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***\*Pictures issued by Sportsfile***

**INSPIRATIONAL MUNSTER DEMENTIA ADVOCATES CALLING ON PUBLIC TO SUPPORT TIPPERARY-LIMERICK LEGENDS CLASH OF THE ASH FUNDRAISIER FOR THE ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF IRELAND**

Two leading Munster dementia advocates, Kevin Quaid and Kathy Ryan, who both have a dementia diagnosis, have called on the public to rally behind a Tipperary v Limerick legends hurling match in aid of The Alzheimer Society of Ireland as they launched the fundraising initiative at a packed Semple Stadium today.

The fundraising drive, which will see legends from the Munster titans face-off to raise vital funds and much-needed public awareness of dementia, will be held during World Alzheimer’s Month 2019 on Saturday, September 7th at Nenagh Éire Óg grounds (5.00pm Throw-In).

Tickets for the event, which has the backing of the GAA Tipperary and Limerick County Boards, can be purchased via Eventbrite at €15.00 for adults and kids going free with all the money raised going towards providing community services and advocacy supports in the Munster area and beyond.

Kevin, who is originally from Broadford in Co Limerick but now living in Kanturk, Co Cork, was diagnosed with Lewy Body Dementia in 2017 aged just 57, is an avid GAA fan and speaks about the fighting spirit of the Limerick hurling team and the fact they never gave up. He brings that same spirit to his life with dementia and has written a book called ‘Lewy Body Dementia, Survival and Me’.

Kathy Ryan was diagnosed with Younger Onset Alzheimer's in January 2014 at the age of 53 and is a mother to two boys and lives in Cashel, Co Tipperary. Kathy got involved in advocacy work because she wants to break down the stigma of dementia and last September she completed part of the Camino to raise funds for The ASI.

This fundraising initiative was the brain child of the dynamic duo, Kevin and Kathy, over a cup of tea when they were discussing ways to give something back to The ASI after everything the charity had done for them – so the inaugural ‘Kevin Quaid and Kathy Ryan Legends Cup’ was created which will bring Tipperary and Limerick hurling legends of yesteryear together to battle it out for the prize come September. Hurling legends such as Joe Quaid and Ciaran Carey have signed up already. Hurling legends such as Joe Quaid and Ciaran Carey have signed up already.

***Member of the Southern Dementia Working Group (SDWG), Kevin Quaid said:***

*“I love hurling and played, coached and loved watching Limerick win the All-Ireland final. My second cousin is the goalkeeper on the team. I watched the final in local pub in Limerick; I wanted to be with my people. I really enjoy going to the pub a lot – I feel that we are all the same when we are on the bar stool. I want to make a difference and with this legends match to shatter the stigma around dementia and to raise money for vital supports and services.* ***There is a stigma around dementia; there is no doubt about it. That’s why we are hosting this match – to step out of the shadows. People should not feel embarrassed or ashamed about dementia. A way that I fight this stigma is be very open with people in my own community about having dementia. I always tell people. And, when I tell them, I find that they just treat me the same. I really want people to get behind this fundraiser – buy a ticket yourself or buy one for a friend. Just come down and support us and the Tipperary-Limerick hurling legends this September.”***

***Vice-Chair of the Irish Dementia Working Group (IDWG), Kathy Ryan said:***

*“The vast majority of people diagnosed with dementia want to live in their own home and stay active and involved in their own community. In order for this to happen we need our communities to become more dementia aware, to understand some of our needs. This hurling legends match is a perfect way to bring dementia into the heart of the community. When a community is dementia aware, it makes the difference between us living as well as possible or staying at home behind closed doors, which has a hugely negative impact on our health and wellbeing. The funds raised from this match will help people with dementia in the community – I am so grateful to the Limerick and Tipperary county boards in particular for getting behind this game and all the warm wishes from both counties and beyond that we have received so far. I really hope the public will get behind us and support the legends match. I am really looking forward to it. Come on Tipperary!”*

In total there are an estimated 13,746 people living with dementia in Munster. There are 2,013 people living with dementia in Limerick and 848 people living with dementia in in North Tipperary and 1,054 people living with dementia in South Tipperary.

It is estimated that there are 55,000 people living with dementia in Ireland and for every one person with dementia three others are directly affected. The number of people with dementia is expected to more than double over the next 20 years to 113,000 in 2039. There are an estimated 50,000 carers of people with dementia in Ireland.

**-Ends-**

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

**Notes to the Editor:**

**About The Alzheimer Society of Ireland:**

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/)

**About Dementia:**

The number of people with dementia in Ireland is expected to more than double over the next 18 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.
* 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*