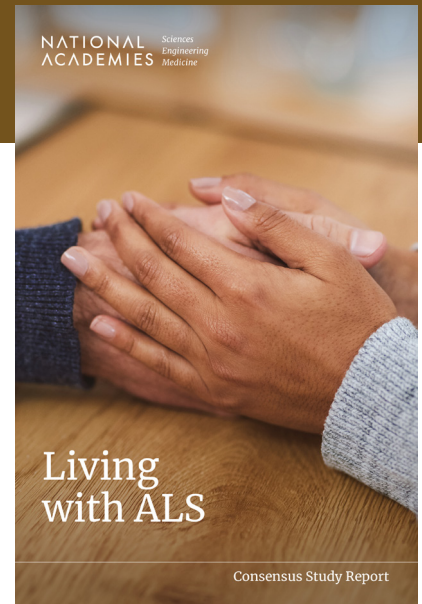


Living with ALS

Supporting Veterans with ALS

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is a rapidly progressive, fatal neurological disease and veterans have twice the risk of developing ALS compared to the general population. A 2024 National Academies report, *Living with ALS*, recommends key actions the public, private, and nonprofit sectors can take to make ALS a livable disease within 10 years—actions that focus on accelerating scientific progress and getting people connected to specialty care. The report also makes a recommendation for enhancing ALS care, research, and education within the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).



WHAT IS ALS CARE LIKE FOR VETERANS?

The VA ALS system of care is a bright spot in the national landscape of ALS treatment. VA follows an interdisciplinary, proactive, patient-centric approach that provides veterans with early and continued access to needed consultations, therapies, equipment, and care services. Additionally, veterans with ALS who receive care through VA generally do not suffer the same financial devastation that others suffer.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO VETERANS WITH ALS FACE?

While positive overall, the VA ALS system of care does not address several critical issues, such as ensuring equitable access to care for veterans across the country or addressing the projected extreme shortage in the ALS health care and clinical research workforce. Additionally, basic research into the connection between military service and ALS has stalled in recent years.

HOW COULD THE REPORT'S RECOMMENDATIONS IMPACT VETERANS?

If implemented, the recommendations in this report could address key issues facing veterans with ALS by establishing a VA network that would:

- Resolve VA's ALS workforce shortage
- Ensure access to comprehensive ALS care for veterans regardless of geographic location
- Increase VA opportunities for ALS health professional training
- Invest in clinical and informatics resources to enhance VA's ability to partner with outside entities

Learn more and access the full report at nationalacademies.org/Living-with-ALS.