

Recognizing the Signs



Changes in memory and behavior are often the first signs it's time to talk about care.

GETTY

By Krysten Godfrey Maddocks
Union Leader Staff

It's normal to forget an appointment or the name of a person you've just met. Making mistakes with medication, unpaid bills, and getting lost in familiar neighborhoods are harder for loved ones to explain away.

When families notice these slip-ups, making the decision to seek a diagnosis and decide what to do next can be a complicated and emotional journey.

Friends and relatives may notice their loved one isn't communicating or performing tasks as well as they did before, even though that person might seem fine during a short conversation.

That's because many people with cognitive impairment, or dementia, fill in any memory blanks with explanations that

“Seeking additional support is not a sign of failure. It's often one of the most compassionate decisions a family can make.”

MICHAEL TUBBS
Benchmark Senior Living

sound believable, according to Dr. Kaitlyn Carbone, a clinical neuropsychologist at Elliot Neurocognitive Services.

While this makes it challenging for family members to discern whether someone is truly experiencing a memory disorder, a combination of imaging, blood tests and neurological testing can confirm impairment. There are certain signs families can look for to know when it's time to explore



Dr. Kaitlyn Carbone

more aggressive testing, Carbone said.

“Are we getting frequently lost when we're driving or having pretty frequent accidents or fender benders? Are we forgetting our medications— not once a month or once every couple of weeks, because again, we're all human — but a couple times a week and they're important medications?” she said. “Those would be signs to come in when it starts to impact those functional things.”

Before patients undergo testing with a neuropsychologist, they typically see their primary care provider first. Their provider may

conduct a brief cognitive screening and order bloodwork to rule out physical conditions that can affect memory and thinking, including thyroid problems, vitamin deficiencies or infections.

A neurologist may also order imaging or other tests before referring a patient for an in-depth neuropsychological evaluation. That's where doctors like Carbone can more accurately measure patient recall, language abilities, attention span, processing speed, executive functioning and visual-spatial skills.

“If you're wondering if there's an issue with your car, we're the

test drivers. So, we take your brain on a test drive. I say, I like to put the pedal to the metal,” Carbone said.

Neuropsychologists review results and compare them to what would typically be expected for someone of a similar age, education level and background.

They may consider whether observed behaviors are interfering with the person's ability to manage everyday responsibilities. Neuropsychologists do not independently take away a driver's license or refer someone to live in residential care, but they can help families make those hard decisions.

Diseases like Alzheimer's disease may not be reversible, but a diagnosis can help families assess risk and determine what additional support they need,

► See **Signs**, Page B2

CAREGIVER SPOTLIGHT

The emotional cost of caregiving: Birgit's story

By Krysten Godfrey Maddocks
Union Leader Staff

Last year, former travel agent Birgit Christiansen, 85, of Portsmouth and her husband, Patrick Malloy, 86 visited South America, where they explored the Falkland Islands, Argentina, and Antarctica.

Today, Christiansen spends more time at home caring for Malloy, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease four years ago. She bathes and dresses her husband and gets help from friends who take him out to lunch or to the movies. She can sometimes leave him alone at their house for a half-hour.

Caregiving can be tiring and isolating, but Christiansen said she is saving money by not hiring outside caregivers.

“He is not ready for a facility yet — or perhaps I should say that I can still manage. He knows who I am, and I will not place him until I can no longer safely handle his care,” Christiansen said. “The neurologist explained

“These groups are my sanity. They are what keep me going. They also remind me that I am not alone.”

BIRGIT CHRISTIANSEN
On local dementia caregiver support groups

that a day may come when Patrick will no longer be able to swallow or feed himself. I have seen people in those later stages. I am not naïve. It is a horrible disease.”

Malloy, who worked as a structural engineer, had survived a quadruple bypass and lung cancer before his Alzheimer's diagnosis. Christiansen said he was a very precise person. When he started forgetting things, she knew something was wrong.

“During a trip, we were in the Amsterdam airport when Patrick went to the restroom. When he came out, he could not find me. I heard my name being announced — pronounced incorrectly — over the loudspeaker. Because I worked in the travel industry,

I initially thought we had received an upgrade,” she said. “It turned out that Patrick had asked airport staff to find me because he could not remember where I was. That was the first time I thought, ‘We had better do something about this.’”

Christiansen said she is avoiding moving her husband into a residential facility if at all possible, because she's discovered memory care could cost between \$12,000 and \$15,000 a month.

The couple had purchased a long-term care policy more than 20 years ago to prepare for any future health care needs, but today's residential



PROVIDED BY BIRGIT CHRISTIANSEN

Birgit Christiansen, right, cares for her husband, Patrick Malloy, who lives with Alzheimer's disease.

► See **Caregiving**, Page B5

No Flavors this week

The monthly NH Medical section takes the place of this week's Flavors section. Flavors, with Our Gourmet, returns next week.

Signs

From Page B1

Carbone said.
“I tell families, I know this is really difficult to hear, but just know that it was there before. Now we just know what to call it,” she said. “We’re armed with some knowledge and we can get you some resources and connect you to places that can help with this, and we will monitor it.”



Kim Gaskell

Safety typically drives the decision

A formal dementia diagnosis doesn’t automatically mean you need to move a family member into a residential facility. Some people can continue living at home for years with help from relatives or in-home care services.

It’s critical for families to look at a loved one’s cognition, quality of life and their home environment when they’re making the decision to place them in residential memory care, according to Kim Gaskell, chief operating officer of The RiverWoods Group, which offers several levels of residential care in its Manchester, Exeter and Durham continuing care retirement communities.

“When you really need to transition to a higher level of care or memory support, it’s typically when the environment no longer feels safe,” Gaskell said. “Residents may be forgetting to turn off the stove. They leave the water running. They are forgetting to take their medications. Wandering becomes a big indication as well.”

If someone requires supervision for much of the day, their needs become increasingly unpredictable, or safety concerns persist despite support, it

may be time to consider a more structured environment, according to Michael Tubbs, senior director of lifestyle engagement at Benchmark Senior Living. Benchmark Senior Living operates Benchmark at Bedford Falls, The Arbors of Bedford, The Birches at Concord, Benchmark Senior Living at Nashua Crossings, Greystone Farm at Salem and Benchmark at Rye. Depending on the community, facilities offer assisted living, memory care or both.

“Assisted living supports older adults who benefit from help with daily living activities while maintaining as much independence as possible. Memory care provides that same assistance in a secure environment, with specialized programming and care approaches designed specifically for people living with dementia,” he said. “Nursing homes generally provide a higher level of medical care for individuals with more complex clinical needs and typically require a physician’s order.”

At Benchmark communities that offer both assisted living and memory care, residents can transition from the assisted living neighborhood to the “Mind & Memory Care” neighborhood within the same community if their needs change, Tubbs said. This continuity helps preserve familiar routines, trusted relationships and a sense of home without requiring a potentially disruptive move to a different community.

Within its Exeter, Manchester and Durham communities, RiverWoods residents can also move through levels of care as needed. Individuals or couples may “buy-in” at the independent living level, but their contract allows

► See **Signs**, Page B3



RIVERWOODS

Newfound Lodge at RiverWoods Durham provides a range of supportive living options, including assisted living, enhanced assisted living and memory support.

Assisted living, memory care or nursing home? Know the difference before you decide

New Hampshire families comparing residential care options often see the terms assisted living, nursing home and memory care used to describe residential care for older adults.

Each setting serves residents with different levels of medical and personal care needs.

Although memory care facilities are not licensed separately from assisted living facilities, state law requires dementia-specific training for certain employees in facilities and programs that serve people with Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of dementia.

An assisted-living residence is a state-licensed residential community that provides housing, meals and

personal support to adults who need help with daily activities, but do not necessarily require nursing-home-level care.

A nursing home is a state-licensed facility that provides 24-hour nursing, medical, rehabilitation and personal care to people whose needs cannot safely be met through ordinary housing or lower levels of residential support.

New Hampshire law requires staff members who provide direct patient care and administrators in facilities that provide memory care to complete dementia-specific training, according to New Hampshire RSA 151:47 – 151:50.

This includes at least six hours of

initial dementia education, generally completed within 90 days of starting employment.

Staff must also complete at least four hours of continuing education each calendar year, which must include updated information about dementia care best practices. The four-hour annual requirement took effect last year.

These requirements apply to people employed by assisted-living residences, nursing homes, and other adult residential or community-based programs, including programs that advertise specialty memory care and serve people with Alzheimer’s disease or dementia.

— Krysten Godfrey Maddocks

SAVE NEW HAMPSHIRE NURSING HOME CARE



Over the past five years, average wage costs for nursing homes have gone up over 34%, as have food costs. Medicaid reimbursement hasn't kept pace, and tariffs now drive care costs even *higher* for food and medical supplies and equipment.

For senior care to survive, the NH Senate must, *at a minimum*, fund Gov. Ayotte's proposed Medicaid budget for nursing homes, and *reject* NH House cuts. The Senate budget must also assist facilities providing unpaid care due to a severe Medicaid application backlog.

For more information, see
savenhseniors.com

HELP in Concord is needed so facilities can meet rising costs and recruit, and retain, staff to serve the most vulnerable Granite Staters!

Signs

From Page B2

them move through higher levels of care as their health needs change. A resident could start in assisted living, and move to memory support, or nursing care without leaving the larger community or paying significantly higher fees, Gaskell said.

“You are ensuring that you have access to health care at a discounted rate for the rest of your life,” Gaskell said. “Most people sell their home, they downsize, and they move in and begin in independent living. And as their needs change, whether on a short-term or long-term basis, they are able to age in place within the community.”

In-home care isn't always the best option

Spouses and adult children may believe they can provide better care because they understand a person's routines and preferences, but the demands of caregiving increase as dementia progresses, said Linda Bresnahan, community life engagement manager at RiverWoods Durham.

“Providing care 24 hours a day is nearly impossible,” Bresnahan said. “Even 12 hours a day, it's almost impossible.”

A move to a facility that offers specialized memory support allows relatives to step away from daily care duties.

“The caregiver gets to be the loving wife or daughter again, instead of the person who has to get them in the shower or make them take their medications, cook all the meals,” Bresnahan said.

Dementia can have a profound impact on spouses, adult children and other family members providing care. Research has shown that caregivers experiencing high levels of stress are at greater risk for depression, chronic health problems and even increased mortality, Tubbs said.

“Seeking additional support is not a sign of failure. It's often one of the most compassionate decisions a family can make,” he said.

Look beyond the lobby: What families should consider when choosing memory care

During a memory care facility tour, families should pay less attention to polished décor and fancy landscaping and more attention to what residents and employees are doing.

Are staff members speaking patiently and respectfully? Are residents engaged individually or in groups? Do employees appear to know residents' routines and preferences? A room full of residents passively watching television may tell a family more than a newly renovated lobby, said Kim Gaskell, chief operating officer of the RiverWoods Group.

Families should not be alarmed if they see residents folding towels, arranging flowers, or holding dolls or robotic pets. Such activities are deliberately designed to provide familiarity, comfort and purpose.

“That's part of programming that I think if you don't know that, you walk in and you might think, like, what is this?” she said.

An impressive activity calendar is important, but it may not tell the whole story, said Linda Bresnahan, community life engagement manager at RiverWoods Durham.

Good dementia programming should be flexible and tailored to a resident's former interests, abilities, and daily rhythms.

One person may enjoy group exercise, while another may prefer coffee and a newspaper, watering plants, or playing cribbage with one or two other residents.

“One of the questions that would be important for people to ask is, what are you doing that's not on your calendar?” Bresnahan said. “Because that's what really what resident-centered care is — finding out what individual residents need and doing those little extra things



Residents at a Benchmark Senior Living memory care community arrange flowers as part of an activity designed to promote engagement and a sense of purpose.

to help them feel more comfortable and like their home.”

At Benchmark Senior Living communities, memory care activities are tailored to each resident's interests, strengths and abilities, offering art, gardening, cooking, movement classes, games, outings and everyday routines that provide residents with a sense of purpose.

The overall goal is to provide meaningful engagement rather than simply keep residents busy, said Michael Tubbs, senior director of lifestyle engagement at Benchmark Senior Living.

“We focus on what each resident can do rather than what they cannot,” he said. “Associates provide cueing and support only when needed, allowing residents to make choices, participate in daily routines and maintain independence while ensuring the environment supports their safety, dignity and success.”

Families should inspect how the physical environment supports residents. Lighting, visual cues, familiar objects and unobstructed walking routes can help residents orient themselves. Secure outdoor areas can allow someone who wanders to continue walking without being confined indoors.

Because people with dementia are prone to wandering, families should understand how a facility prevents unsafe exits while preserving residents' freedom of movement, including whether security measures apply to every resident or only to those who need them.

While many think of memory care communities as “locked units,” memory support residents at RiverWoods aren't necessarily restricted to one space.

The facility includes secure courtyards that allow residents to go

► See **Choosing**, Page B5



“Our residents have peace of mind knowing support is always close by.”

Jason L., Community Executive Director

At Benchmark, our award-winning Mind & Memory Care provides personalized support for individuals with Alzheimer's, dementia and other types of memory loss, offering secure, multisensory environments, 24/7 daily living support and person-centered care capabilities that evolve with residents' needs. Through personalized care and programming, our residents thrive with countless meaningful connections.

The Arbors

OF BEDFORD

70 Hawthorne Drive | Bedford
603.803.6654
ArborsOfBedford.com

BENCHMARK

AT BEDFORD FALLS

5 Corporate Drive | Bedford
603.634.8856
BenchmarkAtBedfordFalls.com

BENCHMARK

SENIOR LIVING

at NASHUA CROSSINGS

674 W Hollis Street | Nashua
603.634.8449
NashuaCrossings.com

BENCHMARK

AT RYE

295 Lafayette Road | Rye
603.932.6905
BenchmarkAtRye.com

The Birches

AT CONCORD

300 Pleasant Street | Concord
603.288.1100
BirchesAtConcord.com

Greystone Farm

AT SALEM

242 Main Street | Salem
603.420.2472
GreystoneFarmAtSalem.com

Get in touch to learn more about life at a Benchmark community.

Assisted Living | Mind & Memory Care





HEALTHY STARTS HERE

The Granite YMCA Health Intervention Programs

The Granite YMCA offers a variety of research-based programs to help manage and prevent chronic conditions like prediabetes, diabetes, high blood pressure, and more. Participants gain practical tools, education, and support to make lasting, healthy changes.

Some programs include:

- **YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program:** Build healthy habits and reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes.
- **Diabetes Self-Management Education & Support Program:** Learn to manage nutrition, activity, medications, and stress.
- **Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program:** Take control of your blood pressure with guided support.

Feel better. Move more. Live healthier. Start today!

Programs offered virtually and in person. YMCA membership not required to participate, financial assistance also available.

To learn more and register, scan the QR code or contact Cindy Lafond, Executive Director of Health Interventions at clafond@graniteymca.org.



THE GRANITE YMCA | www.GraniteYMCA.org



A Benchmark Senior Living employee chats with residents at one of its many New Hampshire communities.

BENCHMARK

Choosing

Continued from Page B4

walk outdoors without leaving the community. Some residents also wear an electronic device that prevents certain doors from opening for them if they are at risk of wandering. Other residents and visitors can continue moving through the building. “A resident could go out one door, be walking outside safely in a courtyard and come back in another door,” Gaskell said. “They could loop all day if they wanted to.”

Meeting with the social services team, families can get a better understanding about how the facility will communicate any changes in a loved one’s mental or physical condition. Social workers can also help relatives adjust their expectations as dementia progresses and understand why a resident’s routine may no longer resemble the life that person once led. “Social workers can also help relatives adjust their expectations as dementia progresses and learn to meet residents where they are and not who they were,” Gaskell said. During a tour, families should take the time to observe whether staff members know residents by name, whether residents appear engaged and comfortable, and whether interactions feel warm, respectful and unhurried, Tubbs said. He also suggests families ask the following questions:

- How are associates are trained, specifically in dementia care?
- How is staffing adjusted throughout the day and overnight?
- How are residents’ health care needs evaluated before they move in?
- How are individualized care plans created and updated?
- How do staff approach any behavioral changes, using personalized, non-pharmacological strategies whenever appropriate?
- How frequently do families receive updates, and how are concerns communicated?
- How do families participate in care planning?
- When would a resident require a different level of care?

Families cannot assume facilities that offer memory support provide the same care, and should ask several questions while they are evaluating and comparing facilities, according to Judith Jones, healthy aging policy director at New Futures, a nonprofit organization that advocates for strategic public policy change.

“You have to do your homework. You’d better look at staffing. And what are the standards, how much training do folks get?” Jones said. “What does it mean when you say we provide memory care?”

Finally, if you’re considering placing a loved one at a residential facility, you should study the facility’s admission contract carefully.

Jones advises families to examine the payment structure, including what triggers a higher monthly rate and who makes the determination that a family member needs a higher level of care.

The contract should also explain when a resident may be transferred or discharged, and what rights the resident has to return after a hospitalization. Families should be especially cautious about verbal assurances that a facility will accept Medicaid after a resident has paid privately for a specified period of time.

Jones said she has seen cases in which facilities made such promises orally but put nothing in writing.

— Krysten Godfrey Maddocks

EXCELLENCE IN REAL ESTATE SERVICES.

*Helping you build
wealth and security
through Real Estate.*



JODI SAVAGE REALTY

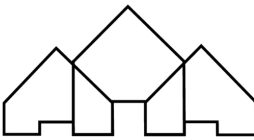
POWERED BY KELLER WILLIAMS

603-320-9534
JodiSavage@kw.com
JodiSavageRealty.com

kw

METROPOLITAN

KELLERWILLIAMS. REALTY



Langdon Place
COMMUNITIES



FIVE SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITIES ACROSS
NEW HAMPSHIRE, ONE SHARED COMMITMENT:

Putting the LIVING in senior living.

DOVER • EXETER • KEENE
NASHUA • PORTSMOUTH

Visit us at the Silver Linings
Senior Healthy Living Expo

August 15 • Exeter High School





Scan to learn more
about our communities

www.603healthcaremanagement.com/langdon-place-communities

603Healthcare

Caregiving

From Page B1

memory care costs are much higher than what their policy will cover.

“My policy is only good for about two years or even less because of the cost. I know that I needed to start saving my money so I have a couple of years extra in cash because the nursing homes, or whatever you call them, really want you to pay a year in advance,” she said.

Christiansen has done all she can to learn more about the disease so she can take care of Malloy safely at home — and make sure she takes care of herself.

She attends dementia caregiver support groups at the Portsmouth Library, the Portsmouth Senior Center, and the Portsmouth Community Campus. She credits the nonprofit Seacoast Dementia Hub for answering her questions and connecting her to local resources.

“These groups are my sanity. They are what keep me going. They also remind me that I am not alone,” she said. “I talk openly about dementia because in the past, people did not talk about Alzheimer’s. They would dismiss unusual behavior as something funny or unimportant. I think it is very important to bring dementia into the open. You may feel sorry for yourself while you are going through it, but then you see that other people are experiencing the same thing and finding ways to manage.”

Granite VNA offers ‘Dementia: Strategies for Care’ workshop

Provided by Granite VNA

Granite VNA is offering “Dementia: Strategies for Care,” the second part of a Caregiver Conversation Series, on Tuesday, Aug. 25, from 10 to 11 a.m. at Wolfeboro Public Library, 259 S. Main St., in the Cynthia A. Beaver Room.

Caring for a loved one is meaningful — but it can also feel overwhelming. Join us for conversations intended especially for family caregivers who want practical tools, trusted information and a supportive community.

Each session focuses on real-life challenges caregivers face and provides strategies you can use right away led by experienced professionals.

Whether you’re new to caregiving or have been supporting a loved one for years, these conversations will help you feel more confident, prepared and connected.

Take time this summer to strengthen your skills, protect your well-being, and connect with others who understand the caregiving journey.

Melissa Grenier, LCSW, regional manager of NH Alzheimer’s Association, will discuss practical and positive strategies for navigating the challenges of dementia care.

This program is offered at no charge.

Registration is required. Register at 603-224-4093, ext. 85664, or granitevna.org.

Connecting caregivers with support

Many caregivers feel isolated and alone in their homes.

The New Hampshire Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association estimates that 57,000 caregivers in the state care for 26,500 residents living with Alzheimer’s disease. Of that group, 65.9% of caregivers have chronic health issues of their own and nearly 30% report depression.

To bridge the gap, the Alzheimer’s Association supports a 24-hour hotline for people with loved ones who are newly diagnosed or who want to know what resources and support groups are available for individuals and families.

This hotline is free of charge and staffed with professionals who have expertise in dementia, according to Melissa Grenier, regional manager, State of New Hampshire, Alzheimer’s Association.

“They can get information about things as simple as a support group list, or they talk to someone about making the tough decision to place mom or dad or whoever their loved one is into a different senior living setting,” she said.

Support line experts also help callers better understand dementia-related behaviors and share strategies with caregivers, including the importance of self-care. Sometimes families require a more in-depth conversation. The Alzheimer’s Association offers those families free care consultations.

“Care consultations are really a lifeline and people feel really, really supported by people who understand,” Grenier said.

The Alzheimer’s Association



VLADIMIR VLADIMIROV/GETTY

The Alzheimer’s Association supports a 24-hour hotline for people with loved ones who are newly diagnosed or who want to know what resources and support groups are available for individuals and families.

tion also helps point family members to virtual and in-person support groups, AARP programs and events, adult day care programs, elder law attorneys, home health care providers, and residential housing options through its Community Resource Finder. By keying in their zip code and selecting from a menu, family members can find resources and support.

Phone: 800-272-3900.
Chat: alz.org/help-support/resources/helpline.
Community resource finder: communityresourcefinder.org.

Seacoast Dementia Hub

In 2021, a group of Seacoast caregivers were frustrated in their search for dementia-related services. In response, they created a place where

caregivers could find guidance, local resources and emotional support through the Seacoast Dementia Hub, a free community-based program.

“More than just a service, the Hub is a partner walking alongside caregivers to provide reassurance and tools that help them care for their loved ones with compassion and confidence,” said Ashley Seinen, director of the Seacoast Dementia Hub. “Our goal is to empower caregivers with the knowledge and confidence they need, while fostering a community where they feel understood, supported, and never alone.”

Individuals can talk about their particular caregiving situations with the program director, who can help connect them with local and national resources.

They also run educational workshops that cover dementia, caregiving strategies, and community services available to families.

There is no cost to utilize the Seacoast Dementia Hub, however some resources or services we may recommend such as medical care, home care, or specialized programs may have their own costs.

Hosted and operated by RiverWoods Retirement Communities, the Seacoast Dementia Hub is grant-funded through major support from the Foundation for Seacoast Health, with support from the Granite United Way and the Seacoast Women’s Giving Circle.

Phone: 603-280-4217.
Website: seacoastdementiahub.org.

— Krysten Godfrey Maddocks



LEARN HOW TO PROTECT YOUR ESTATE FROM A NURSING HOME

YOU HAVE CHOICES!
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY ARE?

Strategic Caring Solutions' team of experts assist families with how to manage assets before or during a time of crisis, to ensure the proper legal documents are in place, as well as to create a long-term care plan that includes the Medicaid process and to provide funding options and strategies to preserve an estate. We are here to answer your questions in times of crisis or before one begins:

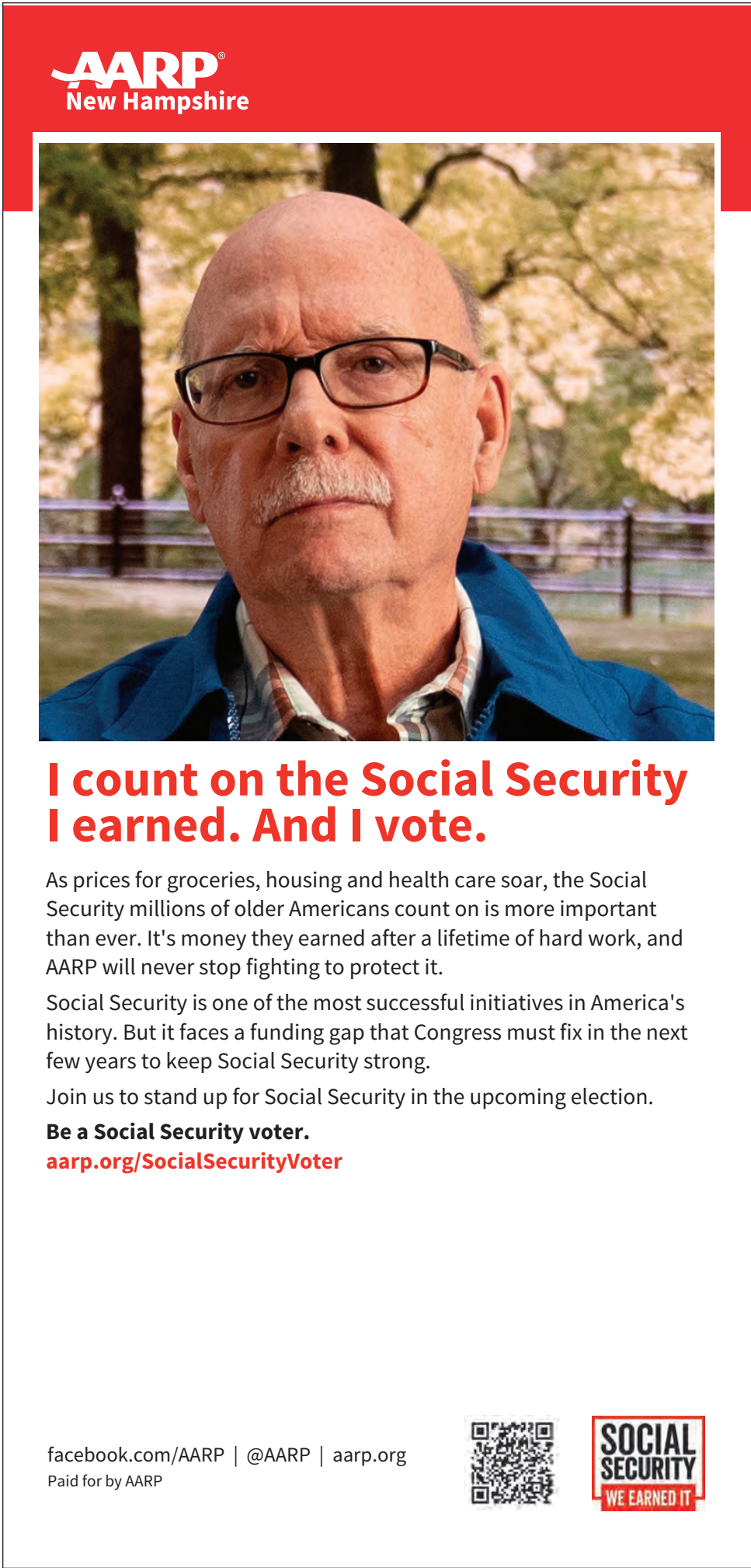
- ▶ When should I start thinking of planning?
- ▶ What assets can be protected and what assets are at risk?
- ▶ What costs are associated with care?
- ▶ What legal documents are needed for planning?

To learn more, contact Catherine Cournoyer, VP/Senior Care Advisor, at 603.934.0440 or Cournoyer@StrategicCaringSolutions.com.



STRATEGIC
Caring Solutions
Plan to live your best life.
StrategicCaringSolutions.com

A subsidiary of Independence Financial Advisors



AARP
New Hampshire

I count on the Social Security I earned. And I vote.

As prices for groceries, housing and health care soar, the Social Security millions of older Americans count on is more important than ever. It's money they earned after a lifetime of hard work, and AARP will never stop fighting to protect it.

Social Security is one of the most successful initiatives in America's history. But it faces a funding gap that Congress must fix in the next few years to keep Social Security strong.

Join us to stand up for Social Security in the upcoming election.

Be a Social Security voter.
aarp.org/SocialSecurityVoter

facebook.com/AARP | @AARP | aarp.org
Paid for by AARP



Right Care. Right Time. Right Place.

Choose where you get your care based on your symptoms to save you time and money. Our expansive network of 590 providers across 90 locations includes five points of care specifically designed for immediate needs, where no appointment is ever required. We welcome new and existing patients at these sites, ensuring you always have access to the right level of care close to home.



Walk-In Primary Care

PRIMARY CARE SHOULD BE YOUR FIRST CONSIDERATION. CHOOSE WALK-IN PRIMARY CARE WHEN YOU CAN'T GET AN APPOINTMENT FOR A SUDDEN ILLNESS OR MINOR INJURY OR WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE A PCP.

Right care for common symptoms such as:

- Allergic reactions, insect bites (such as tick), rashes;
- Colds, flu, sore throat;
- Cuts, scrapes, and minor wounds;
- School, sports, and camp physicals;
- Urination, difficult or painful.

1 Interchange Drive
Concord, NH

Average Cost: \$ | Hours: 8 am – 8 pm, 7 Days a Week



Urgent Care

BEST FOR ISSUES THAT NEED PROMPT ATTENTION — BUT AREN'T LIFE-THREATENING

Right care for urgent needs such as:

- Abdominal pain (minor);
- Cuts that may need stitches;
- Fever, vomiting, or dehydration;
- Infections (eyes, ears, throat);
- Minor burns;
- Sprains and minor broken bones.

60 Commercial Street
Concord, NH

Average Cost: \$\$ | Hours: Saturday and Sunday, 8 am – 4 pm, Monday – Friday, 8 am – 7 pm



Emergency Department (ED)

BEST FOR SERIOUS OR LIFE-THREATENING CONDITIONS

Right care for serious or life-threatening needs such as:

- Chest pain or pressure;
- Head injury or loss of consciousness;
- Severe abdominal pain;
- Severe bleeding;
- Signs of stroke (BEFAST symptoms);
- Trouble breathing.

Concord
Franklin
Laconia

Average Cost: \$\$\$ | Hours: 24/7

Not Sure Where to Go? We're here to help.

If you're uncertain, start with walk-in primary care or urgent care — or call your provider for guidance. When it's an emergency, **call 911 and go to the nearest hospital.**

concordhospital.org

Alzheimer's Cafe



PROVIDED BY THE NHSPCA

On the second Thursday of each month, the New Hampshire SPCA opens its doors to memory care patients, their caregivers and a rotating cast of animal companions. The Alzheimer's Cafe offers a community setting where people living with Alzheimer's disease, dementia or other memory issues, along with their caregivers, can gather, socialize and enjoy conversation. Go to unionleader.com to read the full story.

Keeping seniors with dementia S.A.F.E. from scams and fraud

Provided by Alzheimer's Foundation of America

With scammers stealing an estimated \$7 billion from senior citizens each year according to the FBI, the Alzheimer's Foundation of America is offering S.A.F.E. tips to help family caregivers protect loved ones living with dementia from scams, fraud and identity theft.

"Senior citizens are a top target for scammers, and seniors living with dementia are at even greater risk due to the way dementia affects the brain," said Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr., AFA president and CEO and a former New York state senator who authored laws to protect people against identity theft. "Caregivers need to know about steps and resources they can utilize to help protect their loved ones with dementia from being victimized. Being proactive and alert are the two best defenses."

Seniors are frequent targets of financial scams because they are more likely to have savings, own a home and have good credit, according to the FBI. The FBI also notes that seniors tend to be trusting and polite and less likely to report fraud. Seniors living with

dementia are especially vulnerable because dementia affects memory, judgment, decision-making and the ability to recognize suspicious activity. Scammers will exploit whatever they can to manipulate victims into sharing personal information or sending money.

AFA recommends that caregivers follow the S.A.F.E. tips to protect loved ones with dementia:

• Solidify good security practices

Keep written reminders near the phone or computer, such as: "Do not give out your social security or bank account number" or "do not click on links in emails" to help the person with dementia remember how to protect themselves. Regularly reinforce these proper safety practices with the person.

• Apply blocking tools

Use blocking tools on the person's phone to help prevent suspicious calls and text messages. Ensure computers have anti-virus software installed to block malicious content and look into safety controls that can block unknown apps and websites. Place a "no solicitation" sign on the front door to reduce the chances of unwanted visits from salespeople or scammers.

• Find someone to help monitor financial activity

Identify someone (i.e., family member, financial professional, etc.) who can help the person to review their bank and credit card statements regularly for unusual activity and to watch for warning signs of financial exploitation. Someone with dementia may miss small or repeated unauthorized transactions. Immediately report any suspicious or fraudulent activity.

• Establish stronger financial safeguards

Add a trusted family member onto the person's accounts to monitor transactions and to be alerted about purchases or withdrawals. Many banks and credit card companies offer free alert services that send text or email notifications about suspicious activity or key account changes; ask the person's financial institutions about these services. Federal law also allows consumers to set up a security freeze on their credit, which can help prevent scammers from fraudulently opening new accounts under their name. Learn more about this free service by visiting the Federal Trade Commission's website at ftc.gov.

Free Bedford conference offers roadmap for Alzheimer's caregivers

Provided by Alzheimer's Foundation of America

The Alzheimer's Foundation of America will host a free Alzheimer's & Caregiving Educational Conference in New Hampshire on Wednesday, Sept. 16, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Bedford Event Center, 379 S. River Road, Bedford. The free conference, part of AFA's National Educating Across America Tour, is open to everyone and will allow participants to learn from experts in the field of Alzheimer's disease, brain health, caregiving and advance planning. Register by visiting alzfdn.org/tour. Advance registration is highly recommended.

"Knowledge is a useful and powerful tool that can help make any situation easier to navigate, especially something as challenging as caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease," said Charles J. Fuschillo Jr., AFA's president and CEO. "Connecting families with useful, practical information and support that can help them now and be better prepared for the future is what this conference is all about. Whether Alzheimer's is affecting your family, you are a caregiver or just want to learn more about brain health, we invite you to join us on Sept. 16."

Sessions during the AFA conference will include:

• **Finding Alzheimer's Earlier: New Tests, New**

Treatments, New Hope

Early detection and diagnosis of dementia and mild cognitive impairment is extremely important. Daniel Seichepine will talk about the development of new disease-modifying therapies and blood-based biomarkers and the role they play in early diagnosis and treatment. He also will discuss the biological changes that occur in Alzheimer's disease and how early detection is critical for the timely implementation of recently FDA-approved disease-modifying therapies.

Seichepine is a clinical neuropsychologist, associate professor at William James College and the founder of the University of New Hampshire's Neuropsychology Program and Laboratory. He is also the founder and owner of Next Step Neuropsychology, a New Hampshire-based practice specializing in adult neuropsychological evaluations.

• Preparing for Caregiving: Resources & Support

When a loved one is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia-related illness, families often have many questions and uncertainty about next steps. AARP New Hampshire State Director Christina FitzPatrick will provide an overview of valuable resources, support services and planning tools designed to help families navigate the caregiving journey. Attendees will learn about com-

munity-based programs, strategies for building a strong support network and trusted sources of information and assistance while maintaining their own well-being.

• Alzheimer's Disease: Communication Strategies

Communication challenges are among the most common and difficult aspects of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, often affecting both the person living with the disease and those who care for them. Shirley Gordon, a certified dementia practitioner and caregiver coach, will provide practical, person-centered communication approaches that can help reduce frustration, strengthen relationships and promote more meaningful interactions throughout the dementia journey. She also will highlight techniques for preserving dignity, enhancing quality of life and improving daily interactions for individuals living with dementia.

For more information, or to register, visit alzfdn.org/tour. Those who cannot participate in the conference or have immediate questions about Alzheimer's disease can connect with licensed social workers seven days a week through AFA's Helpline by calling 866-232-8484, texting 646-586-5283 or web chatting at alzfdn.org by clicking the blue and white chat icon in the right-hand corner of the page.

Do you need support to stay safe and independent in your own home?
Are you caring for an aging parent and could use some help for peace of mind?



There is a program that can help you!

For New Hampshire residents 18+ and who qualify for Medicaid, the Choices for Independence (CFI) waiver provides case management and professional in-home supports to keep you in your own community with your friends and family!

As one of the state's largest case management providers, **Crotched Mountain Community Care** is ready to serve you. Ask for us when you sign up for CFI. We'll be by your side!



Learn more and apply at www.cmf.org/cmcc



The Morrison Communities

Summit by Morrison • 603-837-3500, 56 Summit Drive, Whitefield NH 03598
Sartwell Place Assisted Living • 603-837-2541, 6 Terrace Street, Whitefield NH 03598
The Morrison Skilled Nursing Facility • 603-837-2541, 6 Terrace Street, Whitefield NH 03598

"The staff are extraordinarily kind, warm, and dedicated that one could wish for. We feel that they care about us, and that is so pleasant, especially during this time when visiting is limited."
— Joan LeBaron

"It's the way life should be. It's a great environment, a great place to be. It only took me two days to settle in. Now this is my home."
— Ed Walkonen

"We are so impressed with your dedication and devotion at Morrison. We appreciate the care and love (and the above and beyond) effort given each day."
— Ray Conway and Family



themorrisoncommunnities.org

- Independent Living
- Assisted Living
- Memory Care
- Respite Care
- Skilled Nursing Care
- Long Term Care
- Rehabilitative Services

Located in Scenic Whitefield, New Hampshire

2026

ALZHEIMER'S STATISTICS
NEW HAMPSHIRE

PREVALENCE

26,500

of People Aged 65 and Older with Alzheimer's (2020)

10.1%

% of Adults Over 65 with Alzheimer's

of Geriatricians in 2021

44

Increase Needed to Meet 2050 Demand

20.5%

of Home Health and Personal Care Aides in 2022

8,760

Increase Needed to Meet 2032 Demand

23.1%

WORKFORCE

More than 7 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's, and more than 12 million provide their unpaid care. The cost of caring for those with Alzheimer's and other dementias is estimated to total \$409 billion in 2026, increasing to nearly \$1 trillion (in today's dollars) by mid-century.

For more information, view the 2026 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures report at alz.org/facts.

CAREGIVING

57,000

of Caregivers

66M

Total Hours of Unpaid Care

\$1.5B

Total Value of Unpaid Care

65.9%

Caregivers with Chronic Health Conditions

29.5%

Caregivers with Depression

14.4%

Caregivers in Poor Physical Health

of People in Hospice (2017) with a Primary Diagnosis of Dementia

1,007

Hospice Residents with a Primary Diagnosis of Dementia

17.0%

of Emergency Department Visits per 1,000 People with Dementia (2018)

1,494

Dementia Patient Hospital Readmission Rate (2018)

20.4%

Medicaid Costs of Caring for People with Alzheimer's (2025)

\$380M

Per Capita Medicare Spending on People with Dementia in 2025 Dollars

\$30,783

HEALTH CARE

MORTALITY

514

of Deaths from Alzheimer's Disease (2024)

6th

leading cause of death



FDA approves at-home starter dose of Eisai-Biogen Alzheimer's drug

Reuters

The U.S. FDA in July approved an at-home starting dose of Eisai's and Biogen's Alzheimer's drug, allowing some patients to begin therapy with injections administered by themselves or a caregiver.

The approval applies to an under-the-skin formulation of the drug branded as Leqembi.

Until now, patients starting treatment received the drug through intravenous infusions, typically given at a clinic, and could later switch to maintenance treatment after 18 months.

Leqembi's at-home subcutaneous approval could increase uptake by improving patient access and differentiating it from Eli Lilly's Kisunla, which requires intravenous infusions, said BMO Capital Markets analyst Evan Seigerman.

Leqembi is already authorized for adults with Alzheimer's disease, a progressive brain disorder that affects memory, thinking and daily function. The drug targets amyloid beta, a protein that forms plaques in the brains of people with the disease.

Citi analysts said they do not expect the approval to drive immediate commercial inflection, as hurdles such as patient identification, diagnostic confirmation, monitoring requirements, specialist availability and reimbursement access remain key barriers on adoption.

The injectable version, called Leqembi IQLIK, can cause reactions at the injection area, including redness, swelling, rash, pain or bruising, the Food and Drug Administration said.

The FDA's decision was based on two earlier trials showing the IV version of Leqembi was effective in patients with early Alzheimer's disease, including those with mild cognitive impairment or mild dementia and confirmed amyloid buildup in the brain.

The regulator said the subcutaneous version was not tested in separate large trials measuring patient outcomes. Instead, it relied on findings showing it produced equivalent results and similar reductions in amyloid plaques compared with the infused version.

© 2026 Alzheimer's Association® All Rights Reserved. Alzheimer's Association is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

CONCIERGE *Plus* by ALL CARE MEDICAL
A Direct Primary Care Practice

Concierge *Plus* by All Care Medical should be **YOUR** choice for quality primary care:

Personalized care. Unmatched access. No insurance headaches. Experience primary care the way it should be.





SAME-DAY APPOINTMENTS
Get the care you need, when you need it.



24/7 PHYSICIAN ACCESS
Reach your doctor anytime, day or night.



LONGER VISITS, NO RUSH
More time with your doctor means better care.



WHOLESALE-PRICED MEDICATIONS
Save significantly on generic prescriptions.

FEATURE	CONCIERGE PLUS BY ALL CARE MEDICAL	TYPICAL CONCIERGE PRACTICE*	TYPICAL PRIMARY CARE PRACTICE
Easy access	✓	✓	✗
Extended visits	✓	✓	✗
Same day visits	✓	?	✗
24x7 coverage	✓	?	✗
Unlimited labs included	✓	✗	✗
Unlimited office procedures included	✓	✗	✗
Generic medications at wholesale prices	✓	✗	✗
Zero copays, deductibles, co-insurance, or hidden fees	✓	✗	✗
Pure membership model (No insurance billing)	✓	✗	✗
Membership fee	\$3,000 per year	\$1,500 – \$10,000 per year	✗

*In a "Typical" Concierge practice, the membership fee is for access only. Patient is still responsible for all charges.

 22 Main Street
Salem, NH

 603.893.7905

 Visit us online at
AllCareMedical.org

Call for an appointment or for a complimentary "meet-and-greet".
Conveniently located off Exit 2 on Route 93.

HCA Healthcare in New Hampshire



Care close to home, connected across New Hampshire

On the Seacoast, Portsmouth Regional Hospital, Frisbie Memorial Hospital, and our freestanding emergency rooms (ERs) in Dover and Seabrook connect you to compassionate, local care. We are backed by the resources of HCA Healthcare in New Hampshire and a leading national healthcare network.



1000+
healthcare professionals



4
hospitals



70+
care sites



4
freestanding ERs

Find care at
HCAHealthcareNH.com



Expert health advice 24/7

Need help navigating where to get care?
Get answers to your health questions
24/7 with our free nurse consultation line
that provides you with health
information day or night.

Call Consult-A-Nurse®
844-706-8773 (844-70-NURSE)

HCA

Healthcare®

Catholic Medical Center

Frisbie Memorial Hospital

Parkland Medical Center

Portsmouth Regional Hospital

Alzheimer’s Foundation of America releases free caregiver resource guide

Provided by the Alzheimer’s Foundation of America

With over 11 million Americans caring for loved ones living with Alzheimer’s disease or another dementia-related illness, the Alzheimer’s Foundation of America unveiled a new free caregiver resource guide for families caring for loved ones living with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias.

The guide provides families with information about support resources and programs, practical advice, and caregiving tips to help them navigate every stage of the caregiving journey. The guide is available for free through AFA’s website at alzfdn.org/caregiverguide.

Alzheimer’s disease is a growing public health crisis. More than 7 million Americans currently live with Alzheimer’s disease, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention projects that number to continue growing significantly in the years ahead. CDC estimates that more than 11 million people provide more than 18 billion hours of unpaid care to a loved one living with Alzheimer’s. Alzheimer’s caregivers often provide care longer than those caring for people with other conditions and face higher risks of anxiety, depression, burnout and declining quality of life.

AFA developed the guide to help families connect with support and make informed decisions while caring for a loved one. It provides guidance on topics ranging from receiving an Alzheimer’s diagnosis and taking the first steps toward support to managing the complex physical, emotional, legal and financial



The new publication provides caregivers with support resources and programs, practical advice and tips.

challenges that may arise throughout the various stages of the dementia journey.

Topics covered include:

- Understanding an Alzheimer’s or dementia diagnosis and finding appropriate support
- Legal and financial planning considerations
- Managing changes in behavior and communication
- Tips for providing care at home and creating a dementia-friendly home environment
- Safety strategies, including wandering prevention and driving precautions
- Exploring long-term care options
- Understanding palliative care and hospice support during the later stages of dementia
- Managing care costs

• Therapeutic activities
“Anyone and everyone caring for a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease needs help and support,” said AFA president and CEO Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. “Empowering caregivers with practical guidance, useful knowledge and available support resources will help ease some of the common challenges and stress they face throughout the journey.”

The caregiver resource guide is a special edition of AFA’s free caregiver magazine, Alzheimer’s TODAY.

Families can access AFA’s free caregiver resource guide by visiting alzfdn.org/caregiverguide. Support is also available seven days a week by contacting AFA’s Helpline through phone (866-232-8484), text message (646-586-5283), or webchat (alzfdn.org).



Choose coverage that cares

Having dependable dental and vision coverage so you can access quality care for your teeth, gums and eyes is important for overall health. So whether you’re working or retiring, find an affordable, flexible plan for you and your family.

Choose coverage that cares:
Delta Dental.



nedelta.com



Experience the freedom of a glasses free lifestyle through cataract surgery.

Our experienced, compassionate surgeons are recognized leaders in their field, with many earning “Top Doctor” honors. We utilize state-of-the-art technology to deliver exceptional outcomes and personalized care.

Experience the convenience of comprehensive eye care in one place—along with shorter wait times for appointments and surgery.

See clearly.
Live fully.

Call today to schedule:
603-404-2600

www.themedicaleyecenter.com



Heather Bartels, MD



Jason A. Hall, MD



Timothy Link, MD



Jonathan Chao, MD



Amy L. Hennessy, MD, MPH



Maxwell D. Elia, MD



Daniel Vinson, MD



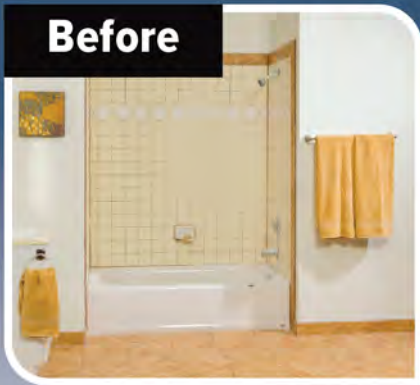
Sarah C. Xu, MD



STAY IN THE HOME YOU LOVE.

Discover a Safer, Beautiful Shower in just

1-2 Days



FREE In-Home Design Consultation
FREE Faucet with Shower Upgrade
FREE Lifetime Warranty

FIVE STAR
bathsolutions™
★ Google | 4.9 Stars

BOOK YOUR FREE CONSULTATION
 **603.819.4871**
www.FiveStarBathSolutions.com

What’s next for Alzheimer’s blood tests?

Experts examine the promise and limitations of a rapidly evolving tool

By Samantha Agate
The News & Observer (Raleigh)

The Alzheimer’s blood test has been climbing headlines as families, patients and clinicians ask whether a simple draw can replace lumbar punctures and PET scans, and whether it can catch the disease before symptoms take hold. Recent studies suggest the answer is inching closer to yes, though researchers are urging caution as the science moves from lab to clinic.

Here’s what the latest research shows, what experts are saying and where the technology could go next.

How accurate is the Alzheimer’s blood test

Accuracy is the headline finding driving most of the current momentum.

A study published in JAMA in October 2024 examined 1,213 patients evaluated for cognitive symptoms in Sweden between February 2020 and January 2024, comparing blood-test results across primary care and secondary care cohorts. The blood test, which measures Alzheimer’s-related proteins, detected the disease’s biological markers with roughly 90% accuracy, outperforming standard clinical evaluations.

Researchers stressed the test is a diagnostic tool, not a standalone answer.

“We see this as a major step towards global clinical implementation of an Alzheimer’s blood test,” said senior author Oskar Hansson, a physician and researcher at Lund Univer-



JOVANMANDIC/GETTY

A blood test may offer a simpler, less invasive way to detect the biological markers associated with Alzheimer’s disease, though researchers say the tests are not yet ready to replace other diagnostic methods.

sity. “It highlights the need for Alzheimer’s biomarkers in making a correct diagnosis more of the time. The next steps include establishing clear guidelines for how an Alzheimer’s blood test can be used in clinical practice, preferably by implementing these tests first in specialist care and then in primary care. This work is currently ongoing.”

A separate 2024 study published in Nature Medicine tested a blood measure of the biomarker

%p-tau217 against gold-standard methods including PET brain scans and cerebrospinal fluid tests.

Researchers evaluated 1,422 participants from Sweden and 337 from the United States.

The blood test performed as well as FDA-approved CSF tests for identifying amyloid plaques and, in some analyses, performed even better for detecting tau tangles.

Overall, the test correctly identified Alzheimer’s-re-

lated pathology in roughly nine out of 10 people with cognitive impairment, with accuracy approaching 95% when researchers used a two-cutoff approach that flagged borderline results as “indeterminate.”

What the Alzheimer’s blood test means for early diagnosis

The appeal of a blood-based test is practical, since it could reduce reliance on lumbar punctures and PET

imaging, which are invasive, expensive or difficult to access. Study authors emphasized that the test is intended for people already being evaluated for memory or thinking problems, not as a screening tool for the general public, and that results should be interpreted alongside symptoms, medical history and other clinical findings.

Doctors treating Alzheimer’s say faster, cheaper diagnostics matter now that disease-modify-

ing therapies exist.

“I expect several other tests will quickly gain FDA approval. Because we have disease-modifying treatments for Alzheimer’s disease, there is now an imperative to detect and treat our patients quickly,” Dr. Andrew Budson, lecturer in neurology at Harvard Medical School and chief of Cognitive and Behavioral Neurology at VA Boston Healthcare System, said, per Harvard Health.

“Just like in a patient in whom cancer is detected, the treatment doesn’t need to be initiated in a week, but six months is too long, and treatment would ideally begin within two months. Blood-based biomarkers will be crucial to help make this scenario into a reality.”

Predicting Alzheimer’s risk before symptoms appear

Beyond diagnosis, researchers are exploring whether blood tests can predict future risk in people who feel fine today. A new study presented at the Alzheimer’s Association International Conference followed more than 2,600 older adults and found that symptom-free adults with the highest levels of p-tau217 had a 38% chance of developing cognitive impairment within five years, a figure that climbed to 78% at 10 years.

Dr. Reisa Sperling, the study’s senior author, urged patience.

“Wait and get tested when you can potentially do something about it,”

► See **Blood Test**, Page C7



Healthcare That Brings Clarity— and Peace of Mind

Changes in memory or thinking can feel overwhelming. And uncertainty can make it hard to know what to do next. You don’t have to face it alone.

Elliot’s Neurology team provides individualized evaluations to help you understand what you’re experiencing—and what steps may support your health. Our clinicians use advanced diagnostic tools and compassionate care to guide patients and families.

Here, you’ll find answers, thoughtful guidance, and a team dedicated to helping you move forward with confidence—when clarity matters most.

Learn more about how we support your memory health at ElliotHospital.org/Neurology

 **Elliot Neurology Associates**



Blood Test

From Page C6

Sperling told ABC News. “At this point it wouldn’t change what I would tell someone to do. I’d still tell them to eat well, sleep well, exercise a lot and stay engaged.”

“This is a gradual process where amyloid and tau build up in the brain and this blood-based biomarker is telling you how far you are in that process,” Sperling said.

Outside researchers called the findings promising but noted the tests “are not yet precise enough to guide individualized prognosis,” while adding that the work has “provided a crucial piece of the puzzle.”

Jessica Langbaum of the Banner Alzheimer’s Institute said patient demand is already outpacing the science.

“Already we have people coming saying, ‘I want this blood test. I have a family history of Alzheimer’s disease,’” Langbaum said. “These findings are quite strong,” she added, saying a predictive blood test would be “really important” if future studies identify treatments that can prevent symptoms from developing.

Dr. Kristien Yaffee, vice chair in the University of California, San Francisco’s Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, told the Fisher Center for Alzheimer’s Research Foundation that “for some people who discover they have the biomarkers, testing could open a window to embark on interventions that may postpone Alzheimer’s onset.”

What comes next for the Alzheimer’s blood test

Leading experts see blood tests reshaping both clinical trials and everyday care, but only after larger validation studies and clearer clinical guidelines.

“Blood tests, once they (a) are confirmed in large populations to be more than 90% accurate and (b) become more widely available, show promise for improving, and possibly redefining, the clinical trial recruitment process and the diagnostic work-up for Alzheimer’s,” said Maria C. Carrillo, chief science officer and medical affairs lead at the Alzheimer’s Association.

“While at this time doctors in primary and secondary care should use a combination of cognitive and blood or other biomarker testing to diagnose Alzheimer’s, blood tests have the potential to increase the accuracy of early diagnoses and maximize the opportunity to access Alzheimer’s treatments as early as possible for better outcomes.”

Nisenbaum of the Alzheimer’s Drug Discovery Foundation echoed that we’re still in the early innings.

“We’re at the early stages of having doctors understanding how to utilize these tests and how to move forward,” Nisenbaum said. “We know patients and families want the diagnosis, and while these tests are not perfect, these blood tests in combination with cognitive testing may fill a key gap in the field.”

“We don’t recommend that people go out and ask to get a p-tau217 blood test,” she added, “but in the very near future, I hope that that story will change.”

How exercise may help lower dementia risk as you age

By Tracey O’Shaughnessy
New Haven Register, Conn.

Remember those bicycle crunches on the old Jane Fonda workout tape?

Going for the burn with Jane again may help you stave off dementia.

Nearly half of older Americans are worried about developing dementia, according to University of Michigan researchers. For years, health experts have said a key in avoiding it or delaying Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias is physical exercise.

Just last year, a study found that exercising between the ages of 45 to 64 may lower dementia risk by 41%. The same study, published in JAMA Network Open, found that exercising between the ages 65 to 88 could lower this risk by 45%.

But how does that work, exactly?

Part of it is understanding what the brain needs to thrive, said Dr. Paul Wright, neurologist and the chair of the Neuroscience Institute at Northwell Health. “The brain’s fuel is sugar, or glucose, which it gets from the food we eat,” he said. “And it gets to the brain through the blood stream.” Although the brain represents only 2% of the average adult’s body weight, Wright said, it consumes 20% of the body’s total energy. Exercise raises the heart rate, which brings nutrient-rich blood flowing more quickly to the brain, he said.

That helps keep the brain’s 86 billion neurons healthy, said Dr. Karina M. Berg, a geriatrician at UConn Health. “It’s improving the health of the blood vessels so that you prevent damage to neurons,” she said. The death of neurons — and loss of connection with other neurons — is what plays such a devastating role in Alzheimer’s disease,



GETTY

A study found that exercising between the ages of 45 to 64 may lower dementia risk by 41%.

according to the National Institute on Aging.

Pumping more blood and nutrients to the brain allows it to do something scientists hadn’t realized the brain could do until the 1990s — create new neurons. Because researchers now understand that the brain can create new neurons even into a person’s 90s, people can keep improving memory and recover from damage by stimulating the brain with activities like exercise and learning, according to a study in Behavioral Brain Research. “Cells themselves become larger after exposure to physical stimulation and strenuous activity,” according to the study.

It’s a reminder, as Yale neurologist Dr. Carolyn Fredericks said that “we’re meant to be more active animals than we often are in today’s sedentary lifestyle.”

The increased blood flow exercise initiates promotes the increase of certain neurotrophins, or proteins, specifically, Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor (BDNF), often called “fertilizer” for the brain. Think of exercise as sprinkling those proteins throughout the landscape of the brain, suggests Dr. Veeresh Kumar, of Trinity Health of New England.

Only two areas of the adult brain can generate new nerve cells, the hippocampus, responsible for memory and learning, according to the Cleveland Clinic, and an area called the SVZ (subventricular zone of the lateral ventricles), which primarily helps with smell.

“When you’re exercising, a couple of things can happen, one of which is the release of this chemical that creates brain cells and makes connections between existing brain cells,” Kumar said. “Those connections are helpful for memory.”

Not only does exercise help bring those proteins to the brain, it helps eliminate toxic waste products that accumulate in neurodegenerative diseases, said Fredericks.

“For a long time we didn’t know that the brain had its own way of getting rid of these products that it doesn’t need,” she said. The glymphatic system “allows these products to be shunted out of the brain and into the cerebrospinal fluid and then cleared by these lymph nodes in our neck,” she said. “Exercise seems to help it work well.”

A study published last year in Nature found that aerobic exercise helps eliminates these toxic products.

Although studies show that moderate to strenuous exercise confer the most benefit to brain health, even moderate walking — 7,000 steps a day — was associated with a 38% lower risk of dementia, compared to about 2,000 steps a day, according to a study released last year in The Lancet.

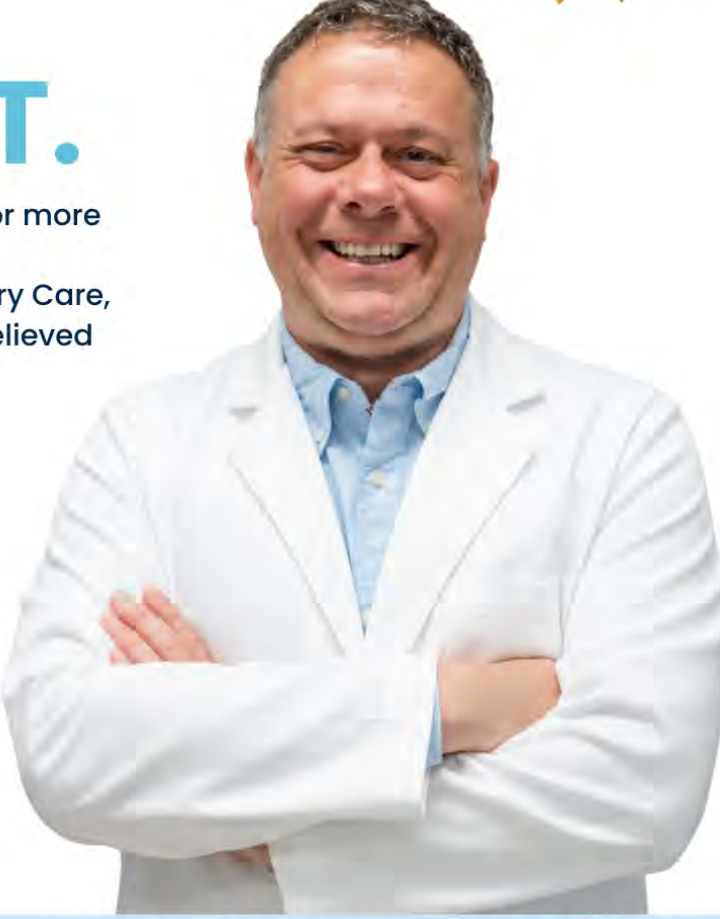
But there’s another benefit, said Wright.

“When we exercise, often we’ll do it in a social setting so apart from the direct effects of increased blood flow and increased neural communication there’s the indirect aspect of the social interactions which has been shown to be very positive for decreasing the risk of dementia,” he said.

Delphi Enhanced Primary Care

DOCTORS WHO KNOW YOU BY HEART—NOT JUST BY CHART.

Treating Patients of All Ages Starting 11/02/2026!



DR. JASON EMMICK
BOARD CERTIFIED IN PEDIATRICS & INTERNAL MEDICINE

For Dr. Jason Emmick, that’s not a tagline. It’s how he’s practiced medicine for more than 23 years, caring for New Hampshire families and often treating three generations of the same household. Now he’s joined Delphi Enhanced Primary Care, a practice built around the time, trust, and personal attention he’s always believed patients deserve. If you’ve been looking for Dr. Emmick, you’ve found him.

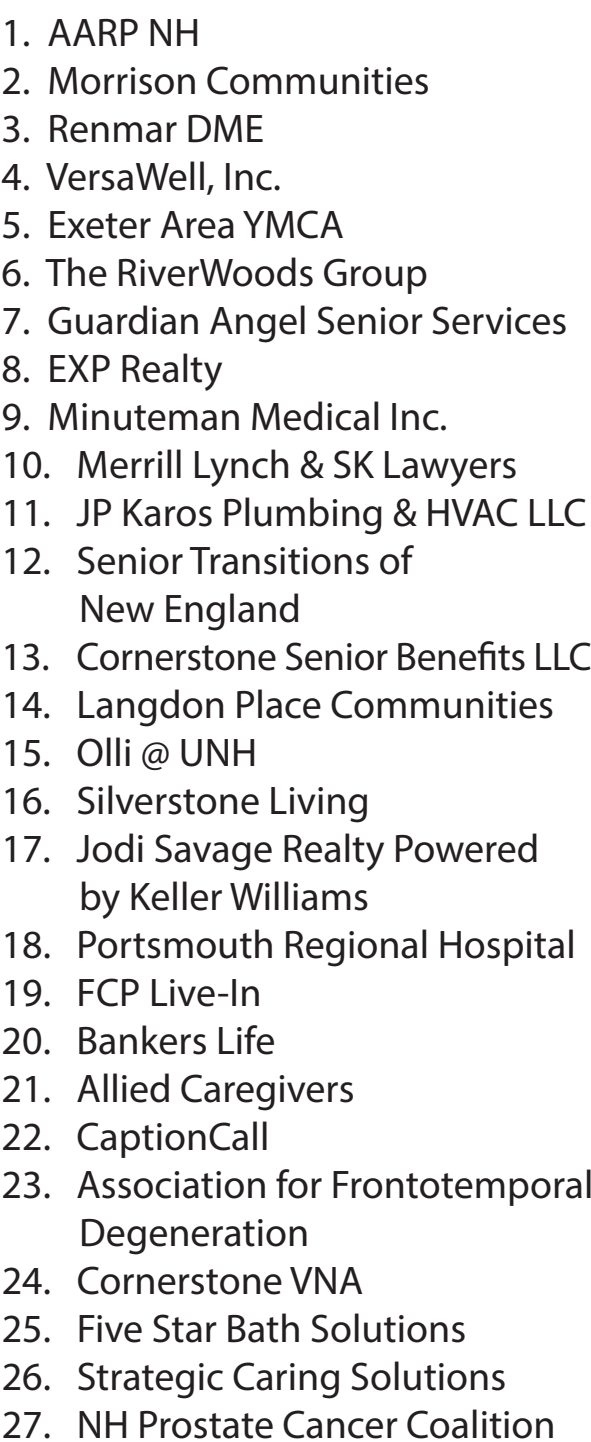
- ➔ **Direct Access:** When you need your primary care doctor, you have direct access with shorter wait times, timely communication, and faster intervention when it matters most.
- ➔ **Personalized Care:** Smaller patient panels mean more time focused on you. Your doctor gets to know your health history, goals, and concerns, to allow for care that’s personalized to your needs.
- ➔ **Proactive Approach:** Stay healthier with a focus on prevention. Regular screenings, comprehensive health assessments, and lifestyle counseling help reduce the risk of future health concerns.
- ➔ **Healthcare Advocacy:** Navigating today’s healthcare system is overwhelming. Your primary care doctor, along with the Delphi team, advocate for you ensuring you receive the support you need every step of the way.

Enhance Your Primary Care Experience

The access fee provides truly personalized primary care and more, including direct access to your doctor’s personal line, delivering a seamless and dedicated care experience. With recent changes in Federal Law, employees can use their Health Savings Account (HSA) to use pre-tax dollars for increased access to high-quality, relationship based primary care!

Scan the QR code or Visit [DelphiHC.com](https://delphihc.com) to access your PCP when you need them!





Christina Cox, Five Star Bath Solutions

For more information, visit **UnionLeader.com/seniorexpo**

