

The
SHRIVER
REPORT

Welcome to A Woman's Nation. Women are half the workforce, raise our children and care for our elderly. Now there's a new pressure on this Woman's Nation: Alzheimer's disease. We have learned:

- Women are at the epicenter of the Alzheimer epidemic. Two-thirds of the people over 65 who have Alzheimer's (3.3 million of the estimated 5.1 million) are women. And among the 11.2 million Alzheimer and dementia caregivers in the United States, 60 percent (6.7 million) are women. That is 10 million American women who either have Alzheimer's or are caring for someone with the disease.
- More than half of all Americans now know someone with the disease. Almost 30 percent of Americans now have a family member with Alzheimer's.
- To know Alzheimer's is to fear it: 9 out of 10 Americans who know someone with the disease are concerned that they or someone close to them will get it.
- The annual per-patient cost of Alzheimer's is now \$56,800, the lion's share of it borne by families. Unpaid family caregivers spend \$4 billion a year on their own health care due to the stress and strain of caregiving. The overall cost of Alzheimer's to American government, business and families is a whopping \$300 billion per year and growing.
- Nearly 40 percent of Alzheimer caregivers say they had no choice but to become the caregiver. About 40 percent of women said they're doing the caregiving because they're the only women in their families.
- By large margins, working women find it easier to find good child care than elder care. And 46 percent of working women say they've wanted time off from the job for Alzheimer's care and couldn't get it.
- Depression, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and insulin resistance have all been linked with an increased risk of Alzheimer's.
- Spouses of people with Alzheimer's and other dementias are six times more likely to develop dementia themselves.
- At the same time the federal government is spending about \$6 billion on cancer research and about \$4 billion on research into cardiovascular disease this coming year, it's investing less than \$500 million in Alzheimer research.
- There's no cure yet, but there is hope. Scientists say advances in early diagnosis like biomarkers may point the way to treatments that could slow or stop the progression of Alzheimer's disease.



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alzheimer's association

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A Woman's Nation Takes on Alzheimer's

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the Alzheimer's Association

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What One City Is Doing

Last year, our city's Alzheimer's/Dementia Expert Panel issued its report, *2020 Foresight: San Francisco's Strategy for Excellence in Dementia Care*. Our city has begun implementing its recommendations, which call for:

- low-cost initiatives for caregiver education and training, plus enhanced access to services
- a pilot project to improve care coordination
- promotion of guidelines and standards to ensure high-quality services
- policy initiatives to enable the better management of resources and an investment in community-based care that may reduce the use of more intensive, higher-cost services
- a demonstration project to create a chronic-care management system

Our goal is to improve the quality of life not only for San Franciscans with Alzheimer's but for their caregivers as well. For more information on *2020 Foresight: San Francisco's Strategy for Excellence in Dementia Care*, go to www.sfhsa.org/asset/ReportsDataResources/2020ForesightStrategyForExcellenceinDementiaCare.pdf

— *San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom*