**IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Wednesday, 9th September 2020**

**New international exchange project brings quality online education programme to dementia family carers in Kenya**

Alzheimer’s and dementia support organisations in ***Kenya*** and ***Ireland*** have come together to share and promote best practice in developing and delivering online education programmes for family carers looking after a loved one with dementia. The new project is called Dementia Education Exchange Project Ireland Kenya (DEEPIK).

Alzheimer’s and Dementia Organisation Kenya (ADOK) has received funding from the Atlantic Institute to work together with The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI) on a short three-month project to design online carer education to be delivered in Kenya.

The project will adapt and translate The ASI’s successful online family carer course ***‘Home Based Care-Home Based Education’*** to make it relevant for the needs of people in Kenya.

Through working together, DEEPIK will allow The ASI to gain a greater understanding of the needs of ***cultural minorities in Ireland***.

Speaking about the project, which launched on Tuesday, 1st September 2020, ***The ASI’s External Learning and Development Manager, Fergus Timmons said:*** *“We are absolutely delighted to be in a position to work with our colleagues at ADOK, to use our course materials as a starting point for developing a high quality online learning experience for Kenyan family carers of people with dementia. DEEPIK will allow us to gain a greater understanding of the requirements of family carers from culturally diverse backgrounds. We are proud to start working together with a progressive Dementia organisation in Kenya, and are hopeful that this will be the start of a mutually positive partnership for ADOK and ourselves.”*

***Wambui Karanja***, who worked for a year at Trinity College as an Atlantic Fellow for Equity in Brain Health at the Global Brain Health Institute (GBHI) and has been a volunteer worker at ADOK welcomed the project funding, said: *“The support from the Atlantic Institute and the experience of Alzheimer's Society of Ireland designing and delivering online education for caregivers gives us a head start to create quality training for family caregivers in Kenya. I am grateful for the opportunities that being an Atlantic Fellow for Equity in Brain Health at GBHI has provided me with, especially the chance to partner with Alzheimer Society of Ireland on this project.”*

CEO and Founder of ADOK ***Elizabeth Mutunga*** said: *“Alzheimer's and Dementia Organisation of Kenya is an organisation that supports caregivers who have loved ones affected by dementia. We are looking forward to the partnership with Alzheimer Society of Ireland while working on DEEPIK. The online carer programme will be beneficial to the caregivers as they continually learn on how best to care for their loved ones. This is an exciting collaboration and looking forward to learning and supporting our caregivers.”*

In the attached picture are: Wambui Karanja, Elizabeth Mutunga and Fergus Timmons at one of their several online meetings where they set out a work plan for the project and worked on the successful funding application.

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**ENDS**

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**NOTES TO THE EDITOR**

***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](http://www.alzheimer.ie)

***Alzheimer National Helpline:***

For more information on our supports and services during this challenging time, please contact The Alzheimer Society of Ireland National Helpline where you can now also book in a 1:1 session with a Dementia Nurse or Dementia Adviser. The Helpline is open six days a week Monday to Friday 10am–5pm and Saturday 10am–4pm on 1800 341 341. Email at helpline@alzheimer.ie or via Live Chat at [www.alzheimer.ie](http://www.alzheimer.ie)

***World Alzheimer's Month***

September is World Alzheimer’s Month which is the international campaign every September to raise awareness and challenge the stigma that surrounds dementia. September 2020 will mark the ninth World Alzheimer's Month. The campaign was launched in 2012: World Alzheimer's Day is on 21st September each year. The theme for this year is ***Let’s Talk About Dementia***.

***About the Atlantic Institute***

The Atlantic Institute has awarded over 40 Solidarity Grants to Atlantic Fellows across the globe. The fund provides targeted support and resources towards Fellows’ collective work to minimize the impact of COVID-19 on endangered and vulnerable communities.

***The Atlantic Fellows***

The program is built on the idea that achieving fairer, healthier, more inclusive societies requires leaders with diverse perspectives to collaborate on solutions and learn from one another. The Atlantic Institute connects seven Atlantic Fellows programs, including the Atlantic Fellows for Equity in Brain Health at Trinity College Dublin, building a global community of leaders who address systemic causes of inequity. The Atlantic Institute is housed with the Rhodes Trust in Oxford, UK.

***The Global Brain Health Institute (GBHI)***

The GBHI is dedicated to protecting the world’s aging populations from threats to brain health. We strive to improve brain health for populations across the world, reaching into local communities and across our global network. GBHI brings together a powerful mix of disciplines, professions, backgrounds, skills, perspectives, and approaches to develop new science-based solutions. We focus on working compassionately with people in vulnerable and under-served populations to improve outcomes and promote dignity for all people.

**ABOUT DEMENTIA**
• The number of people with dementia in Ireland is expected to more than double from 64,000 today to 150,000 in 2045.\*
• 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.
• There are 11,000 new cases of dementia in Ireland each year. That’s at least 30 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*

*\** *Health Atlas, Ireland (2020)*

*\*\*Figure referenced from Pierse, T., O’Shea, E. and Carney P. (2018) Estimates of the prevalence, incidence and severity of dementia in Ireland*