

## **Media Information**

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### **ADMIRAL NURSE IAN WEATHERHEAD APPOINTED TO LEAD NATIONAL HELPLINE *ADMIRAL NURSING DIRECT***

The charity **for dementia** is delighted to announce the appointment of Ian Weatherhead as *Lead Nurse* to head up and develop the national helpline Admiral Nursing DIRECT, manned exclusively by specialist dementia care nurses.

Ian says: “This is such an exciting new opportunity – it allows me to bring a wealth of experience of dementia to this pioneering role and develop a truly national service. Our aim is to provide high quality support for more families affected by dementia, quickly.”

Ian has over thirty years experience in mental health, spending his formative years as a hospital charge nurse, eventually becoming Lead Nurse for NHS Highlands and developing a Community Mental Health Team of seven professionals.

Ian became an Admiral Nurse in 2006, bringing about ‘a significant change in thought process with a total shift of emphasis from patient to carer’. Ian took up his first Admiral Nurse post with the Central North West London Foundation Trust (CNWL), the Trust that employed the very first Admiral Nurse.

It was in this role at CNWL that Ian first came into contact with John Suchet, now a Patron of **for dementia**, who attributes Ian to “literally saving my life”. The media interest surrounding John Suchet and the story of his personal journey through dementia has played a significant role in increasing demands on Admiral Nursing DIRECT, highlighting the need for leadership, increased resources and co-ordination.

Ian has worked on the helpline, giving him insight into the challenges that face him in his new post. His first priority is to develop a robust and responsive system for dealing with the ever-growing demand for information, advice and support from carers of people with dementia. Ian’s vision is to provide a consistently high quality of service to carers and to expand the hours of availability of Admiral Nursing DIRECT. Currently the helpline is serviced by London Admiral Nurses but Admiral Nurses across the country will now be trained to man the helpline.

Ian Weatherhead continues: “My new role is not without its challenges. In order to expand the hours of the helpline, and offer a lifeline to more carers, funding will need to be secured and in the current climate this will not be an easy task.”

The hours of Admiral Nursing DIRECT have recently been extended and callers can now reach Admiral Nurses directly on 0845 257 9406 on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 11am – 9pm. At other times, callers can send an email to [direct@fordementia.org.uk](mailto:direct@fordementia.org.uk) or leave a message and an Admiral Nurse will call back.

ENDS/ Notes follow

**Note for Editors**

1. The mission of **for dementia** is to improve the quality of life of people with dementia and their carers by promoting and developing **Admiral Nursing**, providing high quality **training**, promoting best practice for professionals working with older people, carers and people with dementia, and supporting the carers network Uniting Carers for dementia. For more information log on to [www.fordementia.org.uk](http://www.fordementia.org.uk).
2. The national helpline and email service Admiral Nursing DIRECT is manned exclusively by experienced and specialist Admiral Nurses and is for family and professional carers, people with dementia and those worried about their memory. **0845 257 9406** [direct@fordementia.org.uk](mailto:direct@fordementia.org.uk)  
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