**IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Tuesday, 11th January 2022**

**Siobhan O’Connor appointed as Interim CEO of The Alzheimer Society of Ireland**

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland is delighted to announce that Siobhan O’Connor has been appointed as the Interim CEO by the Board of Directors with immediate effect.

Siobhan, originally from Cork, became The ASI’s Head of Operations in June 2019 and has worked closely with our colleagues right across the country and has been fundamental in delivering excellence in the delivery of dementia supports and services during this time.

Prior to joining The ASI, Siobhan has spent over 20 years in the office supplies industry in senior management roles with her most recent role being Managing Director of Codex Office Solutions.

Siobhan’s experience includes sales, finance, operations, technology, ISO certification and compliance and she also has a track record in Corporate Social Responsibility through activities involving DePaul Ireland, Beaumont Foundation, St Francis Hospice and the Cliona Foundation.

It was announced last week that Pat McLoughlin has decided to step down from his role as CEO, following medical advice to receive immediate treatment and take recovery time. Pat became CEO in October 2016, and he will officially retire from his role in March 2022.

The ASI wishes Siobhan every success in her new role.

 ***The ASI Interim CEO Siobhan O’Connor said:*** *“I am so grateful and honoured to have been given the opportunity to lead this extraordinary organisation and working with all the staff, branches and volunteers to help represent people living with dementia, their family carers and supporters across Ireland. I would like to thank the chairman Eugene McCague and board of directors for this opportunity. I am so aware of how tirelessly our staff and volunteers work across the country to improve the lives of those impacted by dementia in Ireland. I am looking forward to supporting everyone to continue this work in the time ahead.”*

***The ASI Chairman Eugene McCague said:*** *“On behalf of the board of The Alzheimer Society of Ireland, I would like to express my gratitude to Siobhan for stepping into this role.**Siobhan has shown so much commitment to the delivery of supports and services for the people we support over the last number of years and I know that she will bring a great deal of expertise, experience and drive in her new role to help The ASI to continue the work of supporting people with dementia, their family carers and supporters in Ireland. I wish Siobhan the very best in her new role.”*

**ENDS**

**For more information contact The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Interim Head of Advocacy & Public Affairs / Communications Manager Cormac Cahill** **cormac.cahill@alzheimer.ie** **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.*