



Neurological Disease Working Group Alzheimer's Initiative **2026 MEETING SUMMARY**

The Alliance for Patient Access convened clinicians for the inaugural Alzheimer's Disease Initiative meeting to discuss the rapidly changing landscape of care, the importance of early diagnosis and ongoing barriers to treatment access.

THE EVOLVING LANDSCAPE OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Alzheimer's disease is shifting from a condition defined by symptoms to one understood through biology. Advances in biomarker testing, imaging and research have expanded how clinicians identify and manage the disease.

New tools, including blood-based biomarkers, and recently approved therapies targeting amyloid plaques are changing clinical conversations. For many clinicians, these developments bring renewed purpose and optimism in a field that once had limited options. At the same time, participants stressed the importance of careful interpretation of these advancements. Questions remain about how new therapies impact the underlying disease and how best to use emerging diagnostics in practice.

One clinician said, "We never really knew what people had. We were just basing it off symptoms," reflecting how far the field has progressed — while underscoring the need to apply new tools thoughtfully.

ENSURING EARLY DIAGNOSIS

Clinicians agreed that earlier diagnosis is essential to improving outcomes, allowing for better planning, earlier intervention and more informed decision-making. New diagnostic tools, particularly blood-based biomarkers, have the potential to expand access to detection and reduce reliance on more invasive testing.

Primary care clinicians play a critical role in this shift, as they are often the first point of contact. However, clinicians noted gaps in training, and a lack of time and resources, which can limit the effective use of new diagnostic tools and delay referrals to specialists.

Concerns were also raised about testing individuals without symptoms. Clinicians emphasized that while current tools are most reliable when used in symptomatic patients, research is ongoing.

One clinician said, "It can be confusing to explain to a patient who has a positive blood test but is asymptomatic that they might not have Alzheimer's," highlighting the need for clearer guidance and patient education. Overall, meeting participants emphasized the need for standardized guidelines, improved clinician education and policy support to ensure early diagnosis is both accurate and actionable.



TREATMENT ACCESS BARRIERS

Despite meaningful progress, clinicians identified significant barriers that continue to limit access to Alzheimer's care. Workforce shortages remain a major challenge, with long wait times for neurology appointments and limited availability of specialized care. One clinician said, "The biggest access issue is access to us," emphasizing that system-level constraints — not just coverage policies — continue to limit patient care. Insurance-related barriers also persist. Coverage for diagnostic tools such as PET scans varies, and prior authorization requirements can delay care. Clinicians reported spending significant time navigating payer requirements, particularly for imaging and diagnostic services.

Administrative burden further complicates care delivery. Participation in registries and documentation requirements can strain clinical resources, while gaps in coding and reimbursement create additional challenges.

Caregiver burden was also highlighted as a key concern. Many caregivers face financial strain, limited access to support services and long-term emotional stress, particularly as earlier diagnosis may extend the caregiving journey.

NEXT STEPS

Meeting participants were eager to use their voice on behalf of their patients. They offered ideas for new educational resources and expressed interest in legislative engagement.

ABOUT THE ALZHEIMER'S INITIATIVE

The Alzheimer's Initiative of the Neurological Disease Working Groups is a unique network of clinicians treating Alzheimer's patients who engage in support of public policies that:

- Support the clinician-patient relationship.
- Limit abusive insurance practices.
- Empowers patients and caregivers, and acknowledges their individual needs.

GET INVOLVED

To learn more about AfPA's Alzheimer's Disease Initiative, contact Payton Marvin

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and visit our website at **AllianceForPatientAccess.Org/neurological**