

# THE AAN'S APPROACH TO BRAIN HEALTH POLICY, 2024-2025

Brain health is a continuous state of attaining and maintaining the optimal neurological function that best supports one's physical, mental, and social well-being through every life stage. The AAN recognizes Public Policy as a core pillar to advancing brain health, in addition to Science, Patient Care, and Public Education. Conceptually, brain health is an expansive and multifaceted construct, and opportunities for intervention are as diverse and numerous as they are important to raise. It is essential to emphasize the importance of brain health as a societal investment for a productive nation to thrive and excel. Given the complexity and importance of this issue, the AAN is



## Strengthening the Neurology Workforce

The AAN is dedicated to ensuring patients have access to neurological care through supporting the neurology workforce. This includes advocacy on the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule, physician payment reform, reauthorization and expansion of the Conrad 30 Program, and increasing Graduate Medical Education (GME) slots. The AAN also supports measures to address physician mental health and burnout.



## Reducing Administrative Burden

The AAN has long advocated to reform prior authorization and step therapy. These reforms would promote brain health by improving access to recommended care and medication, enabling patients to follow the prescribed treatment plan.

currently focused on promoting brain health through public policies that advance primary prevention of brain disease and living well with brain disease. Much of the AAN's long-standing advocacy work aligns with these goals, and the AAN continues to explore opportunities for collaboration to continue advancing brain health for all. The AAN is committed to exploring additional policy opportunities beyond what is outlined here to continue our work to advance brain health for all.

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## Promoting Patient Access to Care

The AAN is dedicated to ensuring and promoting patient access to needed neurological care. As part of this, the AAN is dedicated to the funding of VA Centers of Excellence, including the Epilepsy Centers of Excellence, the Multiple Sclerosis Centers of Excellence, and the Parkinsons' Disease Research, Education and Clinical Centers, which deliver needed neurological care to veterans and aid in our understanding of brain disease. The AAN also works to ensure that patients have access and coverage to FDA-approved medications and therapeutic devices.

## Supporting Neurological Research

The AAN is dedicated to increasing our understanding of the brain, neurological diseases, and treatments, as well as supporting federal funding for research through the annual appropriations process. This includes support for the BRAIN Initiative and other brain health-focused research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Neurology Drug Program at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and medical and prosthetic research at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The AAN works to ensure that research furthers our understanding of brain conditions and treatments. Additionally, the AAN works to advance research around preventing and treating concussion and other traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) by supporting TBI registries, clearinghouses, and reauthorization for the Traumatic Brain Injury program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



## Promoting Health Equity

The AAN strives to incorporate health equity efforts into its brain health policy work and values diversity, equity, and inclusion. The AAN works to ensure that patients in rural and underserved areas have access to neurological care, accomplished in part by the Conrad 30 program. The AAN is also supportive of clinical trial diversity and diversity in medical education.

Achieving brain health for all requires collaboration between multiple stakeholders, as well as coordination in public policy efforts. If you are interested in joining the AAN to advocate for public policies that promote brain health, please reach out to Madeline Turbes, Health Policy Manager, at [mturbes@aan.com](mailto:mturbes@aan.com) or Nicole Lussier, Senior Brain Health Manager, at [nlussier@aan.com](mailto:nlussier@aan.com).