



2026 Policy Goals and Metrics

APPROVED BY ALLIANCE PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE ON MARCH 2, 2026.

1) **Ensure Sustained Growth and Integrity of Federal Research Programs to Advance Prevention, Diagnosis, Treatment and Healthy Lifestyles Across the Lifespan**

Why it Matters: Federal research funding is our best tool to make meaningful advancements in the health of older Americans. Over the last seventy years, the US has had unprecedented success; advancing treatments for chronic disease, dramatically reducing the threat of infectious diseases, and developing novel medical technologies. This is a direct result of sustained investment in federally funded research. It is critical that we continue to prioritize this investment, particularly at a time when our technological capacity is improving at an astronomical rate and our population is aging every year. Now that we are on the cusp of breakthroughs in areas such as heart disease, cancer, and Alzheimer's, the Alliance maintains we must expand our federal commitment.

Goal:

Ensure that investment in federally funded science is strengthened.

2) **Support Infectious Disease Prevention Policies and Promote Compliance Grounded in Scientific Rigor and Broad, Evidence-Based Consensus**

Why it Matters: Older adults are particularly vulnerable to respiratory and other infectious diseases, which once contracted can be very difficult to treat. Our best tools against these infections are vaccines for prevention and the development of new anti-microbial resistant (AMR) antibiotics to prevent the proliferation of drug-resistant illness. With preventable infectious disease on the rise in many areas of the country, supporting established, science-based approaches and preserving existing federal structures for clinical review and population recommendations is vital to the health of older adults. Ensuring universal coverage of vaccines and responsible antibiotic use will help reduce preventable diseases, ease the burden on healthcare systems, and ultimately save lives.

Goal:

Promote a comprehensive infectious disease policy framework that prioritizes access to lifesaving vaccines, promotes compliance with evidence-based vaccine recommendations, and supports responsible antimicrobial development and use.

3) Improve Access and Affordability for Older Adults in the Medicare Program

Why it Matters: Recent changes across the Medicare coverage landscape for prescription drugs, diagnostics, and medical devices have reconfigured incentives and added complexity for payers, manufacturers, and beneficiaries. Recent changes were primarily enacted to address Medicare program spending, which has created some unintended consequences for older adult beneficiary affordability and access and skews incentives for future clinical development to clinician-administered therapies. Additional challenges to the legal protections for novel diagnostics and other medical interventions create unnecessary barriers to investment. The Alliance is committed to policy reforms that recognize the importance of Medicare program sustainability, while also prioritizing clinical decision-making between patients and health care providers over financial risk.

Goal:

Advocate for policies that ensure affordability and access to care for all Medicare beneficiaries.

4) Ensure Medicare Coverage and Quality Measures Align with Clinical Recommendations and FDA-Approved Treatment Options in the Medicare Program

Why it is important: A core priority of the Medicare program is to provide access to screenings, diagnostics, and treatments that are “reasonable and necessary.” Administrative hurdles have made this particularly difficult in recent years, leading to misaligned incentives that have unequal, negative consequences for Medicare beneficiaries by disease condition or care setting. Medicare coverage pathways and quality metrics should align with current science and clinical guidance to defer to the FDA on safety and effectiveness and promote coverage and reimbursement policies that prioritize equal access to care for all beneficiaries.

Goal:

The Alliance is committed to modernizing Medicare coverage of prevention and screenings, improving access for older adults with any condition in all care settings and enhancing access to novel medical therapies.

5) Rapid Response to Emerging Challenges

Why it Matters: The evolving policy landscape requires a proactive and well-coordinated response to emerging regulatory and executive actions. By anticipating and preparing for potential shifts in healthcare, aging policy, medical research, and regulatory oversight,

we can mitigate negative impacts, seize opportunities, and maintain a strong advocacy presence.

Goal:

Ensure a proactive, strategic, and well-coordinated response to emerging regulatory and executive actions impacting healthcare, aging policy, and medical research.