

IMPROVE EARLY DETECTION AND DIAGNOSIS OF ALZHEIMER'S

ENSURE ACCESS TO BIOMARKER TESTING IN VERMONT



12,800 Vermonters are living with Alzheimer's, but as many as half of them are not formally diagnosed.

An early and accurate diagnosis of dementia can improve access to care and support services, enhance quality of life and reduce the financial impact of the condition.

With the historic Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of treatments that slow the progression of Alzheimer's in the early stages, early detection and diagnosis are even more critical to ensure individuals receive the most benefit at the earliest point possible.

Biomarkers (short for "biological markers") offer one of the most promising paths to improve dementia detection, diagnosis and treatment. Yet these critical tests remain out of reach for many as insurance coverage is failing to keep pace with innovations and advancements in treatments.

TAKE ACTION IN VERMONT



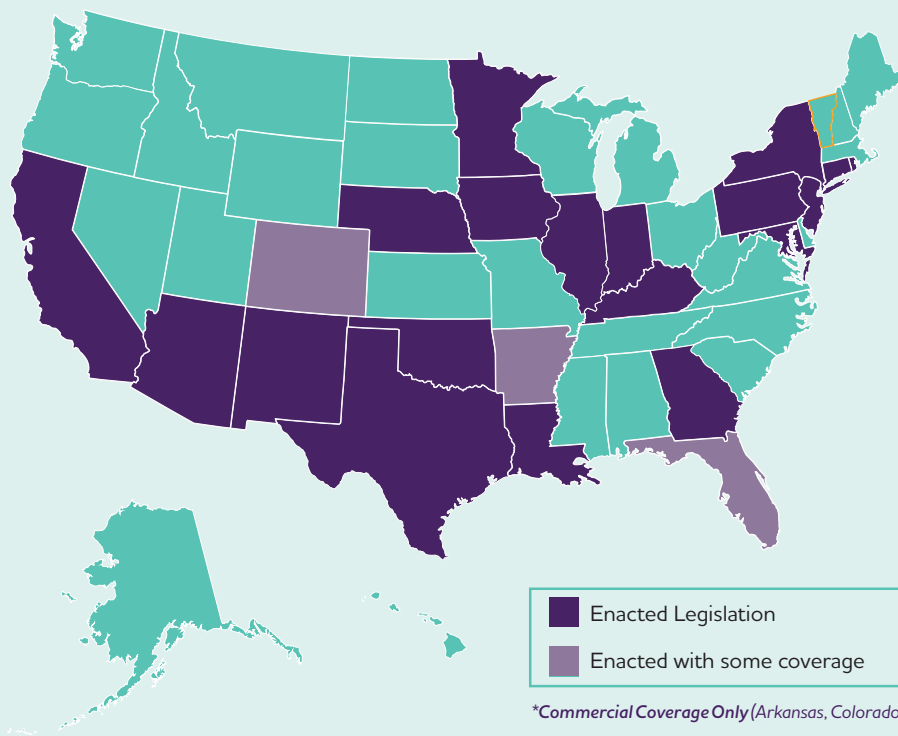
- Require appropriate coverage for biomarker testing to support the early detection and diagnosis of Alzheimer's and other dementia.
- Remove barriers that prevent people living with dementia from benefiting from biomarker testing.

H.136/S.154 ensures that Vermonters can access necessary biomarker testing, reducing the time it takes to receive a diagnosis and enabling access to new disease-modifying treatments and care planning.

Without **taking action** on this legislation, dementia diagnoses may take up to two years, increasing the long-term costs to the individual, family and the state.

Because diagnosis leads to lower costs of care for people living with dementia, access to biomarker testing can accelerate these cost savings. In a 2018 analysis, diagnosis led to projected cost savings of approximately **\$63,000** per person of which **\$30,000** was in Medicare savings, **\$20,000** in Medicaid savings, and **\$13,000** in other savings.

The Alzheimer's Association is part of a national coalition of patient advocates committed to ensuring insurance coverage for comprehensive biomarker testing. National coalition members include ACS CAN, ALS Association, Arthritis Foundation.



As of September 2025

BIOMARKER TESTING

Biomarkers are measurable biological changes that can show if a disease is present or if a person is at risk for developing a disease. Methods for detecting biomarkers can include conducting imaging scans and collecting samples of bodily fluids like blood, saliva, urine and cerebrospinal fluid (the clear, colorless liquid that surrounds the brain and spinal cord).

Currently, there are some FDA-approved biomarker tools (e.g., brain imaging) that can be used to aid in diagnosis of people with symptoms of dementia. Some of these tools already have a wealth of research and clinical data to support their use in a clinical setting, while other emerging biomarkers are promising but still under investigation (e.g. blood tests and genetic risk profiling).

Continued progress around blood-based amyloid biomarkers is likely to lead to new Alzheimer's diagnostic tools coming to market within the next couple of years.

BARRIERS TO ACCESS

Insurance coverage for biomarker testing (including blood tests, saliva tests, imaging, etc.) is currently not keeping up with scientific discoveries and progress in treatment.

Existing health care disparities and challenges to obtaining a dementia diagnosis may be exacerbated if new biomarker testing opportunities cannot be accessed.

Jenny Horgan | State Government Relations Director
603-403-3327 | jchorgan@alz.org
alzimpact.org/Vermont