

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Robyn McGill, Marketing Communications Manager  
(414) 479-8800 | [rmcgill@alz.org](mailto:rmcgill@alz.org)



**Alzheimer's Association Awarded \$500,000 Grant from Wisconsin Department of Health Services to Expand Alzheimer's Awareness**

**Milwaukee, WI – August 28, 2018** – The Alzheimer's Association Wisconsin Chapter Network is pleased to announce it has been awarded a one-time \$500,000 grant from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. These funds will be used to increase awareness of Alzheimer's disease and dementia in rural and underserved urban counties throughout Wisconsin.

The grant, made available through the state legislature's passage of the 2017 Wisconsin Act 186 Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Grant, will be used to immediately mount a major media-driven Alzheimer's awareness campaign designed to increase understanding of the disease and highlight available resources in underserved communities and reduce stigma associated with a dementia diagnosis. The campaign will be supported by diverse programmatic partner organizations across the state, including county Aging & Disability Resource Centers, that are well positioned to: provide information and referral services or education; care and support to diverse audiences in underserved communities; or boost awareness of Alzheimer's and dementia within the communities they serve.

"Alzheimer's disease is one of the nation's largest public health crises," said Dave Grams, executive director, Alzheimer's Association Southeastern Wisconsin. "As the nation's leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research, the Alzheimer's Association is very well positioned and extremely honored to lead the "Wisconsin Campaign for Alzheimer's Awareness."

The Association has engaged the services of two committed media partners for this creative campaign. Cramer-Krasselt, one of the largest independent advertising agencies in America, will bring their innovative creative thinking and deep knowledge base of Alzheimer's disease advertising and messaging to develop the campaign creative. Haworth Marketing + Media will lead the media buying strategy. These professional services, valued at \$115,000 will be entirely pro bono due to the existing relationship the agencies already have with the Alzheimer's Association home office.

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According to the Plan for a Dementia Capable Wisconsin developed by the Department of Health Services an estimated 115,000 people with dementia resided in Wisconsin in 2015, and that number is expected to grow to 242,000 by 2040. State public health surveys and referrals to county human service programs confirm that as many as 50% of people with dementia do not have an accurate diagnosis. Ninety percent of people with dementia live in the greater community. Nearly 30% live alone. Two-thirds of those individuals report receiving no help from family or friends.

Multicultural populations are hit hardest, with African Americans twice as likely to have Alzheimer's as older whites, and Hispanics about one and one-half times as likely to have Alzheimer's as older whites. According to the Down Syndrome Society, 50% or more of people with Down syndrome will develop Alzheimer's as they age. While LGBT older adults are not necessarily at greater risk for this disease, they face significant health disparities due to stigma, discrimination and fear. Native Americans and other individuals living in poor rural areas of the state have little access to healthcare resources, transportation or the internet.

"The vast resources being committed to the Wisconsin Campaign for Alzheimer's Awareness through the partnership between the Alzheimer's Association, Cramer-Krasselt and Haworth Marketing + Media will be brought to bear in ways that may have natural opportunities for Alzheimer's awareness initiatives across the nation, making Wisconsin the groundbreaking state in these efforts," said Grams.

### **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®. Visit [alz.org](http://alz.org) or call 800.272.3900.

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