**IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Thursday, 26th January 2023**

**Model and Entrepreneur Joanna Cooper Backs Denim Day for Dementia Campaign, Following Mother’s Dementia Diagnosis**

· Denim Day for Dementia held on Friday, 3rd March

· Register for your free Denim Day pack on www.alzheimer.ie

· The ASI must raise over €3 million every year to keep services going

***\*Free images attached, more high-resolution pics available on request and issued to photo desks by Photocall Ireland***

Joanna Cooper is calling on Ireland to support **The Alzheimer Society of Ireland**’s (The ASI) annual nationwide ***Denim Day for Dementia*** fundraising campaign on ***Friday, March 3rd,*** to raise funds for vital dementia supports and services.

Joanna, The ASI’s Denim Day for Dementia ambassador, is asking members of the public to don their denims – to the crèche, their school, their place of work or wherever they are – on Friday, March 3rd, and donate to support families impacted by dementia.

Joanna has a personal connection to the condition; her mother Terri was diagnosed with dementia in 2021.Joanna has teamed up with The ASI in the hopes of helping others who the condition has impacted.

This is the sixth year the popular fundraising campaign has been running; it was cancelled in 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

To get involved, members of the public are encouraged to order their free Denim Day for Dementia pack by registering online at www.alzheimer.ie or by contacting The ASI’s Fundraising Team at ***fundraising@alzheimer.ie or (01) 207 3800.***

The ASI needs to raise €3.2 million yearly just to maintain much-needed supports and services, including National Helpline, Day Care, Day Care at Home, Home Care and Family Carer Training to help people with dementia and their struggling families. This campaign aims to raise €30,000 to support families living with dementia nationwide.

An estimated 64,000 people are living with dementia in ***Ireland,*** and one in 10 people diagnosed with dementia in Ireland today is under the age of 65. Dementia which occurs under the age of 65, is often referred to as ***young-onset*** or ***early-onset dementia***.

You can help families living with dementia in Ireland by donning your denims on Friday, March 3rd.

***The ASI Ambassador Joanna Cooper said:***

*“I'm honoured to team up with The Alzheimer Society of Ireland and show my support for Denim Day for Dementia which will help thousands of families living with dementia in Ireland. I know first-hand the struggles families go through when their loved one has dementia; how emotional and challenging it can be. My lovely mum was diagnosed with the condition at the age of 62. My mum was always the life and soul of our family; she loved being a granny and doted on her grandchildren.*

*“I rarely share anything personal online, but I felt it was important to share my family’s dementia experience; even if it helps just one person in a similar situation feel less alone and to know that there are supports out there and how to get them. Each year, over 11,000 people develop dementia. That’s at least 30 people every day, and anyone can get dementia - even people in their thirties, forties and fifties. This is why fundraising campaigns like Denim Day for Dementia are vital; by signing up for a Denim Day pack on* [*Alzheimer.ie*](http://alzheimer.ie/)*, you’ll be helping The Alzheimer Society of Ireland continue their work in raising much-needed funds and awareness for people living with dementia. Let’s all get out there on Friday, March 3rd and wear our denims to support this worthy cause.”*

***The ASI Head of Fundraising, Mairéad Dillon, said:***

*“We’re so pleased to welcome Joanna Cooper as The ASI’s latest ambassador and extremely grateful she is supporting our 2023 Denim Day for Dementia Campaign to help raise vital funds for families living with dementia. We thank Joanna for sharing her story as we continue to bring the conversation around dementia to the forefront. Fundraising is essential for the charity so we can maintain our vital services each year – €3.2 million needs to be raised yearly to keep them going. I encourage everyone to support Denim Day for Dementia by signing up on* [*www.alzheimer.ie*](http://www.alzheimer.ie/) *today.”*

**ENDS**

**For more information, please contact The ASI Communications Officer Niamh Burke at** **niamh.burke@alzheimer.ie****or 086 029 5634.**

 **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. 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 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 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.
* Most 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 by 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.*