



Dear Chair Billinger and members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee:

As you are preparing your recommendations for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment budget, the Alzheimer's Association is grateful for the opportunity to request funding that is important to those with Alzheimer's in Kansas and their families. Kansas' aging population is increasing rapidly. The Alzheimer's Association is very concerned about the Kansas residents under age 65 and on Medicaid who are experiencing cognitive impairment or dementia. These individuals lack access to cognitive assessment and care planning services provided by a clinician that is otherwise available to other Kansans. Almost 55,000 Kansans are living with Alzheimer's. We know this number will only increase in the coming years.

Seeing the need for cognitive assessment and care planning, in 2017 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) created a billing code – CPT 99483 – to reimburse providers who provide cognitive assessment and care planning services. This billing code allows clinicians to be reimbursed for providing a comprehensive set of services such as evaluating cognition, assessing function, measuring behavioral symptoms, creating a care plan, and more. Medicare covers this service nationwide, but the code is an elective service on state Medicaid plans. Nearly half the country has adopted the code including most recently West Virginia and South Dakota.

Having this code reimbursed by Medicaid is critically important because people are getting diagnosed with Alzheimer's at a younger age. Early detection of Alzheimer's or another dementia offers significant benefits for the person diagnosed and their loved ones, including greater access to treatment options and the ability to plan for the future. Currently, the FDA approved treatments that may slow disease progression are approved for people in the early stage of Alzheimer's, making a timely diagnosis critically important.

Care planning, the other aspect of the code, is equally as important. The individual with Alzheimer's and their families often do not know what resources are available, what lifestyle changes are needed, etc. Proper care planning is a significant part of the process for someone diagnosed with Alzheimer's, especially considering that more than 95% of people with Alzheimer's or other dementias have one or more other chronic conditions. Alzheimer's complicates the management of these other conditions — and as a consequence, increases costs. This disease is devastating for anyone facing it, and particularly devastating to younger adults who have families, careers, or are even caregivers themselves. Covering this code can help.

Care planning for those with Alzheimer's can also save on Medicaid costs because it can prevent hospitalization by proactively addressing potential safety risks at home through environmental modifications, establishing consistent routines, managing medications effectively, providing proper nutrition, and utilizing community support services, which can help maintain quality of life and minimize the need for emergency interventions or hospital stays. As you know the Medicaid costs for hospitalizations are high and the pressure on the workforce keeps increasing. The average cost in Medicaid dollars each day for hospitalizations is \$2500. The average hospitalization stay is ten days for those with dementia. If just two days of the ten are saved through care planning, **the state will save a minimum of \$450,000 each year by adding this coverage.**





We ask that the state legislature act now to provide the necessary funding to add coverage of CPT 99483 for reimbursement. Not only will this address the need for diagnosis and proper care planning, but it will also enable the state to track how many people on Medicaid are being diagnosed with Alzheimer's. With the code, trends can be studied and policy making can be better informed.

Therefore, **we request \$632,471 including \$242,584 SGF to reimburse providers for cognitive assessment and care planning services for those on Medicaid.**

Jamie Gideon, Kansas Director of Public Policy, Alzheimer's Association, jjgideon@alz.org (316) 448-6588

