



WorriedAboutMemoryLoss.com

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Elected Officials Asked To Understand Issues of Dementia and Related Diseases

Numerous opinion polls place health care at the top of domestic issues on people's minds during this election year. For someone with a disease that causes dementia, the future of health care is definitely a major concern.

Individuals and families dealing with Alzheimer's and related diseases face issues like: Who will provide care for the person over many years? What care options will be available? Who will pay for long-term care? Do candidates recognize the epidemic nature of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders enough to push for greater funding for treatment research?

The 2008 election will be historic regardless of which party wins, and the candidates themselves represent segments of the population with particular concerns for dementia: senior citizens, women, and African-Americans. In less than three years the first wave of baby boomers will reach age 65, which will begin straining Medicare and Medicaid even further.

This campaign season, the Alzheimer's Association in association with WorriedAboutMemoryLoss.com is emphasizing the urgency of this issue: Unless something changes the course we are on, by 2050 Alzheimer's disease and related disorders will bankrupt Medicare due to the sheer number of people who will have some form of dementia. Medicare spends more than three times as much for people with Alzheimer's than the average beneficiary. Medicare and Medicaid care costs for people with Alzheimer's and other dementias, combined with business costs for employees who are caregivers of people with Alzheimer's, add up to \$148 billion annually.*

"Many believe that the 2008 presidential election provides a great opportunity to raise national awareness about dementia and health policy issues. The Alzheimer's Association is pursuing a grassroots political effort aimed at getting the presidential candidates to use the word Alzheimer's in their health plans and to provide the nation with a responsible plan to end Alzheimer's." said Micki Horst, Dementia Program Michigan Public Health Institute. "AARP is pushing health care and long-term financial security in their Divided We Fail campaign. Other organizations, such as the Kaiser Foundation, provide comparison charts of the candidates' platforms on health issues."

"All of these organizations urge people to be sure to register to vote and to convey their story to candidates, not just at the presidential level, but to those running for state and congressional seats as well." stated Horst.

For more information visit WorriedAboutMemoryLoss.com or contact Micki Horst, (517)324-7318.

* Alzheimer's Association 2008