Alzheimer's Disease International

World Alzheimer's Month
Campaign toolkit

2023
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It’s that time of the year again to start planning your World Alzheimer’s Month activities!

September is the month where we come together to raise awareness and challenge the stigma around dementia and this year, we want to make World Alzheimer’s Month the most meaningful ever. This year’s campaign, ‘Never too early, never too late’, focuses on risk factors and the crucial role of risk reduction in staving off, delaying or potentially even preventing Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of dementia.

By now, most of us know that the number of people living with dementia is set to almost triple by 2050 making it one of the most urgent healthcare challenges facing our world today. As we await further developments of disease-modifying drugs and potentially one day a cure — which remains an ongoing, lengthy, and arduous effort — risk reduction plays a particularly significant role. By taking proactive steps to reduce risk factors, individuals can increase their chances of maintaining brain health for as long as possible.

As such, this year’s World Alzheimer Report will focus on risk reduction in dementia using a journalistic approach with case studies providing a deeper dive into regional stories or innovative studies. Thoroughly exploring the drivers behind risk reduction, the report will touch on lifelong risk reduction, covering areas such as proactive steps individuals can take to change their own behaviours as well as the role of government in population-based systemic changes to promote brain health. Additionally, the report will explore genetic risk and the importance of participation in research as well as the role of risk reduction post-diagnosis.

Through World Alzheimer’s Month, we will also aim to challenge the stigma surrounding dementia that too often leads to discrimination and misunderstanding, further isolating those living with the condition and their support networks. Consequently, delaying or preventing people coming forward to seek out information, advice, support and a diagnosis. The misunderstandings around dementia also have consequential effects on our healthcare systems, with our World Alzheimer Report 2019 showing that 62% of healthcare professionals wrongly believe that dementia is a normal part of ageing. While you and I may know that this is far from the truth, it demonstrates just how vital awareness raising around dementia is during World Alzheimer’s Month, as well as the remaining 335 days of the year!

In 2022, we saw 111 countries take part in World Alzheimer’s Month, as well as wide-reaching levels of engagement and participation on social media and throughout the media. With your help, we can make this year’s campaign even more impactful.

Whether you are hosting your own Memory Walk or showing support online by sharing this year’s campaign hashtags, #NeverTooEarly, #NeverTooLate and #ReduceRiskNow, every person we reach makes a difference in changing attitudes towards dementia and raising awareness about the steps we can take to reduce our own risk.

Paola Barbarino
Chief Executive Officer
About Alzheimer's Disease International

Alzheimer’s Disease International (ADI) is the international federation of 105 dementia and Alzheimer associations from around the world and is in official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO). ADI’s vision is **prevention, care and inclusion today, and cure tomorrow.**

ADI believes that the key to winning the fight against dementia lies in a unique combination of global solutions and local knowledge. As such, ADI works locally by empowering Alzheimer and dementia associations to promote and offer care and support for people with dementia and their care partners, while working globally to focus attention on dementia and campaigning for policy change from governments.

A list of ADI members, as well as the ADI team, can be found [on our website](#).

ADI advocates for the implementation of the **WHO Global Plan of Action on the public health response to dementia 2017-2025**, also known as the WHO Global Action Plan on dementia, universally adopted by WHO Member States in May 2017. The plan committed all 194 Member States of the WHO to seven action areas: dementia as a public health priority; dementia awareness; risk reduction; diagnosis, treatment and care; support for carers; information systems for dementia and dementia research and innovation. Each action area has targets which every Member State of the WHO should work towards.

Since its launch in 2017, ADI has published a series of progress reports called **From Plan to Impact** which document the progress of Member States towards achieving the targets set out in the plan.

ADI also engages in awareness raising and the destigmatisation of Alzheimer’s disease and dementia through various activities but most notably through the World Alzheimer’s Month campaign.
About World Alzheimer’s Month

September 2023 marks the 12th anniversary of World Alzheimer’s Month, our international campaign to raise awareness and challenge stigma.

In 2022, over 111 countries took part in advocacy, fundraising and awareness raising events for World Alzheimer’s Month, with many working to raise general awareness and call for further support for those most affected in their communities.

The month of activities shows a truly global, regional, national and local level response to promote dementia awareness and what we can do to help support those living with the disease, now and in the future.

Only through increased awareness will more people seek out information, advice and support. With the potential to improve diagnosis rates, encourage further research, including around areas as such as risk reduction, and handle the growing demand of access to treatment and care, World Alzheimer’s Month has never been more important.

How we talk about World Alzheimer’s Month

The impact of this campaign is growing but the stigmatisation and misinformation that surrounds dementia remains a global issue.

It is important that we present a positive image and consistent message about World Alzheimer’s Month across all associations, groups and organisations around the world, amplifying the voices of people living with dementia, their carers and families. Normalising the language around dementia, and showing what can be done, is the key to change.

We therefore ask that any organisations or associations, interested in getting involved with World Alzheimer’s Month, use the following text when describing the month: “September is World Alzheimer’s Month, an international campaign to raise dementia awareness and challenge stigma. Each year, Alzheimer and dementia associations, alongside all those involved in the treatment, care and support of people living with dementia, from around the world unite to organise advocacy and information provision events, as well as Memory Walks and fundraising days.”
The focus of this year’s World Alzheimer’s Month campaign, ‘Never too early, never too late’, centres on risk factors and risk reduction, aiming to emphasise their crucial role in delaying and potentially preventing the onset of dementia. This also importantly includes ongoing risk reduction for those who have already been diagnosed.

With the number of people living with dementia set to almost triple by 2050, it has never been more important to recognise the risk factors associated with dementia and take proactive steps towards risk reduction.

In addition to challenging the stigma around dementia and promoting a better understanding of the disease, we can work together to reduce the impact of dementia on individuals, families and global society as a whole.

World Alzheimer Report 2023
Available 21 September

This year’s World Alzheimer Report, written in journalistic style with key case studies, will focus on reducing the risk of dementia. The report will examine the drivers behind risk reduction, including lifelong risk reduction and the steps that individuals can take to reduce their risk as well as the role of government in providing population-based systemic changes to promote risk reduction and the importance of dementia research.
Dementia is not a normal part of ageing

September is World Alzheimer’s Month, an international campaign to raise dementia awareness and challenge stigma each year, Alzheimer and dementia associations from around the world unite to organise advocacy and information provision events, as well as Memory Walks and fundraising days.

Evidence suggests that when people with dementia and their families are well prepared and supported, feelings of shock, anger and grief are balanced by a sense of reassurance and empowerment.

In many parts of the world, access to receiving a diagnosis, as well as support following a diagnosis, is insufficient, difficult to access or not available at all.

National Dementia Plans are the best tool governments have available to tackle dementia.

Alongside drugs and medical supports, social support, including dementia friendly design, social activities, reminiscence sessions, respite, are vital to maximise the independence of people living with dementia and their carers.

Following a diagnosis of dementia, it is vital that support for carers is in place, so that the person diagnosed has a strong post-diagnosis support system around them.

Key messages

This selection of messaging around key areas relating to Alzheimer’s disease and dementia can be used for shaping messaging, both online and in the media.

General

- Dementia is not a normal part of ageing
- September is World Alzheimer’s Month, an international campaign to raise dementia awareness and challenge stigma each year, Alzheimer and dementia associations from around the world unite to organise advocacy and information provision events, as well as Memory Walks and fundraising days.
- Evidence suggests that when people with dementia and their families are well prepared and supported, feelings of shock, anger and grief are balanced by a sense of reassurance and empowerment.
- In many parts of the world, access to receiving a diagnosis, as well as support following a diagnosis, is insufficient, difficult to access or not available at all.
- National Dementia Plans are the best tool governments have available to tackle dementia.
- Alongside drugs and medical supports, social support, including dementia friendly design, social activities, reminiscence sessions, respite, are vital to maximise the independence of people living with dementia and their carers.
- Following a diagnosis of dementia, it is vital that support for carers is in place, so that the person diagnosed has a strong post-diagnosis support system around them.

Statistics

- There are over 55 million people around the world living with dementia.
- Someone in the world develops dementia every 3 seconds.
- The number of people living with dementia is predicted to rise sharply to 139 million by 2050.
- Dementia is the 7th leading cause of death globally and in an increasing number of countries, the leading cause of death.
The economic burden of dementia is US $1.3 trillion dollars every year, a figure that will more than double by 2030.

Almost 62% of healthcare professionals worldwide wrongly think that dementia is part of normal ageing.

Almost 80% of the general public are concerned about developing dementia and 1 in 4 people think that there is nothing we can do to prevent dementia.

35% of carers across the world said that they have hidden the diagnosis of dementia of a family member.

Over 50% of carers globally say their health has suffered as a result of their caring responsibilities even whilst expressing positive sentiments about their role.

50% of the costs for dementia are related to informal care.

The annual global number of informal care hours provided to people with dementia living at home was about 133 billion hours in 2021, the equivalent of more than 67 million full-time workers.

Women provide a substantial proportion of informal care to people with dementia, with around two thirds of primary caregivers overall being women. This figure is significantly higher in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), areas which will account for 71% of the global prevalence of dementia by 2050.

In LMICs, 90% of the care for those living with dementia occurs in the home.

Governments have an opportunity and a responsibility to dramatically increase awareness, detection and diagnosis of dementia, by meeting targets of the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Action Plan on dementia.

Awareness raising is one seven key action areas of the plan, with a target of 100% of Members States delivering national campaigns by 2025.

National Dementia Plans are the best tool available to governments as a robust response to dementia in their countries. Currently there are just around 50 NDPs.

Just 21% of governments, that previously committed to develop national dementia plans in 2017, have done so.
Advocacy

- Robust, post-diagnosis support models can enable governments and healthcare systems to better support people living with dementia and can be cost saving, delaying or reducing hospital and care admissions and enabling people and carers to stay in work, careers and education
- As disease modifying treatment and diagnostic breakthroughs emerge, most healthcare systems are ill equipped to support diagnosis and access to drugs

Risk reduction and risk factors

- It’s never too early or too late for individuals to be proactive and take action to reduce their likelihood of developing dementia
- Those who have been diagnosed with dementia should continue to practice risk reduction activities which could help people live better and longer
- Practicing risk reduction post-diagnosis can continue to have benefit for people living with dementia, improving well-being and ensuring connections with others
- Risk reduction for dementia, including awareness around its importance, should be practiced all different stages of a person's life
- Consuming less alcohol and ceasing smoking can significantly lower your dementia risk
- Having regular hearing checks and having access to and using hearing aids if necessary is an important risk reduction factor
- Avoiding serious head injury and taking care in sports from an early age is a protective factor
- By ensuring that all children have access to an education and the support and knowledge to maintain a healthy weight through nutrition and exercise, dementia cases could be reduced
- Improving sleep and maintaining a healthy lifestyle is a benefit for both brain health and overall wellbeing
- Many risk factors are associated with social and economic disparities, making it imperative that governments address these inequalities crucial for dementia prevention
- As dementia rates rise in low- and middle-income countries, efforts to raise awareness around risk reduction and general preventative measures can have a significant impact in slowing prevalence rates in these regions
- People living with dementia need holistic care, addressing physical and mental health, and social needs
- Even in the absence of a cure or disease modifying treatments, there are still medications which can help with some of the symptoms
Campaign materials

In 2023, we have made available a selection of social media cards, posters, videos and infographics. Additional materials focused on the key findings of the World Alzheimer Report 2023, which will be published on World Alzheimer’s Day, 21 September, will become available on the day.

As an international organisation, we recognise the importance of diversity in our materials which is why this year’s selection has continued to maintain this diversity, including a new selection of materials to encompass those with other disabilities, in addition to dementia.

For this year’s materials, you will find two different sets of social media cards and posters, one which includes photographic images and the other which uses illustrations that tie back to risk reduction and risk reduction activities.
Companion documents
For World Alzheimer's Month

Additionally, we have also put together four separate, companion documents to this toolkit which may help you in your awareness raising and/or campaign endeavours, particularly if you are an Alzheimer or dementia association or a business or non-profit organisation that is looking to show support during World Alzheimer’s Month.

However, these documents can be used outside of World Alzheimer’s Month and may be of help, particularly for ADI member associations who are partaking in the #WhatsYourPlan campaign or other campaign initiatives in their country.

**Companion documents**

- **Dementia fact sheet** which includes top-line information around dementia, including about dementia and key facts and statistics.

- **Organising events for awareness raising and fundraising** which includes information around planning and hosting an event, both online and in-person; advocating for landmarks, monuments and buildings to be ‘lit up’ for World Alzheimer’s Day, and ideas for ways of fundraising.

- **Working with political decision makers and governments** which is targeted at Alzheimer and dementia associations and includes information on how to organise a meeting with governments, with additional information on raising public support around advocacy and public policy efforts.

- **Engaging with the media** which provides extensive advice and information on working with and raising attention through traditional media, including television, radio and newspaper coverage. This document contains information around suggested messaging for sharing; advice on how to get started; frequently asked questions and top tips; organising a media event; speaking to the media, before and during, and how to write a media release.
Media overview

For World Alzheimer’s Month 2023, ADI will develop two press releases. The first will be released on the 1 September and will focus on the general purpose of the awareness raising campaign and theme.

The second will be released on 21 September, World Alzheimer’s Day and will explore the key findings and recommendations from the World Alzheimer Report 2023 on risk reduction.

Working with the media

Your campaign and event

Working with the media is crucial for any successful awareness-raising campaign. It can help amplify messages, raise public awareness and educate people about important issues. With the media’s support, campaigns can reach new and different audiences, as well as raise the profile of the campaign with politicians and policymakers; therefore, it’s crucial to understand how to work with the media effectively, whether you are an Alzheimer or dementia association or an individual hosting a Memory Walk in your community.
Once the media outlets have been identified, it’s critical to provide the media with compelling and relevant stories. This can be accomplished by creating press releases, which highlight key campaign messages and provide useful information to journalists. It is also important to include the voice of those living with dementia and carers within your press release, if not your entire campaign or event, to capture why it is so important to raise awareness and combat the stigma that still surrounds the condition. Working with the media is a two-way street; reporters and editors are looking for interesting and timely stories to report on, while we are looking for media coverage to reach their target audience. Therefore, it’s crucial to provide the media with engaging and informative stories that will capture their attention and provide value to their audience.

Before the campaign starts it can also be helpful to build relationships with reporters and editors. Building these relationships can help to ensure that campaign messages are accurately and effectively communicated to the public. This can be done by reaching out to reporters and editors through email or phone, introducing the campaign, providing background information and answering any questions they may have.

As mentioned previously, by identifying the right media outlets, building relationships with reporters and editors, and providing compelling stories, your campaign or event can effectively communicate the message that you want to share in order to help raise awareness around Alzheimer’s disease and dementia, and improve the lives of those most affected.

Don’t underestimate the power of the media. Make it a priority to work effectively with them to ensure the success of your World Alzheimer’s Month campaign.

Access the companion document Engaging with the media
Social media

During World Alzheimer's Month

One of the most powerful ways to help us spread the message for World Alzheimer’s Month is through social media.

This section of the toolkit provides further information around planning content and messaging for World Alzheimer’s Month on social media, as well as general tips and an overview of information around some of the most popular social media channels.

Using photos, videos and animations to accompany your messaging on social media can help to greatly increase audience reach and engagement.

ADI will share messages around risk reduction, as well as the general warning signs of dementia, throughout World Alzheimer’s Month.

Social media

Follow us on our channels

Facebook
Twitter
Instagram
LinkedIn
Social media
General tips

These tips provide guidance on how to effectively use social media for impact, from setting goals and using clear and positive language, to posting at the ‘right’ time.

- **Decide what your goal is for posting on social media.** Do you want to raise donations, encourage people to volunteer or simply raise awareness by getting your message seen by as many people as possible? These goals will help decide what kind of message you want to share, including the visuals you use and the language of your posts.

- **Keep language clear, friendly and proactive!** Don’t write too much in one post, summarise what you want to say and then link to an external site to provide more information if needed. Be sure to always stay on message.

- **Use colourful, high-quality images or videos to catch attention!** When we look at social media, our attention span is often much shorter, so people may not notice your posts if they don’t include engaging visuals (e.g., bright graphics, animations, a video).

- **Use hashtags #.** When hashtags are used in front of a word or phrase on social media, they help others find your message. If you have never used hashtags or are still unsure of how they work, next time you are on social media, click on a word or phrase that’s been ‘hashtagged’ – see what happens!

- **Post your content on a regular basis** but don’t post so much that you are overwhelming the people who follow you or may want to follow you.

- **The date and times of your posts should always be considered.** Each social media platform has optimum times and dates for when people are more likely to see and engage with your posts.

- **Think of innovative ways to engage your followers** by starting debates and interactive campaigns, such as utilising platform features like Instagram live, Facebook polls and more. What would make you stop and read a post or Tweet, or get involved with a campaign?

- **Ask questions of your audience!** Ask them to engage, leave comments or share your message or their experience.
Social media
Planning your content

By preparing your messaging for World Alzheimer’s Month ahead of time, you can guarantee a cohesive message is conveyed across all your channels, resulting in a unified voice and emphasising the key themes of World Alzheimer’s Month.

Organising your content in advance also allows you to efficiently manage your or your team’s time and resources, allowing you to maintain an active presence on social media while being able to concentrate on other areas of the campaign. Planning your content can also enable you to monitor the performance of your posts, allowing you to adjust your messaging and creatives if necessary.

Thinking about your campaign
Where do I start?

Follow these steps to help you get started on planning and organising your messages and content for social media through World Alzheimer’s Month.

- **Set clear objectives**: Begin by outlining the goals of your social media campaign, one of which should be raising awareness around dementia. Additional objectives may include: raising donations, encouraging sign-ups for an event, such as a Memory Walk; increasing followers, encouraging people to visit your website and more.

- **Identify your target audience**: Understand who you want to reach through social media. Are you trying to reach people within your local community or the wider region? Would you like more young people to see your posts? Do you want to reach government officials and policy makers? This will help guide you in deciding the right social media platforms to use, as well as the language of your messaging and content that resonates most with your audience.

- **Choose your platforms**: Select the social media platforms that are most relevant to your target audience and campaign objectives. If you are unsure of where to start, read the following page on best practices for each social media platform.

- **Develop key messages**: Create concise and compelling messages that convey the purpose and significance of World Alzheimer’s Month. Consider using the key messages of this document to help you in developing your messages - but remember to adjust the language according to your audience!
Social media
How do I organise my campaign?

This section provides advice on organising a successful social media campaign for World Alzheimer’s Month, including creating a content calendar, developing engaging content and more.

- **Create a content calendar**: A content calendar can help you plan, schedule and visualise your social media posts throughout the month.
  - To help you plan your dates and messages for World Alzheimer’s Month, we have put together a free calendar for World Alzheimer’s Month, which you can download for Microsoft Excel, Numbers (Apple), and Sheets (Google). This document includes a calendar example to help you organise specific dates in September, as well as a layout (with sample messaging) to organise your messages.

- **Develop engaging content**: Keep audiences engaged by using a variety of content, including articles and blogs, infographics, videos and images, and commentary on relevant news items.

- **Collaborate with partners, volunteers and influencers**: Reach out to advocacy groups, organisations, businesses and influencers in your area who may be interested in helping to share your message, even if by simply resharing your messages. Their involvement can help you connect with a wider audience and lend credibility to your campaign!

- **Use hashtags and mentions**: Incorporate relevant hashtags and mentions in your posts to further visibility and encourage engagement. By using the campaign’s hashtags #NeverTooEarly, #NeverTooLate, #ReduceRiskNow, #WorldAlzMonth and #WorldAlzheimersMonth, other associations, organisations and individuals will be able to find your messaging.

- **Monitor and adjust**: Routinely assess the performance of your posts, tweaking your messaging and/or content if necessary. By analysing engagement metrics, you can have a better understanding of what resonates with your audience.
Social media

Best practices for channels

While this is not an extensive list of ‘best tips’ for each social platform, these tips should help guide you in posting better messaging and content for World Alzheimer’s Month.

Facebook

- **Who is on it?** Facebook has a diverse, wide-ranging audience base that includes older generations, women, urban/suburban residents and international users. It is also used by many professionals, organisations and businesses. Facebook is a great platform for reaching a broad range of audiences.

- **How do people get involved?** Facebook users engage with posts by liking, commenting, sharing, reacting and tagging. Engagement with posts helps increase your message’s visibility and generates wider interest in what you are sharing. Engagement also helps to increase the reach of your content – in others, how many people see what you have posted.

- **What works best?** Consider using messaging and content which centres around personal stories, educational content, infographics and upcoming community events, such as a Memory Walk.

Instagram

- **Who is on it?** Instagram has a large user base, particularly among younger generations, with over 2.35 billion active users. The platform is most popular amongst people under the age of forty millennials but is used by people from all around the world.

- **How do people get involved?** Instagram users engage with posts by liking, commenting, sharing and tagging. Instagram also has a range of features such as Stories, Reels and IGTV, which allow for more interactive and multimedia content. Like other platforms, hashtags are also commonly used on Instagram to categorise posts by topic or theme.

- **What works best?** Consider using high-quality and visually appealing images or videos, as well as utilising Instagram’s various features including Stories, Reels, and Live to create engaging content.
LinkedIn

- **Who is on it?** LinkedIn is a professional networking platform used by professionals, businesses and organisations. It is particularly popular among job seekers and recruiters, as well as people interested in business and industry news.

- **How do people get involved?** LinkedIn users engage with posts by liking, commenting, sharing and following. Posts that offer industry insights, career advice or share business news tend to generate more engagement.

- **What works best?** Consider sharing news and insights around Alzheimer’s disease and dementia, as well as information around upcoming events or outcomes from past events. Like all platforms, using images, videos or infographics in your post can help it stand out.

Twitter

- **Who is on it?** Like Facebook, Twitter has a diverse user base. It is particularly popular among people who are interested in news and current events, as well as more ‘specialist’ areas. Though it is used by people from all around the world, many journalists, academics, politicians and celebrities in particular use the platform.

- **How do people get involved?** Twitter users engage with tweets by liking, retweeting, resharing and replying. Hashtags (#) are also commonly used on Twitter to help others find a message (tweet) according to its topic or theme. Retweeting and using hashtags can help increase the reach of your tweets and make them more visible to a wider audience.

- **What works best?** Twitter has a character limit for each tweet, so try to ensure that your message is concise and attention-grabbing. ‘Simple’ is often better. Tweets with images or videos also tend to get more engagement.
WhatsApp

- **Who is on it?** WhatsApp is a popular messaging app used by over 2 billion people worldwide. It is particularly popular among younger generations and international users.

- **How do people get involved?** WhatsApp users engage with messages by responding, sharing and forwarding, either to another individual person or in a group, which contains multiple people. As a private messaging app, it’s important to obtain permission from others before adding them to a group or sending messages.

- **What works best?** Consider using WhatsApp for personal communication and engagement with specific individuals or groups. For example, if you are in a WhatsApp group for carers, consider sharing informative and engaging content that is relevant to the interests or needs of carers.

TikTok

- **Who is on it?** TikTok is a popular social media platform, particularly among younger generations, with over 1 billion active users.

- **How do people get involved?** TikTok users engage with videos by liking, commenting, sharing and following. TikTok allows for a range of content, including music, special effect and filters, which can be used to create engaging and creative content. Hashtags are also commonly used on TikTok to group videos by topic or theme.

- **What works best?** Consider using high-quality and visually appealing videos and utilising the various features on TikTok to create engaging and creative content. TikTok’s algorithm promotes content based on engagement and video views, so creating videos that encourage interaction (e.g. ‘Like this video if you want to see similar videos’), can help increase the reach and engagement of your content. Additionally, using trending sounds, music and hashtags can also help increase the visibility of your videos.
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