

# CEHS Secures Funding for Alzheimer's Research Center

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The new center will provide research, training, and support for people with ADRD and their caregivers.

The Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services at Utah State University recently secured state legislative funding of \$850,000 per year to support a new Alzheimer's and Dementia Research Center. This center will provide research, training, support, and increased access to services for people living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia (ADRD) as well as their families and caregivers.

"The Center is well placed in our college," said Al Smith, dean of the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services. "We have a unique collection of human services researchers and clinicians who can meet the comprehensive needs of those suffering from ADRD as well as the needs of their families and communities. We are grateful to the Utah Alzheimer's Association and Representative Dan Johnson for helping us secure funding for this important work."

Alzheimer's disease is highly prevalent in the state of Utah, where it is the 4th leading cause of death of those age 65 or older, and there has been a 187% increase in deaths related to Alzheimer's disease since 2000. In 2021, there were approximately 35,000 people living with Alzheimer's in Utah, and this number is estimated to increase 20% by 2025.

The impact of ADRD extends well beyond the patients themselves; as of 2020, Utah had the 8th highest percentage of dementia caregivers in the nation, meaning that approximately 104,000 Utahns provided an estimated

144,000,000 hours of unpaid care to family and loved ones with ADRD. The value of this unpaid care is estimated to be upwards of \$2 billion, and the actual Medicaid costs of caring for people with ADRD is around \$185,000,000.

The new Alzheimer's and Dementia Research Center will foster Alzheimer's research and service collaboration across multiple departments, organizations, and institutions. It will build on the research and intervention work of specialists such as Dr. Beth Fauth, professor in the department of Human Development and Family Studies, who has dedicated a large portion of her academic career to studying ADRD and its impact on caregivers. As the only land-grant institution in Utah, the university can advance the goals of the coming center through its USU Extension networks that reach all corners of the state.

"Utah State's mission has always been to conduct research that benefits people throughout the state," said Fauth. "This center fits that mission well. Alzheimer's education and support can be made available even to those who live far from Logan, and people throughout the state can have opportunities to participate in research."

The new center will focus on all aspects of ADRD, including prevention, treatment, progression, and family care. It will lead to increased awareness of and service to caregivers through community outreach and education and will enable USU to coordinate with other state and national organizations specializing in ADRD care and research, as well as national health and research entities.

USU [recently attained](#) the prestigious Carnegie R1 Classification, indicating "very high research activity." The new Alzheimer's and Dementia Research Center, along with many similar endeavors, is a vital part of this activity. The Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services is continually making breakthrough developments in education and human services, contributing to the additional recognition USU has received with the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification. This designation reflects a strong commitment to enriching lives through community partnerships.

This new state funding gives USU researchers additional support to prioritize work related to ADRD, stimulating new projects and new partnerships with the goal of yielding an innovative exchange of ideas and scientific methods. More information on the center will become available as the project moves forward.

*The ADRD Research Center was acknowledged in President Noelle Cockett's [2022 State of the University address](#); the announcement also appeared on [Utah State Today](#).*