

Hawaii's defining moment in the fight against the disease

By Girard Perone

Sometimes history doesn't announce itself with fanfare or fireworks. It slips quietly into the world — in the form of a blood test, a needle, or a law passed in the final minutes of a long night at the state Capitol. Yet these small moments can change the future of every family in Hawaii.

In the last hour of this year's legislative session, two Alzheimer's bills crossed the finish line like a miracle at the buzzer. The most transformative (House Bill 700/Act 286) makes it mandatory that every Hawaii resident age 65 and older receive a cognitive test during their annual Medicare wellness visit. For the first time, early detection is not just encouraged — it is guaranteed by law.

That victory was barely inked into the record when science added two astonishing new breakthroughs to the story which brings Alzheimer's care closer to home. The first is a newly FDA-approved blood test capable of detecting amyloid plaques, a hallmark of Alzheimer's, years before the earliest whisper of the disease can be heard. No PET scans, no long waits, no guesswork — just a small vial of blood in primary care can reveal

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Girard Perone submitted this on behalf of the Alzheimer's Association Hawaii.

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