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**\*Free images available from Sportsfile**

**THE ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF IRELAND AMBASSADOR DAVE KEARNEY ENCOURAGING MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO SUPPORT DENIM DAY FOR DEMENTIA FUNDRAISER**

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI) Ambassador Dave Kearney is encouraging members of the public to rally behind Denim Day for Dementia fundraising campaign on Friday, March 9th to help support the 55,000 people living with dementia and their carers in Ireland today.

In its second year, the Denim Day for Dementia campaign is asking everyone from around Ireland to wear their denims – to crèche, primary school and secondary school or to their place of work – on the day and donate just €2 to support people living with dementia.

The professional rugby player has been an official ambassador for the ASI since 2017 and in that time he has shown his support with numerous fundraising events across the country and now he wants you to don your denims to help raise much needed funds for continued ASI supports and services.

Members of the public can order their Denim Day for Dementia Pack by registering online at www.alzheimer.ie or by contacting our fundraising team on (01) 207 3816.

The ASI is the national leader in advocating for and providing dementia-specific supports and services. Each year it provides more than one million hours of community-based dementia-specific care throughout Ireland. The ASI provides supports and services in local communities around Ireland and provides a range of services including day care, home care, family carer training, social clubs and Alzheimer Cafes.

In order to maintain these services, ASI must raise over €3 million every year and with 4,000 new diagnoses of dementia each year, the pressure on services is growing day by day.

**Professional rugby player Dave Kearney said:** “I’m delighted to be showing my support for the Denim Day for Dementia fundraiser which will help thousands of families living with dementia in Ireland. The work the ASI does in helping the 55,000 people living with dementia in Ireland today is outstanding, so, that’s why I will be wearing my denims on Friday, March 9th and I will encouraging everyone to do the same. Please support Denim Day for Dementia and help raise much-needed funds and much public awareness for people with dementia around the country. We want everyone from around Ireland to get involved and wear their denims on the day – to crèche, to school or to work, whatever it might be, and donate just €2 to support people living with dementia.”

**The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Head of Fundraising Mairéad Dillon said:** “We are so pleased that our official ambassador for The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Dave Kearney has come on board for Denim Day for Dementia. We’re very grateful to Dave for joining us today and taking time out of his schedule to assist the ASI in raising much-needed funds for people with dementia and helping us bring the subject of dementia out of the shadows and help remove the stigma associated with the condition in Ireland. So please, everyone, wear your denims on Friday, March 9th.”

**ENDS**

**For more information 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*

**Dementia: Understand Together campaign**

Dementia: Understand Together is a public support, awareness and information campaign led by the HSE, working with the Alzheimer Society of Ireland and Genio, that aims to inspire people from all sections of society to stand together with the 500,000 Irish people whose families have been affected by dementia. For more information on dementia, and the services and supports available, Freephone 1800 341 341 or visit [www.understandtogether.ie](http://www.understandtogether.ie)