

Seeking new momentum in Alzheimer's research after decades of slow progress

5.8 million Americans have Alzheimer's, with a new person developing the condition about every minute of every day. [There is still no treatment](#) that slows progression of the disease, let alone stops or reverses it. There are increasing doubts whether the [prevailing theory](#) explaining the foundation of Alzheimer's is accurate.

"I would have thought we'd be further along by now," Harry Johns, the [Alzheimer's] association's CEO, acknowledged in an interview at the group's headquarters here.

But to listen to Johns and other association executives is to hear a message of hope: The groundwork is now, finally, being laid for future therapies. New approaches are being explored, and awareness of [Alzheimer's](#) and other forms of dementia — and the desire to address them — has reached critical mass. The past few years have also been a boon for the association, with an increased profile and fundraising reaching a record \$365 million in fiscal 2019.

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The question is whether that outlook reflects a predictably bullish view from an advocacy group — one that should be taken with a dose of skepticism — or a sign that researchers and patients might be on the precipice of progress.

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