

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Amanda Helvie
Communications Director
562-900-2265
amanda.helvie@alzoc.org

***Alzheimer's Orange County to Open 50-Bed Facility for COVID-19 Positive
Dementia Patients Who Don't Need Hospital-Based Care***

IRVINE, California, December 28, 2020 – Alzheimer's Orange County's (AlzOC) in partnership with the County of Orange and Fairview Developmental Center has recently been approved to open a 50-bed care facility at Fairview Developmental Center in Costa Mesa for dementia patients who are COVID-19 positive, but either have mild symptoms or are asymptomatic and do not require hospital-based care.

The short-term facility is set to open on December 28 for the first 25 residents and will be staffed 24/7 with LVN lead team members and caregivers with dementia training. The capacity will expand to 50 beds should cases continue to increase.

The facility will accommodate individuals with dementia who are positive for COVID-19 who do not require significant medical care but who need to be kept apart from other patients at their residential care facility.

Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris, who represents California's 74th Assembly District – Costa Mesa, Laguna Beach, Laguna Woods, Newport Beach, and portions of Irvine and Huntington Beach, played an integral role in getting the facility approved.

"When Dr. Chau informed me that our dementia and memory care facilities were facing a COVID-19 crisis, I immediately called on the California Department of Developmental Services to help find a solution to care for Orange County's most vulnerable patients," said Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris. "This is a great example of how nonprofits, the County and the State can work together to serve and protect our community. Thank you to Alzheimer's Orange County for managing the care of our COVID-19 and dementia patients and working so hard to prevent further spread during this deadly pandemic."

"During this difficult time, we are using our expertise and experience with those living with dementia to care for vulnerable, frail seniors and those living with memory loss who now are COVID-19 positive," said Alzheimer's Orange County CEO and President Jim McAleer.

"We want to assist our hospitals by reducing the strain of taking care of these patients. It is our hope that our temporary facility will lessen demand for hospital beds, helping free them up for other people in need," said Chairwoman of the Orange County Board of Supervisors Michelle Steel, Second District. "It is crucial that we care for the vulnerable in our community at the appropriate level to focus health care workers and resources where they can be most beneficial."

"The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is glad to help provide critical space at Fairview Developmental Center for individuals who have dementia and are COVID-19 positive to help reduce the

burden on area hospitals. Alzheimer's Orange County and Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris have been incredible partners, in addition to the other state and local entities involved in making this happen," said Nancy Bargmann, Director of the Department of Developmental Disabilities.

Statistics show that 80 percent of those who have died from COVID-19 are 65 and over, with older adults living in long-term care facilities at particular risk.

From 1959 until early this year, the state-owned Fairview facility was home to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). As part of the state's COVID-19 response efforts, Fairview has recently been used as a temporary alternative care site for the larger community, as well as individuals with I/DD. These efforts are key in reducing hospital occupancy in Southern California.

###

About Alzheimer's Orange County

Alzheimer's Orange County provides programs and services that span the continuum of care of Alzheimer's and related forms of dementia to Orange County, California residents living with Alzheimer's or dementia, including older adults and frail seniors, along with their families, caregivers, and the community. Alzheimer's Orange County began as an independent 501c3 nonprofit in 1982 with a primary mission of providing care and support for those impacted with dementia and their caregivers in Orange County. Alzheimer's is a devastating neurodegenerative illness that weakens the memory and other cognitive and emotional functions. For more information, call the Helpline at 1-844-HELP-ALZ, or visit www.alzoc.org. Find Alzheimer's Orange County on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram.