



**ATTN: NEWS EDITOR  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MARCH 30, 2016**

**ALZHEIMER'S ALLIANCE HELPS EASE  
FINANCIAL HARDSHIPS FOR CAREGIVERS**

TYLER – The Alzheimer's Alliance of Smith County is proud to be one of the leading independent nonprofit organizations in the United States supporting those with dementia who are facing financial hardships.

In a report published today by the national Alzheimer's Association, it was found that dementia's costs of care are 74% higher than any other disease, including heart disease and cancer. With generous private donations and grants from state agencies, the Alzheimer's Alliance typically funds over 1,000 hours of assistance each month to Smith County caregivers. Programs include in-home care, overnight breaks, and a weekly day club social program. These respite options ease the financial and emotional burdens for caregivers while ensuring their loved one is well cared for and safe.

“Caregiver support is such a critical area of need in our community,” said Luanne Harms, LMSW, Client Services Director of the Alzheimer's Alliance of Smith County. “Regular breaks allow caregivers to look after their own physical and emotional health, which means they are ultimately able to provide better care for their loved one.”

Caregiving also has a significant impact on the local economy. In 2016, unpaid caregiving hours are expected to total almost \$19 billion in Texas, with caregivers reducing their workload, changing jobs, or leaving the workforce entirely. Many are surprised to discover the limits of Medicare, health insurance, retirement plans, and personal savings when confronted with the costs of caring for a person with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias.

“There is so much misinformation out there about planning for long-term care,” said Nelda Davis, Interim Executive Director of the Alzheimer's Alliance of Smith County. “On the positive side, the Alliance is unique in the support we can provide families, employers, and church communities as they navigate through this journey. We can help them become educated and prepare early so they are responding, not reacting, to a crisis.”

For more information about care assistance at the Alzheimer's Alliance, visit our website at [www.alzalliance.org](http://www.alzalliance.org). The full report on caregiving costs from the Alzheimer's Association can be found on their website at <http://alz.org/facts/>.



### **About the Alzheimer's Alliance of Smith County**

Founded in 1982, the Alzheimer's Alliance of Smith County is a local nonprofit organization committed to walking alongside all of those affected by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Our services include personal consultations, education and awareness, caregiver support and resources, and brain health advocacy in Smith County.

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