**IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Thursday, 11th March 2021**

**The Alzheimer Society of Ireland teaming up with Virgin Media Television for special ‘Donate For Dementia’ week to mark Jack Charlton documentary**

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI) is teaming up with ***Virgin Media Television*** for a special ***‘Donate For Dementia’*** week of activity from ***22nd-28th March*** to raise much-needed awareness and vital funds for the charity to support people with all forms of dementia which affects half a million Irish families.

From Monday 22nd March, Virgin Media TV (VMTV) studio shows from Ireland AM to The Tonight Show will include special programming to put the spotlight on people living with dementia, family carers and ambassadors, staff and friends of The ASI.

Virgin Media Television presenter ***Martin King*** will open up about his own personal experience with dementia in a special documentary called ***‘We Need To Talk About Dementia’*** on Virgin Media One on Sunday 28th March (8.00pm).

Martin’s mother, Christina, was diagnosed with dementia and sadly passed away in 2019. His father, Martin Senior, who was in the same nursing home, and room, as his mother, died just four weeks before her. Martin talks to members of his own family, people in the community and those with a lived experience of dementia about lifting the stigma that is often associated with disease.

The special awareness and fundraising week will conclude with the broadcast of the ***Finding Jack Charlton*** documentary on Virgin Media One on Sunday 28th March (9.00pm). This compelling documentary, which The ASI are a charity partner for, looks at this Irish sporting legend and his previously undocumented life with dementia.

It features contributions from Jack’s family for the first time, including his ***wife Pat*** and ***son John***. They are supported by major figures in football, music, film and politics. The documentary also features unseen archive footage, capturing behind the scenes with Jack and the Ireland team during the World Cup in 1990 and on the road to their qualification for the 1994 World Cup in the USA.

**Pat McLoughlin, CEO of The Alzheimer Society of Ireland said:***“I am delighted that The Alzheimer Society of Ireland is teaming up with Virgin Media Television for a special week of activity to mark the TV launch of the powerful Finding Jack Charlton documentary. Jack lived with dementia in the final years of his life and this excellent documentary focuses on his love for his family and those extraordinary years when he brought Ireland to Euro 88 and two World Cups, boosting our national pride beyond comparison. There are 64,000 people living with dementia in Ireland and each year there are 11,000 new cases – that means today, tomorrow and the next day 30 people per day will be diagnosed. This one-week partnership will raise so much awareness and much-needed funds to support those living with dementia and their carers. We are just so grateful to Virgin Media and the makers of the Jack Charlton documentary Noah Media Group for helping to put this spotlight on people with dementia and their family carers during this week. We are all really looking forward to it now.”*

***Director of Content, Virgin Media Television, Bill Malone said:*** *“Virgin Media Television are delighted to be part of such an initiative, to raise awareness of Dementia and to raise much needed funds for The Alzheimer’s Society of Ireland. Throughout the week our key programmes will shine a light on the experiences of those who have been affected by Dementia and the great work of the society. The culmination of our fundraising week will be Sunday, March 28th with a number of specially commissioned programmes; tributes to Jack Charlton by those who knew him and the TV premiere of the wonderful film Finding Jack Charlton.”*

**ENDS**

**For more information please contact The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Communications Manager Cormac Cahill** **cormac.cahill@alzheimer.ie**

**NOTES TO THE EDITOR**

***About The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI):***The Alzheimer Society of Ireland is the leading dementia specific service provider in Ireland. The Alzheimer Society of Ireland works across the country in the heart of local communities providing dementia specific services and supports and advocating for the rights and needs of all people living with dementia and their carers. Our vision is an Ireland where people on the journey of dementia are valued and supported. A national non-profit organisation, The Alzheimer Society of Ireland advocates, empowers and champions the rights of people living with dementia and their communities to quality support and services. The Alzheimer Society of Ireland also operates the Alzheimer National Helpline offering information and support to anyone affected by dementia on 1800 341 341.

***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)

**ABOUT DEMENTIA**

* There are 64,000 people with dementia in Ireland and the number of people with the condition will more than double in the next 25 years to over 150,000 by 2045.\*
* 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.\*\*
* 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.
* 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*

*\*Figure referenced from Alzheimer Europe (2020) Dementia in Europe Yearbook 2019 ‘Estimating the prevalence of dementia in Europe’*

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