Taking Dementia out of the Closet: A World Without Stigma

The Dementia Services Information and Development Centre, in association with the Alzheimer Society of Ireland, is delighted to announce an afternoon seminar entitled: “Taking Dementia out of the Closet: A World without Stigma” will be held on May 20th from 3.30pm- 6pm in the Long Room Hub, Trinity College Dublin.

The aim of the seminar is to debunk prevailing fears, myths and misunderstandings that surround Alzheimer’s disease and dementia and to explore the critical impact dementia, and its associated stigma, often has on the individual diagnosed and on other family members.

Keynote speaker, the eminent Professor Perla Werner, Vice Rector of the University of Haifa in Israel is a world-class scholar who has worked tirelessly in the area of advancing knowledge and research in Social Gerontology for four decades.

Prof Perla has published more than 200 papers in peer-reviewed journals and has received numerous grants from prestigious institutes, including; the NIA, the Science Foundation and Alzheimer’s Associations. Several of her recent works have addressed the important topic of stigma, public and professional understandings of Alzheimer’s and dementia. Her presentation is entitled “Stigma and Alzheimer’s: Why Study”?

This presentation will be followed by five talks delivered by a range of key experts in the dementia field in Ireland. These include Ronan Smith, a man in his fifties and well known theatre impresario diagnosed with Younger-onset Dementia, Tina Leonard, Head of Advocacy and Public Affairs at The Alzheimer Society of Ireland, Sean Donal O’Shea, a full-time carer of his mother Debbie, who has Younger-onset Alzheimer’s, Fidelma Browne (HSE) and a journalist.

The second part of the seminar will explore different perspectives on dementia; the potential of public awareness campaigns in relation to changing attitudes, and the role of the media in either challenging or reinforcing the stigma of dementia. This panel discussion will be chaired by Professor Suzanne Cahill.

The seminar will conclude by formulating recommendations on how stigma can be reduced in society today, and how people with dementia can be helped to live well and enjoy a good quality of life.

The seminar is open to both the public and health service professionals but early registration is advisable since numbers are strictly limited.
To register, please contact Lorraine Lovely at llovely@stjames.ie or telephone 4162035. Registration will close on Friday, May 15th.