

Candidates Urged to Commit to a National Dementia Registry **(<https://www.activelink.ie/node/112281>)**

Keep Dementia a Priority in the Next Government

Election candidates and parties have been called on to commit to the delivery of a comprehensive National Dementia Registry in the next government.

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (The ASI) said a National Dementia Registry is essential to enable the development, operation and quality of dementia-related health and social care services.

An estimated **64,000** people in Ireland live with dementia, with the number projected to reach **150,000 by 2045**.

The ASI called on candidates to ensure a Dementia Registry is in the next Programme for Government as it is needed for mapping services and ensuring equitable access across all regions.

The ASI's Head of Advocacy, Research and Public Affairs, Cormac Cahill welcomed an allocation of €200,000 in Budget 2025 to implement a National Dementia Registry, but said this was just the beginning.

"Unlike many other countries, Ireland does not have a dementia registry which means there is no national systematic approach to the collection and analysis of dementia data. The lack of hard data on the number of people with dementia in Ireland and where they live makes our estimations just that, estimations on prevalence rather than evidence-based facts.

"This creates a significant challenge for planning equitable service provision; both nationally and locally. Access to dementia services, such as Day Care, Home Care, and medical support, remains unequal across Ireland, with rural areas particularly underserved."

The call to fund a Dementia Registry is one of six asks in The ASI's General Election manifesto. Other priorities included are:

1. Continue Rollout of the Model of Care for Dementia
2. Make Brain Health a Public Health Priority
3. Deliver a Dementia Workforce for the Future
4. Implement the Statutory Home Support Scheme
5. Appoint an Independent Commissioner for Older People.

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland CEO Andy Heffernan said *great progress has been made in dementia supports, services and understanding of dementia in the last decade, but much more remains to be done.*

"It is essential that momentum is not lost and that the needs of so many remain a priority on the political agenda. Ireland's first National Dementia Strategy, launched in 2014, was a significant milestone culminating in a key cornerstone of that strategy, the Model of Care for Dementia in 2023, which offers a crucial pathway of care and support for so many people.

"It is now a decade since the dementia strategy was first introduced. A mid-term review on the progress of the strategy was published in 2018; however, a full review needs to be completed in the near future. It's crucial that we look at the need for a new dementia strategy with achievable targets.

"The next Government has a responsibility to review the current strategy, build on existing progress, and plot a realistic path forward that best supports people who are impacted by dementia in Ireland. There is also a pressing need to prioritise support for dementia research and ensure that any innovations in treatments, diagnostics and Disease Modifying Therapies are accessible to all who need them."

To enable candidates to make public their support The ASI has set up an online Dementia Pledge which candidates of all parties and Independents have been urged to sign up to at www.dementiapledge.ie. (<https://alzheimer.ie/creating-change/political-campaigns/dementia-pledge-election-2024/>) During the campaign, candidates can also tag their support using **#DementiaPledge**.

In turn, voters will be able to visit the portal before voting day and see which candidates in their constituency have given their commitment to people with dementia and their carers.

Further information

Ronan Cavanagh, Cavanagh Communications: (086) 317 9731 /ronan@cavanaghcommunications.ie
(<mailto:ronan@cavanaghcommunications.ie>)

Region

Nationwide

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