**IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Thursday, 8th April 2021**

**Dáithí Ó Sé invites nation to show solidarity with people with dementia and family carers to celebrate Alzheimer’s Tea Day 2021**

RTÉ star ***Dáithí Ó Sé*** is calling on the nation to show solidarity with people with dementia and their family carers and virtually have ***Tea in Every Town*** with their friends and loved ones to mark ***Alzheimer’s Tea Day*** which takes place across Ireland on ***Thursday, 6th May*** and is proudly sponsored by ***Fujitsu Ireland***.

This year The Alzheimer Society of Ireland is inviting the public to ***brew the most important and powerful cup of tea*** this year and invite your family and friends to join you online. The ASI wants people to now come together virtually to celebrate, remember and show solidarity with people with dementia, their carers and the ***500,000*** people who are impacted by dementia in Ireland.

Although people can’t gather in groups for Tea Day, people can still ***connect and reach out*** to friends and loved ones across their communities, around Ireland and abroad – on the phone, on screen, Skype, Zoom and any other socially-distanced way people may choose.

There are ***64,000*** people living with dementia in Ireland today and every day, another 30 people are diagnosed. However, there is one simple and magical thing you can do to help – put the kettle on and connect with friends online over a simple cuppa!

The ASI has listened to ***concerns*** of people with dementia and family carers who have been feeling isolated in their own homes lately and many people have contacted The ASI about Tea Day – and thanks to the wonders of modern technology we are delighted that Tea Day can take place.

This year, it’s ***more important than ever*** ***before*** that people put the kettle on, pick up the phone and reach out to a loved one or someone in your community to say hello and share a virtual cup of tea and to show people with dementia and carers who are at home, often confused, isolated and struggling without access to usual daily supports that we haven’t forgotten them.

The ASI needs to raise ***€3.5 million every year*** just to keep services running and while the public has been so generous over recent months; the reality is that more funds are needed to plug the gap in funding due to the impact of Covid-19 to support the 64,000 living with dementia in Ireland.

***HOW TO TAKE PART IN TEA DAY 2021 – FOUR EASY STEPS:***

**1. SIGN UP –** Join the nation for the most memorable cuppa ever. All you have to do is sign up on teaday.ie and you’ll be helping to support people in your area living with dementia.

 **2. HOST –** Share the magic of a cup of tea – online – with the ones you love. Invite family, friends, colleagues, neighbours and loved ones – from home and from all over the world – to join you to share some precious memories over a wonderful cup of tea.

 **3. CELEBRATE** your Tea Day by sharing it on social media. Post your photos, videos, messages and don’t forget to use our hashtags #TeaInEveryTown #TeaDay2021

 **4. DONATE** Send us back your special Tea Day donation on teaday.ie. Remember, every extra euro you raise funds vital services for people living with dementia and their families.

***The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Ambassador, Dáithí Ó Sé said:*** *“On Thursday, May 6th, join your online gathering to thousands of others all over the country as we share a cuppa with our friends, family and colleagues to chat and celebrate those we love. You’ll also be raising much-needed funds to help families living with dementia. Tea Day is The Alzheimer’s Society of Ireland’s biggest and most important fundraiser of the year. Over the last year, because of COVID-19, they could only raise a fraction of what is needed to run their vital services. So, this year people living with dementia need our support more than ever. So please join the Tea Day movement. Click with your family and friends by clicking online. Maybe even invite loved ones across the world. Share some precious memories over a cuppa and help change the life of someone living with dementia today. Thank you so much!”*

***The Alzheimer Society of Ireland CEO Pat McLoughlin said:****“Alzheimer’s Tea Day has been our biggest fundraising event over the last 27 years and the organisation is so dependent on the funds that it brings in each and every year. However, the Covid-19 health crisis means that Alzheimer’s Tea Day has to move online, but I am delighted that we can still celebrate the community spirit that makes Tea Day such a great national event through modern technology. This year we can’t gather in each other’s homes to share Tea Day. But there is still something that you can do. You can invite friends and family from all over Ireland – and even all over the world – to join you online or on social media to share some memories and a cuppa. Every person who joins you will be helping to support vital dementia services all over Ireland.”*

***Fujitsu Ireland CEO Tony O’Malley said:*** *“We are incredibly proud to support this vital campaign alongside The Alzheimer Society of Ireland. People with dementia and their families, carers and supporters have felt the challenges of lockdown and the associated restrictions on travel, household visitors and daily social interactions most keenly and Fujitsu Ireland is committed to helping The ASI continue to deliver its vital support to this amazing community. We invite our staff, clients, partners and the Irish public to sign up on teaday.ie, put the kettle on, and raise much-needed funds for this incredible organisation.”*

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**For more information, please contact The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Communications Manager Cormac Cahill** **Cormac.cahill@alzheimer.ie** **or 086 044 1214**

**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.*