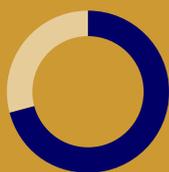


# Rural America's Alzheimer's Crisis — and the Solutions Policymakers Must Act On



More than 7 million Americans live with Alzheimer's disease — a number projected to nearly double by 2060. Rural communities are disproportionately affected: populations are older, aging faster, and face severe shortages of specialists and diagnostic infrastructure. Meanwhile, scalable, affordable solutions already exist but lack the federal policy framework needed to reach the patients who need them most.



**71% of rural physicians** say there are not enough dementia specialists to meet demand — vs. **44% in urban areas**

**1 in 5 Medicare dollars** is currently spent on Alzheimer's and related dementias — rising to **1 in 3 by 2050**

**23% more likely:** rural caregivers to face significant financial strain vs. urban caregivers

**13% more likely:** rural adults to receive care from an unpaid family member

## SCALABLE SOLUTIONS ALREADY EXIST



### Blood-Based Biomarker Tests

The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) cleared two blood-based Alzheimer's diagnostic tests in 2025. These tests are less invasive, less costly, and less complicated to administer than Positron Emission Tomography (PET) imaging or cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) testing — making them better suited for rural clinic settings.



### Digital Cognitive Screening Tools

App-based cognitive assessments can be administered by non-specialists via telehealth, which will expand early detection where clinical staff are limited. But inconsistent American Medical Association CPT reimbursement coding prevents rural providers from reliably adopting these tools.

## WHAT WE ASK POLICYMAKERS TO DO

1

### Pass the Alzheimer's Screening and Prevention (ASAP) Act (H.R. 6130/S.3267)

Create a pathway for Medicare coverage of FDA-cleared blood tests for Alzheimer's screening.

2

### Pass the Accelerating Access to Dementia and Alzheimer's Provider Training Act (AADAPT) Act (H.R. 3747)

Fund virtual continuing education for rural primary care providers on dementia diagnosis and long-term management.

3

### Establish a CPT Code for Digital Cognitive Assessments

Create a clear, consistent reimbursement pathway and remove the uncertainty that discourages rural providers from adopting these tools.

4

### Pass the Convenient Care for Caregivers Act (S. 3234)

Establish a pilot program providing rural caregivers access to counseling, peer support, and health services alongside the patients they assist.

5

### Pass the Fair Funding for Rural Hospitals Act (S. 474) and Rural Hospital Support Act (S. 335)

Strengthen Medicaid funding for rural hospitals — over 48% of which operated at a loss in 2023 — to support integration of new diagnostic technologies.