

News: For Immediate Release

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MEDCHI RECOGNIZES WORLD ALZHEIMER'S MONTH HIGHLIGHTING THE IMPORTANCE OF AWARENESS, EARLY DETECTION, AND SUPPORT

BALTIMORE – September 29, 2026 — During World Alzheimer's Month, MedChi is raising awareness about Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia and emphasizing the importance of early recognition, access to care, and support for individuals, families, and caregivers affected by these conditions.

World Alzheimer's Month provides an opportunity to increase understanding of Alzheimer's disease, challenge misconceptions and stigma surrounding dementia, and encourage individuals to seek information and support.

"Alzheimer's disease affects more than just the individual who receives a diagnosis—it affects families, caregivers, physicians, and entire communities," said Dr. Eric Wargotz, President of MedChi. "By increasing awareness and encouraging conversations about memory changes and cognitive health, we can help Marylanders receive appropriate evaluation and support earlier while ensuring that those living with dementia are treated with dignity, compassion, and respect."

Alzheimer's disease is an increasingly significant public health issue in Maryland, with an estimated 127,000 Marylanders age 65 and older living with Alzheimer's disease and approximately 260,000 family caregivers providing unpaid care and support according to the Alzheimer's Association.

For Marylanders living in rural communities, access to timely diagnosis, treatment and ongoing support can present additional challenges. Maryland identifies 18 areas as rural, where residents may face barriers including limited availability of health care providers, transportation challenges, and technology gaps.

Maryland's new Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) provides an important opportunity to address some of these barriers. The program expands primary care, strengthens telehealth infrastructure, improves health information exchange connectivity, supports technology-enabled care, and develops the rural health workforce which could help rural Maryland communities strengthen the health care infrastructure needed to identify cognitive changes earlier, connect patients with appropriate specialists and resources, and support individuals living with dementia and their caregivers closer to home.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia and can affect memory, thinking, behavior, and the ability to perform everyday tasks. While some changes in memory can be a normal part of aging, persistent or worsening changes should be discussed with a healthcare professional. Early evaluation can help identify potentially treatable causes of cognitive changes, provide an opportunity for appropriate diagnosis, and allow individuals and families to plan for the future.

“Physicians play an important role in helping patients and families navigate the challenges associated with cognitive decline and dementia,” said Gene Ransom, CEO of MedChi.
“World Alzheimer’s Month is an important reminder that awareness, education, early conversations, and compassionate healthcare can make a meaningful difference for Maryland families.”

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. Formed in 1799, it is still the largest physician organization in Maryland today. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients, and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit www.medchi.org.