**IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Monday, 10th February 2020**

**Stars align for Denim Day for Dementia: Sinead Kennedy, Terrie McEvoy and Niamh Cullen combine forces to support national fundraising campaign**

* Denim Day for Dementia held on Friday, 6th March
* Register for Denim Day pack on www.alzheimer.ie
* The ASI must raise over €3 million every year to keep services going

***\*Free images attached and available from Photocall Ireland***

TV and social media stars Sinead Kennedy, Terrie McEvoy and Niamh Cullen want members of the public to rally behind The Alzheimer Society of Ireland’s annual Denim Day for Dementia fundraising campaign on Friday, March 6th to raise funds for vital dementia supports and services.

In its fourth year, the Denim Day for Dementia campaign is asking everyone from around Ireland to don their denims – to crèche, school or to their place of work – on Friday, March 6th and donate just €2 to support the 55,000 people living with dementia and their carers.

To get involved, members of the public are being urged to order their Denim Day for Dementia pack by registering online at www.alzheimer.ie or by contacting the ASI’s fundraising team on (01) 2073848.

Dementia supports and services are in a state of crisis across Ireland and no county receives even a minimum standard of care. The ASI needs to raise €3.5 million each year just keep its vital supports and services running. This campaign aims to raise €25,000 to support people with dementia and their struggling families.

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 Cafés.

***TV Presenter, Reporter and latest ASI Ambassador Sinead Kennedy said:*** *“Dementia is a huge issue for our society as there are 500,000 people in Ireland whose families have been impacted by dementia. The Alzheimer Society of Ireland provides supports and services in local communities around Ireland including day care, home care, family carer training, social clubs and Alzheimer Cafés. But I know that the pressure on these services is growing day by day as the demand increases. More must be done to support people affected by dementia. So I’m delighted to support the Denim Day for Dementia campaign which is asking everyone from around the country to wear their denims on Friday, March 6th and donate just €2 to support the 55,000 people living with dementia and their carers. I would ask everyone to order their Denim Day for Dementia pack by registering on www.alzheimer.ie to get behind this campaign.”*

**Nurse / Fashion and travel blogger, Terrie McEvoy said:** *“I’m delighted to be showing my support for the Denim Day for Dementia fundraising campaign which will help thousands of families living with dementia in Ireland. 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. More must be done to help people living with dementia in our communities around the country, so I would ask everyone to please support Denim Day for Dementia and help raise much-needed funds to support people with dementia and their families. I will be wearing my denims on Friday, March 6th and I encourage everyone to do the same.”*

***Fitness and Fashion Enthusiast, Niamh Cullen said:*** *“I’m delighted to be supporting The Alzheimer Society of Ireland to raise much-needed funds for the 55,000 people living with dementia. I really want to get younger people talking about the impact of dementia on society; it’s one of the biggest health challenges that we are facing. One in 10 people diagnosed with dementia in Ireland today is under the age of 65. I know fundraising is essential to this national charity just to keep their vital supports and services going each year. I would ask everyone around the country to support Denim Day – please don your denims for dementia to raise vital funds on Friday, March 6th.”*

***The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Head of Fundraising, Mairéad Dillon said:***

*“We are so pleased that Sinead Kennedy, Terrie McEvoy and Niamh Cullen have all come on board for Denim Day for Dementia this year. We’re very grateful to them all for taking time out of their busy schedules to assist The Alzheimer Society of Ireland to raise much-needed funds for people with dementia and helping us bring the subject of dementia out of the shadows, especially amongst a younger generation. Fundraising is essential for the charity so we can keep our vital services going each year – in fact, €3.5 million needs to be raised each year just to keep them going. Please support our Denim Day campaign, sign-up on*[*www.alzheimer.ie*](http://www.alzheimer.ie/)*today.”*

**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 understanding and providing dementia-specific supports and services. With a national network of over 120 specialist services, 900 staff and 300 volunteers, each year they provide almost 900,000 hours of community-based, dementia-specific care throughout Ireland. For more information see www.alzheimer.ie.

**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 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

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