**IMMEDIATE RELEASE – MONDAY, MARCH 26th 2018**

**THE ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF IRELAND LAUNCHES REGIONAL GROUP FOR DEMENTIA CARERS’ ADVOCACY NETWORK IN MUNSTER**

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI) has launched the regional group of its carer advocacy network, the Dementia Carers Campaign Network (DCCN), in Munster with the first meeting taking place in Limerick city.

The DCCN, which was set up in 2013, is a national campaigning group and ismade up of people who have experience of caring for a loved one with dementia.

It aims to be a voice of and for dementia carers in Ireland and to raise awareness of issues affecting families living with dementia. The group is supported and facilitated by the ASI.

The first meeting of the Southern DCCN took place at the Clayton Hotel in Limerick city on Friday, March 23rd and was attended by current and new members of the DCCN. This group is open to anyone who is interested in advocacy and has experience caring for a friend or family member with dementia.

### Since the DCCN’s inception, members of the network have been involved in monitoring the implementation of Ireland’s first National Dementia Strategy (NDS); taken part in awareness-raising activities, including national and local media work; contributed to research programmes; and spoken at conferences and events across Ireland.

There are 500,000 people across Ireland whose families have been affected by dementia. In order to adequately reflect the experiences of dementia carers in Munster, the ASI has established the Southern DCCN which will focus on highlighting the issues affecting dementia carers in the region.

For more information on the DCCN, please contact advocacy@alzheimer.ie

In total, an estimated 14,000 people in Munster have dementia.

**DCCN committee member from Cork, Ann Twomey said:** “Since working with the Dementia Carers Campaign Network (DCCN) I have used my own experiences as a carer for my late husband to the benefit of other carers – by **raising awareness of issues facing families caring for a loved one with dementia and by lobbying for policy change. Being** a part of the Dementia Carers Campaign Network gives you a voice that may otherwise have gone unheard.”

**For more information, please contact The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Communications Manager Cormac Cahill on 086 044 1214 or** **cormac.cahill@alzheimer.ie**

**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 progressive. There is currently no cure. Dementia is not simply a health issue but a social issue that requires a community response.
* 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.
* 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.
* 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.

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