**IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Tuesday, 30th March 2021**

**Virgin Media Television’s Donate for Dementia campaign raises €1 million for The Alzheimer Society of Ireland**

Virgin Media Television’s Donate for Dementia fundraising and awareness week has raised €1 million for The Alzheimer Society of Ireland.

All last week, Virgin Media Television aired special programming around the disease, which affects half a million Irish families, with one in 10 of those diagnosed being under the age of 65.

The special week concluded on Sunday night with the highly anticipated broadcast of Finding Jack Charlton which was commissioned by Virgin Media Television and the BBC.

Over half a million people nationwide tuned into the programme which is now also available to view on the Virgin Media Player. 355,800 tuned in for Martin King’s documentary, We Need To Talk About Dementia with the entire week reaching over a million people.

All funds raised from the week will be used to fund The Alzheimer Society of Ireland’s dementia services that support the 64,000 people living with dementia in Ireland including redeveloping day care centres, providing family carer training and providing information and support across the country.

**Pat McLoughlin, CEO of The Alzheimer Society of Ireland said:**

*“Everyone at The Alzheimer Society of Ireland is absolutely delighted after the success of the ‘Donate for Dementia’ week with Virgin Media Television culminating in the powerful and thought-provoking Martin King ‘We Need to Talk About Dementia’ documentary and the inspiring 'Finding Jack Charlton' documentary. During this past week we have raised an incredible sum in donations for vital dementia supports and services, raised awareness of dementia and really kick-started a national conversation around dementia. We have, through the partnership with the Virgin Media team, brought dementia further out of the shadows. I am so grateful to everybody who took part and supported the week whether you did a Jump for Jack challenge, shared your story and experience, supported on social media or made a donation. We are so grateful and really taken aback by everyone’s generosity of spirit. All money raised from the ‘Donate for Dementia’ week will be used to fund our dementia services that support the 64,000 people living with dementia in Ireland. We rely heavily on donations from the public to keep our supports and services in place so any donation made really counts and means so much to the people who depend on these services."*

**Paul Farrell, Managing Director, Virgin Media Television said:**

***“****We’re humbled but not surprised by the wonderful generosity of our viewers who have donated to this cause. I think it’s fair to say that the much loved Jack Charlton would be very proud of this outcome. His illness, as we saw in the documentary, told a story that very many people and families in Ireland all too sadly will recognise. I’m also extremely proud of the energy, passion and creativity that everyone in Virgin Media TV put into making the Donate for Dementia campaign such a resounding success in raising awareness about dementia and raising much needed funds for The Alzheimer Society of Ireland.”*

***Images are attached***

***A video clip is available on the ASI YouTube Channel here***

**ENDS**

**For more information please email The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Communications Manager Cormac Cahill** **cormac.cahill@alzheimer.ie** **or ring 0860441214**

**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 Virgin Media:***

Virgin Media is the leading connected entertainment cable and broadcast business in Ireland. Every day we deliver connections that really matter for Irish Consumers and Businesses with multi award-winning services including broadband, TV, mobile and home phone. Our Virgin Media Business division provides the fastest broadband speeds and connectivity solutions for entrepreneurs, businesses and the public sector.

Virgin Media Television, our broadcast division, is Ireland’s number one commercial broadcaster offering three free-to-air channels: Virgin Media One, Virgin Media Two, Virgin Media Three, as well as the Virgin Media Player. We are a significant investor in home produced content, including news, current affairs and drama, as well as offering the best in international programming. Virgin Media Sport and our 6 Extra Sport channels offer extensive sports coverage across the UEFA Champions League and the UEFA Europa League. Our advertising sales agency, Virgin Media Solutions, creates unique, innovative campaigns for our business and for third party clients across the UK and Ireland.

Virgin Media is part of Liberty Global, one of the world’s leading converged video, broadband and communications companies, with operations in six European countries.

**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.*