**IMMEDIATE RELEASE – THURSDAY, JULY 19th 2018**

**MUNSTER DEMENTIA CARERS ADVOCACY NETWORK TO MEET TO DISCUSS LACK OF ACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF DEMENTIA SUPPORT**

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI) will hold the second meeting of the regional group of its carer advocacy network, the Dementia Carers Campaign Network (DCCN), in the Clayton Hotel in Limerick City on Friday, July 27th (12.00pm-2.00pm).

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.

According to a dementia services mapping project carried out by the ASI and the HSE’s National Dementia Office, not only does access to community dementia-specific services across Ireland vary depending on where you live but no county in Ireland has an acceptable level of dementia support.

The ASI launched called on the Government to invest €12 million towards community supports for people with dementia in the Pre-Budget Submission ‘Dementia Supports Across Ireland – Building Communities of Care. This issue needs to be addressed as a matter of urgently and the Southern DCCN will be concentrating on this issue in the coming months.

### 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 to focus on highlighting the issues affecting dementia carers in the region.

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

**The ASI Advocacy Engagement & Participation Officer Clodagh Whelan said:** “The ASI was founded by carers and we believe the carer voice and lived experience is vital to ensure robust and practical dementia supports in Munster. We know that no county in Ireland has a basic minimum level of dementia supports and services and we need local advocates to help us change this.”

**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 on the DCCN, please contact ASI Advocacy Engagement & Participation Officer Clodagh Whelan via** **clodagh.whelan@alzheimer.ie**

**To request an interview, 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 @DCCNIRL
**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*