input to support a comprehensive update to the National Plan.



5 Listening sessions

≈250 participants



Request for Information

Public comment underway



2026 - 2035 National Plan

Public input will help shape
future goals and priorities



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We want to hear from you!



Submit RFI comments

[Visit regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov)

Docket: HHS-ASPE-2026-0298

Public comment is open through Aug. 15, 2026.

Additional resources



National Plan webpage

View National Plan updates and related NAPA documents.

[ASPE National Plan webpage](#)



Questions and general NAPA comments

Use the general NAPA inbox for questions, comments, and follow-up.

napa@hhs.gov



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CDC Update 2026

1. Building Our Largest Dementia (BOLD) Infrastructure Cooperative Agreement

- *2026 Primary Activity:* Deploying ~\$41.5 million in FY2026 funding, the highest annual investment to date.
- Supporting 43 state, tribal, local, and territorial health departments in implementing their strategic plans.
- Convened recipients at the 2026 BOLD Learning Action Institute to facilitate peer learning, technical support, and networking opportunities

2. National Healty Brain Initiative (HBI) Combined Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

- *2026 Primary Activity:* Evaluating, selecting and funding applications for a new combined NOFO ([cdc-rfa-dp-26-0227](https://www.cdc.gov/rfa/dp-26-0227)).
- The NOFO has three components, the National HBI, Public Health Centers of Excellence, and ADRD Adoption Accelerators. Together, recipients will build and translate the evidence base for promoting brain health to address the needs of all people affected by ADRD. Total funding is expected to be about \$7M per year across the three components.
- The submission window has closed, and CDC received 28 applications. CDC is reviewing applications now and anticipates distributing awards to at least seven recipients later this summer.

3. Data Collection & Surveillance

- *2026 Primary Activity:* Integration of specialized modules for older adults into the 2026 BRFSS survey cycle to capture cognitive decline (32 states) and caregiving trends (27 states).
- Expanding the Alzheimer's Disease and Healthy Aging Data Portal to include county-level risk factor "heat maps".





CMS National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA)

July 2026

- › CMCS 1115 Waivers and demonstrations
- › CMMI model tests
- › Innovation Accelerator Program

- › Advanced Alternative payment models
- › ACOs, PCMH, Bundles
- › Multi-payer State agreements
- › Prevention and Population Health
- › Rapid Cycle Evaluation

- › Quality Improvement Organizations
- › Hospital Innovation & Improvement Networks

- › Provider Enrollment
- › Fraud, Waste & Abuse Prevention & Detection
- › Medical Review
- › Audits and Investigations

- › Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight (CCIIO); Marketplace



- › Hospital Inpatient including IRFs
- › Hospital Outpatient
- › In-patient psychiatric hospitals
- › Cancer hospitals
- › Nursing homes
- › Home Health Agencies
- › Long-term Care Acute Hospitals
- › In-patient rehabilitation facilities
- › Hospices

- › CLIA
- › Target surveys
- › Quality Assurance Performance Improvement

- › Hospitals, Home Health Agencies, Hospices, ESRD facilities, Marketplace, Plans

- › Parts A, B, C, D
- › VBP hospitals, SNF, HHA,
- › ESRD Payment adjustments HAC, hospital RRP
- › Physician Quality Payment Program (QPP)

Enhance Care Quality and Efficiency : 2027 Proposed Physician Fee Schedule

- ▶ In the 2027 Proposed Physician Fee Schedule, CMS has released a Request for Information on Intensive Lifestyle Interventions to Slow Progression of Alzheimer's Disease.
- ▶ CMS is requesting comments discuss: cost savings, fraud, waste and abuse, biomarkers, essential domains, whether it is a one time or recurring service, who should be eligible, who should be on the interdisciplinary team, supervision, frequency of sessions and minimum number of weeks, in person versus virtual service and how applications in the Health Technology Ecosystem can support.
- ▶ Comments are due 9/14/26

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/07/16/2026-14327/medicare-and-medicaid-programs-cy-2027-payment-policies-under-the-physician-fee-schedule-and-other#p-963>

Enhance Care Quality and Efficiency : Quality Reporting

- ▶ The Age-Friendly attestation in the Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting (IQR) Program promotes the evaluation of cognition in the acute care setting. The Hospital IQR Program is a pay for reporting program.
- ▶ The measure collection started with the CY 2025 reporting period/FY 2027 payment determination.
- ▶ In Domain 3, Frailty and Screening and Intervention, systems are required to use validated screening for cognition, delirium, mobility and malnutrition and generate a management plan based on the screening results.

<https://www.cms.gov/medicare/quality/initiatives/hospital-quality-initiative/inpatient-reporting-program>

Enhance Care Quality and Efficiency : Modernizing Nursing Home Oversight with New Risk-Based Survey

- ▶ CMS is introducing a new Risk-Based Survey (RBS) process is designed to improve efficiency and effectiveness in nursing home oversight; these surveys are the primary activity to oversee the health and safety of nursing home residents.
- ▶ Permits higher quality facilities to undergo a more focused survey protocol requiring less onsite time and a smaller survey team, while continuing to ensure compliance with health and safety standards.
- ▶ In 2023, CMS began testing a RBS in 22 states and over 100 facilities and About 12% of all nursing facilities will qualify for the new risk-based survey process initially.
- ▶ CMS will place an icon on Nursing Home Care Compare website identifying facilities that qualify for the RBS which indicates a higher level of performance.
- ▶ The RBS survey will be implemented nationwide beginning September 8, 2026

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/qso-26-14-nh-original-release-2026-07-16.pdf>

Enhance Care Quality and Efficiency : GUIDE Model

- ▶ CMS continues to administer and expand the GUIDE Model.
- ▶ CMS is pleased to report an increase in the number of partners engaged with the program. This growth reflects our ongoing commitment to expanding collaboration and broadening the program's reach with local community organizations.
- ▶ CMS has increased stakeholder outreach on the model.
- ▶ Participants have received their performance measure scores for Performance Year 2 (PY2). CMS is encouraging participants to review their scores carefully and reach out with any questions or concerns as they plan for the upcoming performance period.

Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care and Services – Quarterly Update

Michael R. Butkovich, Integration and Coordination Division Senior Director
Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

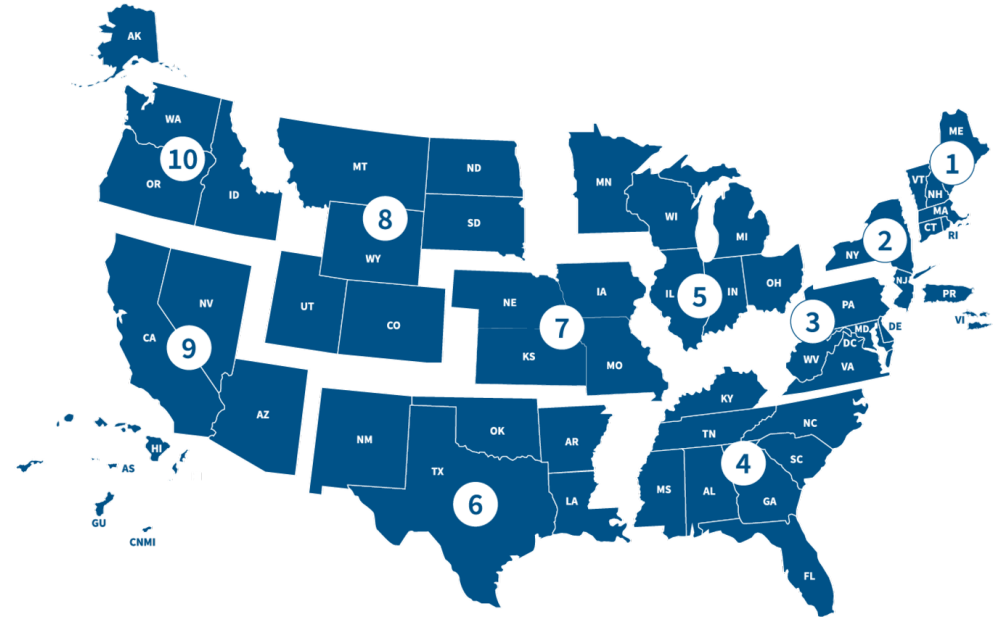


FEMA

What is FEMA?

FEMA helps state, local, Tribal Nation and territorial partners manage a growing range of threats and hazards—from traditional natural disasters to complex homeland security incidents —while supporting resilience, continuity and whole-community coordination.

- Coordinates federal disaster and emergency response
 - Locally executed, State/Tribal Nation-managed, and federally supported
- Supports communities through preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation
- Partners with state, local, tribal and territorial governments to prioritize the safety and resilience for all, including people with disabilities



Helping People Before, During and After Disasters.



FEMA

FEMA Alzheimer's Task Force

Integrating needs of individuals with Alzheimer's and other dementias throughout FEMA operations, including response, recovery, mitigation and preparedness, and in training to state, local, tribal, and territorial partners.

- Includes FEMA representation from:
 - Office of Response and Recovery/Individual Assistance
 - U.S. Fire Administration
 - Mission Support
 - FEMA Medical Division
 - Integration and Coordination Division (includes Disability Integration)



FEMA

Training for Responders



- Integrate information about Alzheimer's and related dementias in the following:
 - FEMA training programs
 - U.S. Fire Administration training
 - FEMA training exercises
 - FEMA policies and guidance
- Expand partnerships with advocacy organizations to share best practices



FEMA

Resources

- FEMA.gov: Guidance for responders, families and caregivers (<https://www.fema.gov/fact-sheet/fema-assistance-available-survivors-disabilities-0>)
- Ready.gov: Disaster and emergency preparedness tips for people with disabilities, including people with Alzheimer's and related dementia (<https://www.ready.gov/people-disabilities>)



FEMA

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FEMA

Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program Update

- The Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Programs (GWEPs) uses the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Age-Friendly Health Systems 4Ms Framework—What Matters, Medication, Mentation, and Mobility—as the foundation for delivering person-centered, age-friendly care to older adults for older adults.
- Johns Hopkins University GWEP partners with the Johns Hopkins AIDS Education and Training Center to enhance the care of older adults living with HIV through interprofessional education grounded in the Age-Friendly Health Systems 4Ms Framework. Training emphasizes integrated geriatrics and primary care, HIV and aging, cognitive health, care coordination, and the management of multimorbidity and polypharmacy.
- The 42 GWEPs received supplemental funding (\$1M) to develop and deliver education on Limbic-predominant age-related TDP-43 encephalopathy and Multiple Etiology Dementia.



Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Research Update

Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services Meeting

Richard J. Hodes, M.D., Director, NIA

Amy Bany Adams, Ph.D., Acting Director, NINDS



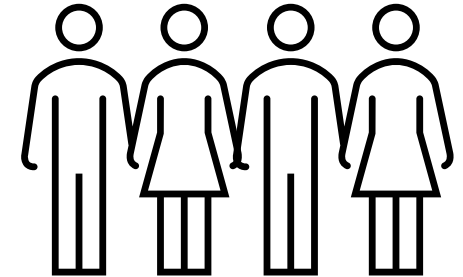
National Institutes of Health
Turning Discovery Into Health

August 3, 2026

The Societal Impact of Dementia in 2026

According to a recent NIH-funded study:

- In 2026, **5.7 million** US adults aged 51 and older are living with dementia, supported by **5.2 million** care partners.
- The total cost of dementia will reach **\$818 billion** this year in the U.S.



The impact goes beyond medical costs and includes hours of unpaid care by family and friends, earnings losses, and declines in quality of life.

Total Cost of Dementia by Cost Category, 2026

Cost category	Annual cost	% of total
Quality-of-life loss for persons living with dementia	\$320B	39%
Unpaid care from care partners	\$237B	29%
Medical and long-term care	\$222B	27%
Quality-of-life loss for care partners	\$15B	2%
Forgone earnings of persons living with dementia	\$14B	2%
Forgone earnings of care partners	\$9B	1%

Total: \$818B

Thunell, J., et al. (2026). *Alzheimers Dement.*, 22(6):e71480

A Clinical Trial to Test Lifestyle Interventions

U.S. POINTER was a randomized clinical trial designed to evaluate whether lifestyle interventions that simultaneously target many risk factors protect cognitive function in approximately 2,000 older adults who are at increased risk for cognitive decline.

Results: A multidomain lifestyle intervention – including exercise, diet, cognitive and social engagement, and health monitoring – improved global cognition in high-risk older adults over two years. [Baker, L.D., et al. \(2025\). JAMA, 334\(8\):681-691.](#)

Funded by:



U.S. POINTER Neuroimaging Ancillary Study added important neuroimaging measurements, including:

- PET imaging to measure amyloid and tau proteins, and
- MRIs to measure details in the brain including volume, white matter integrity, and blood flow.

Results:

- The structured intervention may enhance cognitive resilience in people with low hippocampal volume or elevated brain tau. [Harrison, T.M., et al. \(2026\). JAMA Neurol., 83\(6\):521-529.](#)
- Lifestyle interventions attenuated changes in a cerebrovascular MRI marker (white matter free water) over time in people under age 70 but not among those 70 years or older, suggesting greater benefit when interventions are implemented earlier in late life. [Maillard, P., et al. \(2026\). JAMA Netw Open, 9\(7\):e2620353.](#)



Funded by NIH

NIH is funding three other ancillary studies focusing on neurovascular function, sleep, and the microbiome



New Alzheimer's Blood Biomarker May Predict Symptom Onset

- According to a new NIH-funded study, **blood-based circular RNAs may signal near-term Alzheimer's symptoms**, with elevated levels nearly tripling the risk of developing cognitive symptoms.
- **Researchers identified 34 AD-associated circular RNAs** from more than 1,200 people across multiple independent cohorts.
- **Circular RNAs outperformed pTau217 at predicting disease progression**, with levels diverging from normal about two to four years before symptom onset.



New AD/ADRD Research Implementation Milestones Informed by the 2024 NIH AD Research Summit

Epidemiology / Population Studies

- [Milestone 1V: Population Studies: Lifecourse exposome studies](#)
- [Milestone 1X: Population Studies: Exposome mechanisms](#)
- [Milestone 1Y: Population Studies: Neurodevelopmental and neuropsychiatric factors](#)

Disease Mechanism:

- [Milestone 2DD: Lifespan and healthspan approach](#)
- [Milestone 2EE: Molecular taxonomy](#)
- [Milestone 2FF: Research rigor and translatability](#)

Diagnosis, Assessment, and Disease Monitoring

- [Milestone 9X: Biomarkers: Multimodal biomarkers](#)



Translational Research and Clinical Interventions

- [Milestone 6K: Drug Development/Novel Targets: NPS in AD/ADRD](#)
- [Milestone 7G: Combination therapy: Experimental medicine](#)
- [Milestone 7H: Drug repurposing and combination therapy: leverage trials data and biosamples](#)
- [Milestone 10I: Trial design: Innovative methods and rigor](#)
- [Milestone 12M: Participant engagement: Lived experience](#)

Research Resources

- [Milestone 3J: Data sharing: Reuse of real world data \(RWD\)](#)
- [Milestone 3K: Data sharing: FAIR Data Ecosystem](#)

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/2024-alzheimers-summit>

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/research/milestones>

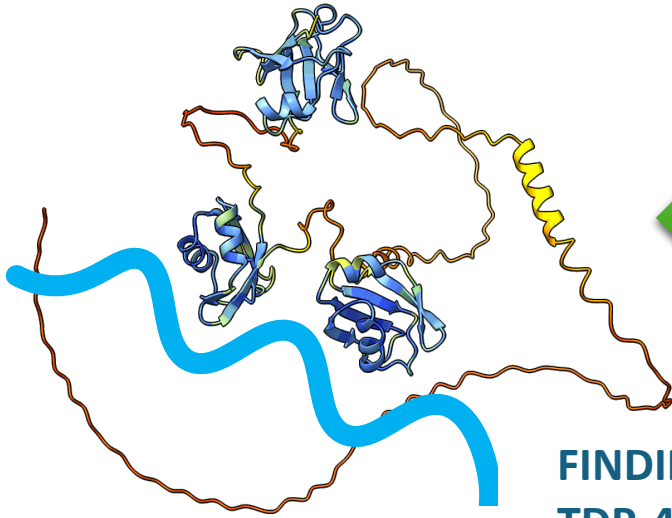
A therapeutic strategy for TDP-43 proteinopathy: Short RNAs that restore TDP-43 nuclear localization



In healthy neurons, TDP-43 plays a crucial role in regulating gene expression and RNA processing within the nucleus

In ADRD, TDP-43 accumulates in the cytoplasm of neurons and glia, creating harmful aggregates and leading to a loss of normal function

TDP-43



TDP-43 aggregate



FINDING: Short RNA chaperones bind TDP-43, inhibit aggregation, restore nuclear localization and normal function

RNA



MECHANISTIC INSIGHT:

Short RNAs can bind cytoplasmic TDP-43 and induce changes to the structure, restoring TDP-43 function and solubility

IMPLICATIONS: Like Anti-Sense Oligos (ASOs), these small RNAs could be optimized as therapeutic candidates.

Short RNA chaperones promote aggregation-resistant TDP-43 conformers to mitigate neurodegeneration. Copley et al., Science, May 2026.

Advisory Council on Parkinson's Research, Care, and Services Update



Part of the Dr. Emmanuel Bilirakis and Honorable Jennifer Wexton National Plan to End Parkinson's Act, the Council was established to coordinate Federal efforts, accelerate research, improve care, and enhance support for those living with Parkinson's and their families.

Inaugural meeting held on
June 29th, 2026

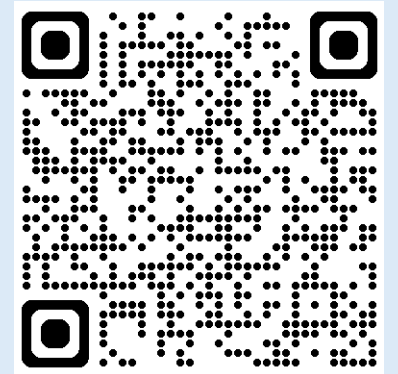
Next meeting scheduled for
August 24th, 2026

Watch the recording on the HHS YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/c/HHS/videos>

Stream it live on the HHS website:
<https://www.hhs.gov/live/index.html>

Request for information due August 22nd: NINDS is seeking broad public input to support development of the National Plan to End Parkinson's and inform the work of the Advisory Council on Parkinson's Research, Care, and Services

<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-NS-26-039.html>



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