

Alzheimer's Disease International

Working with political decision makers and governments

2023



**Alzheimer's Disease
International**

The global voice on dementia

Table of contents

- 01** About this toolkit
- 02** About Alzheimer's Disease International
- 03-04** Policy: Key areas of information
- 05-06** Government: Organising a successful meeting
- 07** Policy and advocacy events: Organising a meeting

About this toolkit

Dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, affects millions of people worldwide. **By 2050, it is estimated that 139 million people will be living with dementia.**

Raising awareness, challenging stigma and supporting those most affected are crucial efforts that extend beyond World Alzheimer's Month. Advocacy and public policy efforts play a significant role in generating public support and urging governments to take action.

This document has been designed to provide Alzheimer and dementia associations with further information on how to effectively organise meetings with government officials and raise public support for advocacy and public policy efforts related to dementia, particularly the WHO Global Action Plan on dementia, not only during World Alzheimer's Month but also throughout the year for various campaigns and initiatives, including the [**#WhatsYourPlan campaign**](#).

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 a 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.

Policy

Key areas of information

In this section, you can find information around key areas of Alzheimer and dementia policy, including the WHO Global Action Plan on dementia and National Dementia Plans.



What you should know **The WHO Global Action Plan**

In 2017, following decades of advocacy by ADI and others worldwide, the World Health Organization (WHO) launched the **Global Action Plan on the public health response to dementia**. The Global Action Plan (GAP) focuses on seven key action areas, aiming to improve the lives of people with dementia, their carers and families, while decreasing the impact of dementia on communities and countries.

All 194 Member States of the WHO unanimously committed to implementing these seven action areas.

Each of the seven action areas has suggested actions and targets, which seek to, for example, improve access to diagnosis and support or help to delay or prevent the onset of dementia through risk reduction. The latter being the theme of the 2023 World Alzheimer's Month campaign.



What you should know **National Dementia Plans**

The target for action area 1 states that 75% of countries will have a National Dementia Plan by 2025.

A National Dementia Plan, not dissimilar from the GAP, seeks to improve the lives of those living with dementia within a country, providing the policy or basis for action which should be undertaken jointly taken by governments and nongovernmental partners. ADI strongly believes that funded and robust National Dementia Plans, which encompass the seven action areas of the GAP is the best way to support those living with dementia and carers, as well as lessen the burden of dementia on society.

Policy

Key areas of information

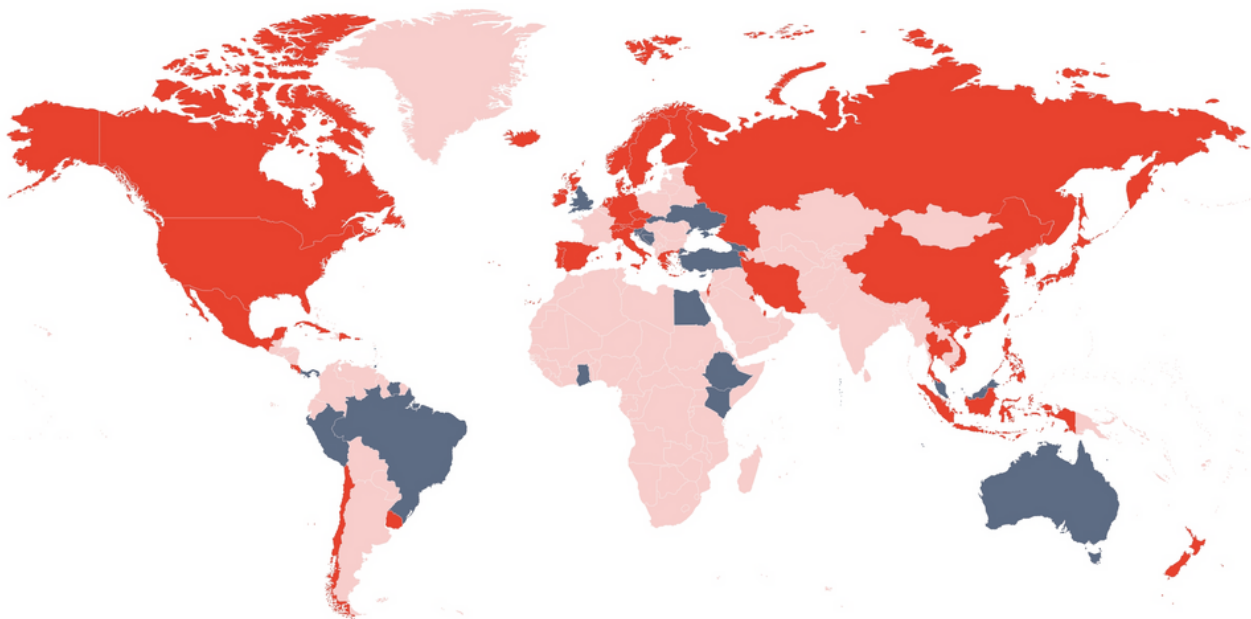





What you should know **From Plan to Impact reports**

Since the adoption of the GAP, ADI has tracked the progress of Member States towards achieving the targets, through its series of reports From Plan to Impact.

Each report is launched at the World Health Assembly in Geneva and invites ADI Members, Ministers of Health and government representatives, WHO, those living with dementia and carers to discuss ways in which we, as a community, can expedite the implementation of National Dementia Plans globally.

Unfortunately, all From Plan to Impact reports have demonstrated that the progress by Member States towards developing National Dementia Plans has been far too slow. Through advocacy and campaigns, such as the #WhatsYourPlan campaign, ADI and our members have been seeking to address this.



-  Countries and territories with a national plan as of May 2023
-  Countries and territories with a plan in development as of May 2023
-  No plan as of May 2023

Government

Organising a successful meeting

Collaborating with government officials is crucial for making positive changes in the lives of people with dementia. Whether it's your first meeting or a follow-up, it's important to be well-prepared when meeting with the Ministries of Health or similar.

Organising meetings Government ministers and officials

To organise a successful meeting with government ministers and officials, it's important to thoroughly research and prepare for the visit or online meeting.

Clearly define the purpose and goals of the meeting, as well as refine the key points you want to get across, in advance. **Staying up-to-date with policy developments is also crucial, such as monitoring changes in top health officials, including Ministers of Health and their stance on dementia-related issues.**



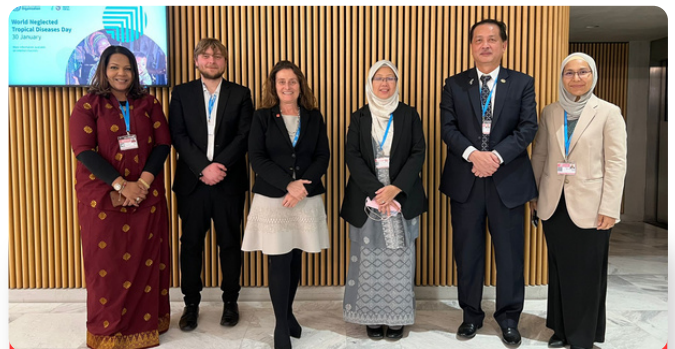
Members of the ADI team with Uruguay's Minister of Health, Dr Daniel Salina, during a meeting in October 2022.



ADI CEO Paola Barbarino with Stefanja Zlobec of Spominčica (left) and the President of Slovenia, Nataša Pirc Musar (right)



Representatives of governments, including Ministries of Health, often join ADI for its annual From Plan to Impact report discussion.



ADI meets with the delegation of Malaysia, including the Minister of Health, Dr. Zaliha Mustafa during the WHO 152nd Executive Board

Organising meetings

Things to consider beforehand

When organising advocacy and public policy events, it's crucial to engage both individuals and groups, whether online or in-person, to increase the size of your audience and amplify your message.

- Let the official express his or her point of view.
- Public officials, whether elected or appointed, have many parties competing for their attention. **Use your time constructively**, leading with your most important points.
- Public officials and their staff are human and expect common courtesy. They may be more helpful if you treat them with respect.
- Get to the point quickly. **Show that you know how valuable their time is.**
- **Keep it simple!** Don't be too technical, too detailed, too complex, or too indirect. Get to the point, cover the basics and make sure the official understands your main point.
- **Use key headline data** you have, such as prevalence, incidence, mortality, diagnosis rates. You can follow up later with more detail if required.
- **Emphasise that you are part of ADI**, the global organisation, in official relations with WHO and present in 105 countries.
- An unwieldy group can make everyone uncomfortable, distract from your message, and waste valuable time getting set up. **Make certain that the group has already decided on a spokesperson and stick with that decision.**
- If possible, **include a person with dementia or a care giver** – the voice of lived experience is powerful.
- Your reputation is everything, so try to be as prepared as possible before entering a meeting.
- Always ask for the official's support.
- **Remember to call/send a note of thanks to the person you visited** to remind them of your visit. You could also send them a Tweet to thank them or remind them of the discussion.
- **Follow up your visit with a phone call or subsequent letters if your requests are not met.**
- Public officials are busy but are more likely to take notice if you make your presence felt through frequent correspondence.
- Make use of facts, statistics, case studies, stories and involve people with dementia and their carers.

Policy and advocacy events

Engaging the public

When organising advocacy and public policy events, it's crucial to engage both individuals and groups, whether online or in-person, to increase the size of your audience and amplify your message.

- **The number of people you attract to your event is important.** The size of your group at an event speaks volumes about your message and cause.
- **Call your board members,** support group leaders and service providers you have good relationships with. They are great sources of people who understand your message and will be more likely to help recruit others to attend your event.
- **Lack of transportation and difficulty in finding care arrangements can be barriers** for carers who want to attend functions. If you can provide assistance with these obstacles, do!
- **A senior association person (board member, staff) needs to be visible** at the event to 'shepherd' participants, troubleshoot, and assure they know the role of the group's presence.
- **Identify and prepare a media spokesperson.**
- **Security is usually taken very seriously** – especially when visiting government officials. When information given to you about an event is said to be 'confidential', it is so for a reason. Keep it that way.
- **Give the best information possible to all attendees.**
- **Call and ask participants directly to attend an event.** Don't just assume an invitation or flyer will get people to come when you need them.
- **Don't forget to say 'thank you' to all carers and speakers** who attend an event. A simple 'thank you' goes a long way to assuring their support in the future.



Access the companion document
**'Organising events for awareness
raising and fundraising'**