**IMMEDIATE RELEASE – MONDAY, JUNE 11th 2018**

**KBC’S HUB2HUB EXTREME-800KM CHALLENGE TO HELP RAISE AWARENESS AND FUNDS FOR THE ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF IRELAND DURING NATIONAL CARERS WEEK 2018**

More than 150 KBC employees are getting ready to take part in a grueling 800km 80 hour non-stop hub2hub relay across Ireland in order to raise awareness and much-needed funds for their charity partner The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI) which will be taking place from June 15th-18th.

The hub2hub concept was created by KBC employees in 2017 when they selected the ASI as their chosen charity partner. Last year staff undertook a 600km 60 hour challenge which saw the bank raise more than €100,000 for the ASI. This year they have increased the challenge and employees have undertaken hours of training as well as fundraising in preparation over the past few months. In 2017 KBC raised over €130,000 in total for their charity partner.

The event will take place during National Carers Week 2018, a week of celebration for carers across Ireland and will consist of a non-stop relay that will see employees cycle, run and walk across the country with key arrival and departure events taking place across Dublin, Galway, Cork and Waterford.

This route will travel over 800km passing by all of KBC’s 16 Hubs and head office locations and all of the funds raised will be donated to the ASI to provide support and services for the 55,000 people who have dementia in Ireland today.

Over 50 of KBC’s employees will depart the KBC’s head office on Sandwith Street Upper on June 15th and cycle 200km from Dublin to Galway and from there over 70 employees will begin 10km interval relays, non-stop, to the Waterford Greenway. At the Waterford Greenway 30 employees will walk the Greenway Marathon and from there the runners will take over again and complete 10km relays back to Dublin non-stop.

ASI staff, supporters, volunteers and advocates will join KBC staff at the departure and arrival events in Dublin, Galway, Cork and Waterford. Members of the public are invited to come out and support the relay team when they arrive at, and depart from, each KBC Hub.

In addition to this, the ASI’s Mobile Information Service will be following the relay to bring much-needed support and information to people living with dementia and their carers. The service is run by trained staff and volunteers and creates a unique opportunity to increase awareness about dementia in areas of the country which are currently poorly serviced.

There are an estimated 180,000 people in Ireland who are, or who have been carers for a family member or partner with dementia. With 55,000 people currently living with dementia in Ireland, and that number expected to more than double by 2040, more and more people are going to find themselves in a situation where they need to support a loved one with dementia.

**The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Head of Fundraising Mairéad Dillon said:**

“The Alzheimer Society of Ireland is delighted to partner with KBC Bank Ireland on this Hub2Hub Extreme event. We are very grateful to the KBC staff that give up their time generously to raise funds and awareness for the ASI during this exciting relay around Ireland.

“The charity partnership with KBC Bank Ireland has been very positive for the ASI so far with the very successful Hub2Hub event last June bringing in over €100,000 for vital supports and services. The partnership gives the ASI an opportunity to not only raise vital funds for our services, but also to bring awareness of dementia, our advocacy work and information helpline to the wider community.

“The ASI is rooted in communities throughout Ireland with local day centres, our mobile information service and Dementia Advisers and with the KBC partnership we can ensure awareness of our work is communicated with an even larger audience across the country.”

**Aidan Power, Director of Customer, Brand and Marketing, KBC Bank Ireland said:**

“We are absolutely thrilled to be able to work with The Alzheimer Society of Ireland on the Hub2Hub challenge for a second year in a row. Last year KBC raised over €100,000 through the hub2hub challenge for the ASI and our aim is to raise as much funding as possible again this year for our deserving partner.

“We are extremely proud of the 150 KBC employees from all over Ireland who will complete 800km in 80 hours for the 80 people diagnosed with dementia in Ireland every week. This is no easy task and a number of our employees have been in training for months and we are extremely grateful for their time and commitment in raising funds. The work the ASI does in our communities is very important and clearly one that many people in KBC feel passionate about.”

“The Alzheimer Society of Ireland provides more than one million hours of community-based dementia-specific care throughout Ireland and we are privileged to be able to support that. You can expect to see us out and about in communities raising awareness and funds for a great cause in the lead up to the event and over the weekend of the challenge itself”

**Donations:**

To donate to KBC’s Hub2Hub Extreme-800km Challenge via the Every Day Here Page follow this link: <https://kbc-hub2hub-extreme-800km-challenge.everydayhero.com/ie/kbcevents>

**Hub2Hub Extreme Events Timetable:**

**DATE LOCATION TIME**15th June KBC Blanchardstown 9.00am Departure

15th June KBC Galway 9.00pm Arrival
16th June KBC Wilton & Lapps Quay 6.00pm Arrival

17th June Waterford Greenway 1.00pm Departure

18th June KBC Dublin HQ 3.00pm Arrival

**ENDS**

**About The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI):**

The ASI is the national leader in advocating for and providing dementia-specific supports and services and each year the organisation provides more than one million hours of community-based dementia-specific care throughout Ireland.

**The ASI provides the following services:**

* National Helpline
* Social Clubs
* Support Groups
* Day Care Services
* Home Care
* Dementia Advisor Service
* Mobile Information Bus

**Helpline:** The Alzheimer Society of Ireland National Helpline is open six days a week Monday to Friday 10am–5pm and Saturday 10am–4pm on 1800 341 341.
**Website:** [www.alzheimer.ie](http://www.alzheimer.ie/)
**Twitter:** @alzheimersocirl
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/TheAlzheimerSocietyofIreland/](http://www.facebook.com/TheAlzheimerSocietyofIreland/)

**About dementia:**
• The number of people with dementia in Ireland is expected to more than double over the next 20 years, from 55,000 today to 113,000 in 2036.
• Dementia is an umbrella term used to describe a range of conditions which cause changes and damage to the brain.
• Dementia is progressive. There is currently no cure. Dementia is not simply a health issue but a social issue that requires a community response.
• The majority of people with dementia (63%) live at home in the community. Over 180,000 people in Ireland are currently or have been carers for a family member or partner with dementia with many more providing support and care in other ways.
• Each year over 4,000 people develop dementia. That’s at least 11 people every day and anyone can get dementia - even people in their 30s/40s/50s.
• 1 in 10 people diagnosed with dementia in Ireland are under 65.
• The overall cost of dementia care in Ireland is just over €1.69 billion per annum; 48% of this is attributable to family care; 43% is accounted for by residential care; formal health and social care services contribute only 9% to the total cost

*Figures referenced to Cahill, S. & Pierce, M. (2013) The Prevalence of Dementia in Ireland*

**About National Carers Week 2018**

Caring is hugely rewarding, but it can also be challenging and National Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout Ireland. For more information on Carers Week 2018 follow this link www.carersweek.ie

**Ends**

**For interview requests please contact The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Communications Manager Cormac Cahill 086 044 1214**