

Alzheimer Scotland

Response to G8 Dementia Summit

Introduction

Alzheimer Scotland is Scotland's leading dementia voluntary organisation. We work to improve the lives of everyone affected by dementia through our campaigning work nationally and locally and through the provision of specialist and personalised services. We also offer information and support through our 24 hour freephone Dementia Helpline, our website (www.alzscot.org) and our wide range of publications.

Response to consultation questions

Which areas of research would benefit most from international collaborations?

All areas of dementia research - cause, cure, care, treatment and prevention of dementia has the potential to benefit from high-quality and effectively co-ordinated international collaborations.

This includes experts collaborating in scientific and clinical fields and the sharing of international perspectives on the lived experience of dementia in order to improve responses to caring and support.

How can we work internationally to get the most benefit from what we already know about dementia?

Through networking, promotion of collaborations, pooling of initiatives and facilitating collaborations between experts in different research fields.

Scottish researchers are playing their role in this through the recent formation of the Scottish Dementia Research Consortium (SDRC). This will bring together Scottish-based dementia researchers from all disciplines. It will promote collaboration and co-ordination between researchers and enable the pooling of talent and skill. It will also nurture a greater level of joint research applications and increase the level of national and international research funding secured by partners within the SDRC.

The SDRC will represent dementia research interests at a national, UK, European and international level.

What are the barriers to international collaboration on dementia research and how can be they over come?

This must begin with breaking down the barriers that currently prevent Scottish researchers from participating fully within a UK context. Scottish researchers were unable to access the UK Government's Dementia Research Challenge on an equal

footing with other UK researchers because of the primary focus being placed with the Department of Health.

Alzheimer Scotland welcome's the UK Prime Minister's initiative to convene a G8 Dementia Summit on 11 December in London. We fully support the Summit's objective of developing greater international collaboration and public private partnerships for research into the causes, treatment and prevention of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. We call upon the G8 countries to:

- Include and consult Alzheimer associations and people with dementia in the decision making process and definition of a global research agenda.
- Adopt a holistic approach to research to include psycho-social, care, socio-economic and health systems research.
- Substantially increase the funding dedicated to all areas of dementia research.
- Promote dementia as a priority in other international bodies including the G20, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations.

What roles can business and industry play in improving quality of life for people with dementia?

This requires the promotion of dementia as an illness that will impact on everyone in some way. The workplace has a key role in dementia friendly communities. More people will be working into later life and there are many more employees who will be caring for a family member with dementia.

Business and industry has a key role in helping to improve the quality of life of people living with dementia through raising awareness and employment practices. There is also a role for business and industry in prevention and promoting the cognitive, mental, physical and emotional health of their employees.