



### What is the Compassionate Allowance Initiative?

Under this initiative, the Social Security Administration (SSA) finds individuals with certain diseases/conditions eligible for Social Security disability (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits by the nature of the disease. While applicants still have to meet other SSDI criteria and/or SSI criteria, when it comes to the disability criterion, they are considered eligible by virtue of the disease and fast-tracked for a favorable decision about their eligibility for SSDI and SSI benefits.

### What is Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)?

Social Security disability benefits (SSDI) are paid to individuals who have worked for enough years and have a condition that is so severe that they are not able to work any longer. Administered by the SSA, SSDI makes monthly payments to eligible disabled individuals and is a significant benefit for individuals with early-onset (younger-onset) Alzheimer's disease. In addition to a monthly payment, it serves as entry to Medicare benefits for those under the age of 65. Family members (e.g., spouses and minor children) may also be eligible for benefits based on the applicant's work record.

### What is Supplemental Security Income (SSI)?

Supplemental Security Income benefits (SSI) are paid each month to individuals who are aged, blind or disabled and have limited income and resources (assets). The "disability" criteria for SSI are the same as for SSDI benefits. Unlike SSDI, eligibility for SSI is not based on prior work experience. In addition, in most states, individuals who receive SSI are also automatically eligible for Medicaid (medical assistance) benefits.

### Why is this important to individuals with early-onset Alzheimer's disease and related dementias?

Social Security disability benefits are very important to those with early-onset (younger-onset) Alzheimer's and related dementias because these individuals are often initially denied benefits – but usually win on appeal. Those affected by early-onset Alzheimer's are often simultaneously faced with the enormous challenges that the disease presents, while also undergoing a long disability decision process that is financially and emotionally draining. By adding Alzheimer's disease to the list of “Compassionate Allowance” conditions, it will simplify and streamline the SSDI/SSI application process and should result in receiving SSDI/SSI benefits in an expedited manner.