

World Health Organization adopts global plan on dementia

The plan opens a new era in understanding, care and treatment – but governments must act now. The plan acknowledges that dementia is not a normal part of ageing and that those affected should be helped to live as well as possible.

- **Every 3 seconds someone in the world develops dementia but most people with dementia do not receive a diagnosis or support**
- **Governments must develop their own national plans**
- **Next year dementia will become a trillion dollar disease**
- **Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI) recommends spending at least 1% of the global cost of dementia on public funding for research to find solutions**

Geneva, 29 May 2017 - After ten years of continuous advocacy by ADI for a global response to the growing dementia crisis, The World Health Organization (WHO) has adopted a global plan on dementia. It calls on governments to meet targets for the advancement of dementia awareness, risk reduction, diagnosis, care and treatment, support for care partners and research. The plan was approved at the 70th World Health Assembly this week.

Only 29 governments out of the 194 WHO member states have developed a plan on dementia. The global plan supports the urgent message that governments must implement their own plan or policies and that these must be funded, implemented and monitored.

Paola Barbarino, CEO of ADI, said: *"Governments need to act now. We have a once-in-a lifetime opportunity to dramatically change the attitude to dementia from fear and inaction, to fighting back, understanding, inclusion and support."*

Dementia affects 50 million people worldwide – a number that will almost triple by 2050. More than half of all people with dementia live in low and middle income countries, where as few as 10% of individuals receive a diagnosis. In 2018, dementia will become a trillion-dollar disease.

Glenn Rees, Chair of ADI, said that dementia is the only major chronic disease area without a cure. *"At least 1 per cent of the cost of dementia needs to be invested and invested now in dementia research."*

ADI and DAI were consulted on the development of the plan which includes, as an example, targets for all member states to implement public awareness campaigns and dementia friendly initiatives, and 75% of all countries to develop training for care partners and families.

Kate Swaffer, Co-founder, Chair and CEO of Dementia Alliance says she *"greatly values WHO's global leadership with this Global Action Plan for a Public Health Approach to Dementia, and asks for the support of all Health Ministers and governments to implement it so that people with dementia have access to their rights in international law on the same basis as those with other disabilities."*

Dr Tarun Dua, WHO Department for Neurological Disorders and Public Health, said: *"The Action Plan is a very welcome commitment by the member states of WHO to initiate a strong public health response to dementia with time bound targets. We look forward to providing the necessary technical assistance for countries to achieve the objectives of the action plan. We will need all the support from civil society organizations like the Alzheimer's Disease International to undertake this task."*

NOTES TO EDITOR

The *Global Plan of Action on the Public Health Response to Dementia 2017-2025* was adopted by 194 countries of the WHO during item 15.2 of the 70th session of the World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland.

- Find out more about the Global plan, including answers to common questions at: www.alz.co.uk/dementia-plans/global-plan
- See the full draft of the plan on the WHO website: http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB140/B140_28-en.pdf?ua=1

For more information, please contact:

James Smith
Communications and Administration Coordinator
Alzheimer's Disease International
T: +44 (0) 20 79810880
E: j.smith@alz.co.uk

Available for interview

- Paola Barbarino, CEO, Alzheimer's Disease International
- Marc Wortmann, Former Executive Director of Alzheimer's Disease International
- Glenn Rees AM (based in Australia), Chair, Alzheimer's Disease International
- Kate Swaffer, Chair, CEO and Co-Founder of Dementia Alliance International

Global Plan on Dementia

The seven targets of the plan include: (1) Dementia as a public health priority; (2) Dementia Awareness and Friendliness; (3) Dementia risk reduction; (4) Dementia diagnosis, treatment, care and support; (5) Support for dementia carers; (6) Information systems for dementia; and (7) Dementia research and innovation. Read the response to the plan by ADI, DAI and key stakeholders at: <https://www.alz.co.uk/news/adi-submits-response-to-zero-draft-global-plan-on-dementia>

World Alzheimer Report 2016: Improving healthcare for people living with dementia

The World Alzheimer Report 2016 contains important recommendations for the strengthening of healthcare systems in response to the global plan on dementia. The full report is available at: www.alz.co.uk/world-report-2016

About Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI)

ADI is the international federation of 90 Alzheimer associations around the world, in official relations with the World Health Organization. ADI's vision is prevention, care and inclusion today, and cure tomorrow. ADI believes that the key to winning the fight against dementia lies in a unique combination of global solutions and local knowledge. ADI works locally, by empowering Alzheimer associations to promote and offer care and support for persons with dementia and their care partners, while working globally to focus attention on dementia and campaign for policy change. For more information, please visit www.alz.co.uk

About Dementia Alliance International (DAI)

DAI is a collaboration of like-minded individuals diagnosed with dementia providing a unified voice of strength, advocacy and support in the fight for individual autonomy for people with dementia. DAI was established in 2014 to promote education and awareness about dementia – in order to eradicate stigma and discrimination – and to improve the quality of lives of people with dementia. Dementia Alliance International is the global voice of dementia. For more information, visit: <http://www.dementiaallianceinternational.org>