FIGHT DEMENTIA CAMPAIGN

TOWARDS A WORLD WITHOUT DEMENTIA

UPDATE FOR DEMENTIA CHAMPIONS

23 AUGUST 2012
Dear Champions,

As part of the Living Longer. Living Better. Aged Care Reform package, announced on 20 April, we have achieved landmark changes in dementia policy. This was only possible because of your support.

As promised in this package, the Commonwealth sought the agreement of State and Territory Health Ministers to make dementia a National Health Priority Area. This was agreed by Health Ministers on 10 August.

We have a lot to be proud of but we still have a way to go to achieve all the goals of the Fight Dementia Campaign. With no increase in Government funding for dementia research, the fight is not yet over.

Compared to research on other chronic diseases, dementia research is grossly underfunded. Australia will not beat this awful disease unless we tackle it by investing in research the same way we have for other chronic diseases such as cancer, vascular disease and HIV/AIDS.

Today marks the launch of phase two of the Fight Dementia Campaign – Towards a World Without Dementia.

We will be campaigning for a commitment of $200 million over five years for dementia research in the 2013-14 Federal Budget.

Even with this additional funding, the cost of research funded though the National Health and Medical Research Council will be only one per cent of the direct health care cost of dementia.

If researchers had the funds to develop new interventions to delay the onset of dementia by just five years, the number of people with dementia in Australia in 2050 would be reduced by one third.

With your support as a Dementia Champion, we have the opportunity to achieve this. The basis has been laid by Australian and international research over the last 25 years to identify those at risk of dementia and to develop new treatments.

Attached is our Campaign Document – our call to action and detailed information on why we need greater investment in dementia research and how you can get involved.

Thank you so much for your support as a Dementia Champion. Together we have the opportunity to work together to move towards a World Without Dementia.

My very best wishes,

Ita Buttrose
National President
Alzheimer’s Australia

FEATURED DEMENTIA CHAMPIONS!

Julie, Mermaid Waters, Qld
I would like the Federal Government to put more into research, as prevention is better than cure. I saw my mother die from rapid dementia and Lewy Body disease. It was devastating not only for her but for all of us.

Demelza, Newtown, Qld
My nanna has Alzheimer’s and it is so hard on me, I need to do something proactive.
Towards a World Without Dementia - Campaign Details

Attached is a detailed campaign document, which we encourage you to read through and act on. However, here is a brief run down:

What is our goal?
To move towards a world without dementia by:
1. Delaying the onset of dementia by five years;
2. Reducing the number of people living with dementia in 2050 by one third; and
3. Improving quality of life for people with dementia.

Can this goal be achieved?
We are optimistic.
In the past 10 years we have developed a much better understanding of how we can reduce the risk of dementia. We also know that if we develop interventions to delay the onset of dementia, we have the potential to significantly reduce the number of people living with dementia. Our goal is to delay the onset of dementia for long enough so people can live dementia-free lives.

How can we achieve our goal?
Start now by increasing government investment in dementia research by $200 million over five years.

$200 million is needed to:
1. Build capacity in dementia research by supporting 150 of the best new researchers to start working on the biggest challenges in the field;
2. Establish a strategic fund to support major new dementia research projects targeted at the most pressing issues facing health and aged care;
3. Ensure we make the most of what we already know by translating existing research into better dementia care practice; and
4. Invest in vital dementia research infrastructure to allow our scientists to develop the solutions we need.

Get Involved
Now that you are equipped with the Campaign Document, there are a number of ways you can start to get involved:

• Write to your Federal MP or Senator and voice your concerns. At the back of the campaign document is a template letter which you can use to get you started. For a list of contacts please click here.
• If you want to go a step further, set up a meeting with your Federal MP or Senator and be sure to take the campaign document with you to leave with him/her. If you get a chance, have your picture taken with them and send it to fightdementia@alzheimers.org.au so we can include it on our campaign website.
• Send us your story, of no more than 200 words, about why funding for dementia research is important to you. Please send your story to fightdementia@alzheimers.org.au
• Encourage all your friends and family to become Dementia Champions. If you are holding an event and would like to sign your friends up give us a call (02 6254 4233) and we will send you Dementia Champion cards for people to fill out.

Contact Us
For further information on the campaign please visit the campaign website at campaign.fightdementia.org.au/ or email fightdementia@alzheimers.org.au
To opt out of receiving this e-newsletter please send an email to fightdementia@alzheimers.org.au with OPT OUT in the subject.

SUPPORT FROM YOUR FELLOW CHAMPIONS:

Come on Australia dementia research is so important!
It’s a terrible and cruel disease...something needs to be done, not later but NOW!!!

Best of luck with research funding. In lieu of preventing the disease for now, the best we can do is implement care policy that ensures the sufferers and carers are as content as possible while they share this journey.

We need to continue the fight!!!

Would be wonderful to have more funding for research.

It is about time that more money is dedicated to dementia research. No one should have to endure what my family is currently going through.

This disease is going to become an epidemic if there is nothing done to stop it in its tracks!!!

More funding towards research needs to happen and it needs to happen now. Surely it would be cheaper for the Government in the long run to invest in dementia research!!

Two generations in our family have been affected by dementia. My grandmother went from being the matriarch of our family to a shadow of her former self before she died. My mother has dementia and is in decline to the point where she now lives in full time care – two strong independent capable women whose lives were changed dramatically. I would like to think if money is spent on research that my generation, and that of my children, may be spared if we found we had the genetic predisposition to dementia.

Tomorrow is the first anniversary of losing my dear mother to this terrible disease! No one deserves to suffer. For our children’s future, this disease needs to be eradicated!!!

If you would like to be involved in the discussion on dementia research ‘like’ us on Facebook.

TOWARDS A WORLD WITHOUT DEMENTIA – CAMPAIGN DETAILS