

## **Media Statement**

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### **DEMENTIA – an issue of Citizenship**

In response to the launch of the DH's *Living Well with Dementia* awareness campaign, the charity *for dementia* calls for dementia to become an issue of good Citizenship

### ***Neighbourly support for all coping with dementia – the norm not the exception***

Dementia already touches the lives of many – as partners or spouses, children or grandchildren, friends or colleagues, neighbours or carers. It will touch the lives of many more as the population ages and the disease is increasingly diagnosed in those both above and below the age of 65.

### **Everyone is affected: everyone can help**

**Barbara Stephens, Chief Executive** of the charity *for dementia* says:

“Formal care services – no matter how extensive or sophisticated - will not be able to cope with the increasing need for dementia care.

It will be up to each and every one of us to contribute to ensuring that people with dementia and their families can live positive and fulfilling lives throughout the duration of the illness.

“How can we do that? By reacting positively in any number of achievable ways. Making time to listen and engage with the person with dementia and their carer and family; supporting them with errands or household chores; resolving not to cross the street when neighbours coping with dementia are out and about; or to stop seeing friends when a diagnosis of dementia becomes public.

What people with dementia and their families and carers need most is more contact and more engagement in order to keep up their confidence and their social, practical and intellectual skills.

To make this happen a sea-change in attitude is required across all age groups. Adding dementia to the Citizenship agenda would be a great start.

Many children at primary and secondary schools will be aware of grandparents, and sometimes parents, battling personally with the practical, emotional and physical effects of dementia.

The impact on grandchildren can be as painful as that experienced by adults. Improving understanding at an earlier stage will not only help young people directly with any current situation, but also embed helpful and appropriate attitudes into adulthood.

Colleges, universities and workplaces can also contribute to the on-going impetus by providing information and raising awareness, and encouraging everyone to engage with the everyday issues that affect people's lives.

The DH Living Well campaign to raise awareness of the importance of everyone 'doing their bit' to reduce the stigma of dementia is a great initiative.

What we need now is an innovative approach from schools, universities and workplaces to continue to roll out the key messages of this time-limited campaign and ensure that neighbourly support for all living with dementia becomes the norm, not the exception."

## **ENDS/**

### **Notes**

Find out more about the DH Campaign 'Living Well with Dementia' at <http://bit.ly/awsiTq>

The mission of *for dementia* is to improve the quality of life of people affected by dementia by promoting and developing Admiral Nursing, providing high quality training and promoting best practice for professionals working with older people, carers and people with dementia, and supporting the carers network **Uniting Carers for dementia**.

Professional and family carers and people with dementia can call the dedicated **Admiral Nursing DIRECT** phone line 0845 257 9406 on Tuesdays and Thursdays 11 am- 9pm, Saturdays 10am – 1pm. Leave a message at any other time for a call back, or email questions to [direct@fordementia.org.uk](mailto:direct@fordementia.org.uk). For more charity information log on to [www.fordementia.org.uk](http://www.fordementia.org.uk).

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