



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Commission

Patricia W. Slattum, Ph.D., Chair

March 13, 2012

Dear Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care and Services:

Having just recently released the *Dementia State Plan: Virginia's Response to the Needs of Individuals with Dementia and their Caregivers*, the Virginia Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Commission (Commission) welcomes the *Draft National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease (Draft Plan)*. The emphasis on promoting research and developing new treatments that prevent and effectively treat the disease, expanding support for people with the disease and their families, and enhancing care quality and coordination are shared goals of both plans and we look forward to working together as state and federal partners in addressing the rapidly mounting Alzheimer's crisis.

Regarding *Draft Plan Goal 1: Prevent and Effectively Treat Alzheimer's Disease by 2025*, the Commission promotes research, supports all strategies to facilitate dissemination of research findings into medical practice and public health programs, and would welcome federal funding for provider education and outreach. Under *Draft Plan Goal 2: Enhance Care Quality and Efficiency*, Virginia's own plan calls for coordinating quality dementia services, integrated systems of care, and development of dementia specific training. The Commission welcomes any federal support of this state plan strategy.

The action items in *Draft Plan Goal 3: Expand Supports for People with Alzheimer's Disease and their Families* mirror our own state plan recommendation, "In order to survive, families need dementia friendly solutions for their safety, services and behavioral concerns, including: assessment and diagnosis, counseling and support services, care management, respite care, assistive technologies and home modification, transportation, and payment options including long-term care insurance." Additionally, the Commission supports *Draft Plan* action items for legal services and stable housing for people with the disease. Because of Virginia's large military and veteran population, the Commission advocates for federal and state partnerships to meet the dementia care needs of this population.

As noted in *Draft Plan Goal 4: Educate the Public About Alzheimer's Disease*, some states and localities "have published plans to address AD that cover many of the same issues as the National Plan. Leveraging the available resources and programs across these levels of government will aid in the success of these efforts" to advance Alzheimer's Disease awareness and readiness across all levels of government. Finally, both Virginia's plan and the *Draft Plan* recognize the need to improve data collection to better understand the disease's impact on people with the disease, their families, and the healthcare system and, therefore, *Draft Plan Goal 5: Improve Data to Track Progress* is also imperative. Specifically, the Commission requests coordination of shared federal and state data and the removal of barriers to sharing of information and best practices.

The Commission looks forward to the final version of the *National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease* this spring as the Commonwealth is just beginning its state plan implementation. Concerted efforts in national and state strategic planning will provide the best chance to overcoming this dreaded disease.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia W. Slattum".

Patricia W. Slattum, Chair

Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Commission

<http://www.vda.virginia.gov/alzcommission.asp>

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