

## Press Release



THE Alzheimer  
SOCIETY OF IRELAND



Free image attached.

Case studies/interviews with ASI reps are available upon request.

### **The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Welcomes Funding for Dementia Supports in Budget 2023**

**The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (The ASI)** welcomes the **Budget 2023** announcement by **Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People Mary Butler TD** that the priority focus of the development of dementia services and supports will continue.

The ASI also welcomes an increase in **15%** of **new home care hours** ringfenced for people with dementia, with a continuation of **dementia at-home support and continued funding of The Alzheimer Society of Ireland.**

It was encouraging to hear the dementia strategy mentioned yesterday by **Minister Michael McGrath** in Dáil Éireann on Budget Day and to see a commitment to The **ASI** in **Minister Mary Butler's** press statement. Minister Butler has meaningfully engaged with our organisation since coming into office and we welcome her understanding and funding of much needed dementia services.

**The ASI** welcomes social protection increases and one-off payments, in particular the €500 for family carers, they will go some way to alleviating the financial burden on people affected by dementia. We know that family carers of people with dementia are struggling with the current cost of living crisis and urge the government to embed these supports in a more sustained manner and move away from once off measures.

**The ASI** looks forward to receiving more dementia-specific Budget details in due course.

**The ASI** appreciates the support for the Pre-Budget 2023 campaign, including staff, branches, e-campaigners and advocacy champions. We acknowledge the considerable engagement with **Minister Mary Butler, Senator Fiona O'Loughlin**, and all in the **All-Party Oireachtas Group on Dementia.**



The ASI's Pre-Budget Submission 2023 ***Dementia Can't Wait – Urgent funding needed to address rising need***, called for an overall investment of **€19m** to address difficulties in meeting the rising demand for dementia services.

**The ASI** sent a powerful message to the Government with the campaign. **The ASI** welcomed over 60 public representatives to our Pre-Budget Submission launch; made over 100 phone calls; held numerous meetings, photocalls and engagements with the All Party Oireachtas Group on Dementia. Hundreds of public members got involved and, along with their supporters, sent over **3000 emails to TDs and Senators**.

**The ASI CEO Andy Heffernan said:** *“We very much welcome today's news of this much-needed funding in Budget 2023 and we look forward to learning more dementia-specific Budget details in due course. I welcome the increase to 15% of new home care hours ringfenced for people with dementia, home care is of critical importance to our grassroots. I welcome the continuation of dementia at-home support and continued funding of The ASI. Our services are embedded in communities throughout the country and respond to the needs of people affected by dementia.*

*“I was heartened to hear the dementia strategy being mentioned by Minister Michael McGrath in Dáil Éireann yesterday and to see The ASI noted in detail in Minister Mary Butler's press statement. We are most appreciative of her genuine engagement and support over the years.*

*“The announcement that an increase of 15% of new home care supports for people living with dementia is very welcome and we would now ask the Government to address the staffing crisis in the sector as home care that is dementia appropriate and provided by dementia-trained staff is crucially needed.*

*“We know that people living with dementia and their family carers are struggling to meet the challenges of the cost of living crisis, so I am pleased to see the social protection announcements in Budget 2023 as they will go some way, at least, to alleviating their financial burden. But we know that living with dementia and caring for a person with dementia is a long journey. Those carer supports must move from a once-off measure to more sustainable supports that people can rely on into the future.*

*“The ASI's objectives in Budget 2023 were consistent with the 2020 Programme for Government and its commitment to implementing the National Dementia Strategy. The need for services is growing among existing service users and those who have not previously been in contact with dementia-specific services. A culture of scarcity exists as providers contend with unmet demand for places, reflected in extensive waiting lists and requests for additional*



*hours. Our pre-budget submission called for the resources to meet ever-increasing public demand. Dementia in Ireland has increased from 54,000 to 64,000, and a deepening gap between services and needs must be addressed.”*

**ENDS**

**For more information, contact The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Communications Manager Hugh O’Donoghue at [hugh.odonoghue@alzheimer.ie](mailto:hugh.odonoghue@alzheimer.ie) or 085 856 71 43.**

### **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 support 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.

#### **The ASI turns 40 (1982-2022):**

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland celebrates 40 years in 2022. Many milestones have been achieved since 1982 when carers Winifred Bligh and Imelda Gillespie held their first meeting and changed the face of dementia care in Ireland forever. Forty years on, The ASI is now a national organisation providing support, services and care to the 64,000 people living with dementia and their family carers in Ireland today. In 2022, we want to mark this milestone and many achievements with our staff, branches, volunteers and supporters.



## **Alzheimer National Helpline:**

For more information on our supports and services during this challenging time, please contact The Alzheimer Society of Ireland National Helpline. The Helpline is open six days a week, Monday to Friday, 10 am – 5 pm, and Saturday, 10 am – 4 pm on 1800 341 341. Email at [helpline@alzheimer.ie](mailto: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 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 that cause brain changes and damage.
- 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 is 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 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'*

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