



Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of Alzheimer's Association, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Diabetes Association, Arthritis Foundation, National Multiple Sclerosis Society and our thousands of employees and tens of millions of volunteers and supporters, we thank you for the support shown to the charitable sector in the CARES Act. As the leading voluntary health charities, we are committed to quality care, support, and research on behalf of patients and their families. With these families and our missions in mind, we need to share how the CARES Act can be improved and strengthened for nonprofits trying to weather this crisis and rebuild.

Health Charities' Rapid Response to COVID-19

All of our organizations represent patients who all have health conditions that may increase their risk of contracting COVID-19 or developing dangerous complications. These conditions, such as heart and lung disease or rheumatoid arthritis, are associated with more severe coronavirus cases and an increased fatality rate of two or three times higher than the general population. Furthermore, these individuals have one or more chronic conditions, including 38 percent of people with Alzheimer's that also have heart disease and 37 percent that also have diabetes.

We have each responded quickly to support our constituents, and these initiatives—and others like them—wouldn't be possible without charitable giving and public support.

- The **Alzheimer's Association** has released guidance based on its Dementia Care Practice Recommendations to help ensure the delivery of high-quality care for people living with Alzheimer's and all dementia in long-term care and community-based settings during the COVID-19 crisis.
- The **American Heart Association (AHA)** announced a commitment of \$2.5 million in rapid response research awards to better understand COVID-19 and its interaction with heart and

brain systems. AHA has also developed the first COVID-focused registry to aggregate data and aid research on the disease, treatment protocols and risk factors tied to adverse cardiovascular outcomes.

- The **American Lung Association** announced it will expand its COVID-19 research within its Airways Clinical Research Center Network to examine preventive research, vaccines, antivirals and to advance future outbreak preparedness, as well as to evaluate the effect of COVID-19 on patients with chronic lung disease.
- The **American Cancer Society** has in recent weeks received in excess of 35,000 calls to the National Cancer Information Center and approximately 80 percent of all calls received were related to COVID-19 and cancer, including service requests and questions about health safety.
- Among other resources, the **National MS Society** is offering bi-weekly sessions for healthcare providers and is now a hub for ECHO MS, ensuring that clinicians in rural and underserved areas have the knowledge and support they need to better manage patients with complex conditions such as MS.
- The **American Diabetes Association** is deploying a wide range of free support for clinicians who are caring for people with diabetes and COVID-19, such as a daily webinar series addressing common points of interest among clinicians and an artificial intelligence-powered digest of current scientific literature on COVID-19 and diabetes, among other efforts.
- The **Arthritis Foundation** launched a resource page called [Care and Connect](#) with continuously updated information for patients, in addition to launching a survey to collect data on COVID-related impacts and access challenges. The Arthritis Foundation is also combating shortages of hydroxychloroquine, coordinating with State Boards of Pharmacy, state and federal officials, and stakeholders across the supply chain, in addition to working directly with patients to connect them to pharmacies with supply.

Additional Relief Needed to Bolster Larger Charities

Key provisions in the CARES Act, including emergency funding, loans, payroll tax credits, and enhanced charitable giving incentives, were a first step to give charities the resources needed as employers and essential service providers. However, even larger nonprofits such as our organizations will be greatly impacted by the economic ramifications of this pandemic for months and even years without expanded support. In the next package, we urge you to include:

- **Expand Nonprofit Access to Credit:** As many of our organizations employ more than 500 staff, we understand the limitations of the Paycheck Protection Program and urge funding exclusively for nonprofits within the Mid-Size Business Loan Program with some improvements. Specifically, we join with coalition partners in asking for an adjustment to the CARES Act Section 4003 (c)(3)(D) to implement a program to support nonprofit employers with between 500 and 10,000 employees, including loan forgiveness and other provisions. The legislation should direct the Treasury Department to have this program operational no later than 15 days after enactment.

· **Expand Charitable Giving Incentives:** We all support a more robust universal charitable deduction by raising the cap and making it permanent as recommended by several Members on both sides of the aisle. We also support the **Legacy IRA Act (H.R. 3832/S. 1257)**, a bipartisan, bicameral solution that is a longer-term recovery tool to incentivize charitable giving by seniors.

The short-term funding provisions will meet the need now for critical services, staff, and community resiliency. However, we will need long-term charitable giving support to help meet this crisis, build communities, and ensure the viability and vitality of the charitable sector. Both of these legislative asks will allow us to continue supporting our patients and their families.

We stand ready to work with you and answer any questions or concerns that you may have with these proposals. Please contact Rachel Conant, Vice President of Federal Affairs at Alzheimer's Association, at rconant@alz-aim.org or Emily Holubowich, Vice President of Federal Advocacy at American Heart Association, at Emily.Holubowich@heart.org.

Sincerely,

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American Diabetes Association
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