



For Immediate Release

## **Local Southern California Alzheimer's Organizations Applaud the Passage of AB 453 (Chau) to Make Medical First Responders Dementia Capable**

SACRAMENTO, CA (July 16, 2019)- Governor Gavin Newsom today signed AB 453 by Assemblymember Ed Chau, which requires the Emergency Medical Services Authority to develop trainings focused on effective communication with people living with dementia and their caregivers for Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs).

We applaud Governor Newsom for making this important commitment to Alzheimer's families. People living with the disease and their caregivers should be confident that they will receive quality care in a medical emergency. Over 650,000 Californians are living with Alzheimer's, a number which is expected to drastically increase as our population continues to age. In fact, the population with dementia is expected to increase 51% by 2050, meaning that EMTs will have increasing contact with people living with dementia<sup>1</sup>. Creating communities and systems of care that are dementia friendly and dementia capable is imperative to ensuring that those impacted with the disease are treated with respect and dignity. EMTs who receive this training are playing a vital part in making our health care system and our communities safe for Alzheimer's families.

**Assemblymember Ed Chau (D-Monterey Park):** "AB 453 is a critical step in ensuring that emergency personnel are better equipped to meet the needs of Alzheimer's and dementia patients by ensuring they undergo the appropriate training to better understand a patient's limits, including an inability to accurately communicate, answer questions appropriately, report their needs, or make sound decisions. I thank the Governor for signing this bill into law."

**Alzheimer's Los Angeles President and CEO, Heather Cooper Ortner** said: "For our families who are already managing the stressful responsibility of caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or another dementia, having knowledgeable and understanding professionals during an emergency can help to reduce that stress. e. We thank Assemblymember Ed Chau for his leadership and commitment to helping Alzheimer's families."

**Alzheimer's San Diego President and CEO, Eugenia Welch:** "Through collaborative partnerships with our local law enforcement agencies, Alzheimer's San Diego is actively providing dementia training for first responders. Knowing the signs of dementia and how

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<sup>1</sup> 2018 NADRC: Working Together: How Community Organizations and First Responders Can Better Serve People Living with Dementia (September 2018); <https://nadrc.acl.gov/node/155>

to best respond to incidents involving dementia increases first responder's availability to competently and safely manage these situations. We look forward to working with the Emergency Medical Services Authority to integrate dementia training into their curriculum."

**Alzheimer's Orange County President and CEO, Jim McAleer:** "As the number of people living with Alzheimer's and other dementias increases, medical first responders will have increased interactions with people living with dementia. We need to ensure that our medical first responders have not just a basic understanding of the disease, but the skills and knowledge to effectively communicate, handle situations appropriately, and connect families to appropriate community resources."

Our organizations are ready to assist the Emergency Medical Services Authority in creating the dementia training. Alzheimer's San Diego and Alzheimer's Orange County have developed in-person and online trainings for law enforcement officers, firefighters, and EMS through grant funding from the Administration for Community Living. Together they have trained over 1,400 first responders.

Alzheimer's Los Angeles, Alzheimer's Orange County, and Alzheimer's San Diego are independent, local nonprofits, serving Southern California families impacted by Alzheimer's through services and programs including Care Counseling, education, and support groups.

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### **About Alzheimer's Los Angeles**

For almost 40 years Alzheimer's Los Angeles has been serving people throughout Los Angeles County and the Inland Empire. 100% of funds raised stay local, providing free care and support for individuals and families. Low cost training and education are also offered for professionals. Alzheimer's Los Angeles focuses on care, support, advocacy, and local research. Alzheimer's is a devastating neurodegenerative disease that weakens the memory and other cognitive and emotional functions. For more information, call the Helpline at 844.HELP.ALZ or visit [www.alzheimersLA.org](http://www.alzheimersLA.org)

Find Alzheimer's Los Angeles on social media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AlzheimersLA>

Twitter: @AlzheimersLA | Instagram: @AlzheimersLA

### **About Alzheimer's Orange County**

Alzheimer's Orange County provides programs and services, many free of charge, to Orange County residents with Alzheimer's and related dementia disorders, their families, caregivers, and the community. Alzheimer's Orange County began as an independent 501c3 nonprofit in 1982, became a chapter of a national association in 1984, and in December 2015, became an independent nonprofit again with all fundraising going toward care, support and research in Orange County, Calif. Alzheimer's is a devastating neurodegenerative illness that weakens the memory and other cognitive and emotional functions.

For more information, call the Helpline at 1-844-HELP-ALZ, or visit [www.alzoc.org](http://www.alzoc.org). Find Alzheimer's Orange County on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram below.

Find Alzheimer's Orange County on social media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ALZOC/>

Twitter: @OCAAlzheimers | Instagram: @alzorangecounty

### **About Alzheimer's San Diego**

Alzheimer's San Diego offers a variety of free programs that enhance the well-being and quality of life for those living with the disease and their families, including expert phone and in-person support, connection to community resources, education classes, social engagement and activity programs, specialized support for the newly diagnosed, support and discussion groups and in-home respite. Personalized and family-centered service is the heart of the Alzheimer's San Diego mission, ensuring families receive the support they need most.

Find Alzheimer's San Diego on social media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AlzheimersSD>

Twitter: @AlzheimersSD | Instagram: @alzheimerssd