

# LI Alzheimer's Goes It Alone

by Tara Martinez

If you or someone you know has Alzheimer's you will find that what once was the Long Island Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association has recently changed its affiliation. The former chapter has now become the Alzheimer Disease Resource Center and works as an organization separate from the national Alzheimer's Association.

Having been managed by the national Alzheimer's Association and overseen by the New York City affiliate, the former Long Island Chapter has cited mismanagement of funds as being at the core of their decision to become a unique entity.

"The national Alzheimer's Association has taken 40 percent of the gross unrestricted revenues raised here on Long Island, failed to protect our exclusive territory, threatened our restricted revenues and is rolling up chapters into the national office, which we believe continually increases the association's expenses," states a legal document on the Alzheimer Disease Resource Center's website.

Current Executive Director of the Resource Center in Bay Shore, Mary Ann Ragona, is hopeful that this shift will bring

positive changes to Long Island while allowing for greater freedom to become a more stable and useful resource to locals.

"Because territorial boundaries have been lifted we will continue to expand to all areas of need within the greater New York Metropolitan area. We will be able to focus on local research and bring to our constituency innovative programs that we believe will be of most help to those that we serve...We will also be expanding our programs and services on the East End of Long Island utilizing our newly opened Southampton office. We are working towards bringing much needed assistance to families on the East End in the form of training, Support Groups, and assistance in the home," she said.

The response from the national Alzheimer's Association office was quite the opposite — stating that it was their decision to disaffiliate the former Long Island chapter for failing to observe association policies.

"After a history of noncompliance with Alzheimer's Association policies and procedures, the National Board of Directors of the Alzheimer's Association made the deci-

sion to disaffiliate the Long Island Chapter from the national organization on October 6, 2013. The national board is disappointed this action was necessary," said Erin Heintz, Senior Associate Director of Public Relations for the Alzheimer's Association.

While the former Long Island chapter has reorganized, the national office is determined to reestablish another chapter to meet community needs. "Our priority remains providing the families on Long Island, greater New York and across the United States with the ongoing care, support and information they need. We will immediately begin the process of establishing a new Alzheimer's Association national chapter on Long Island," said Heintz.

Both sides make it clear that those in need of support from these organizations will have no trouble finding a resource for their troubles, as their main priority of serving the Alzheimer's community remains in tact. For more information visit [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org) or [www.ardcinc.org](http://www.ardcinc.org).



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