



**Alzheimer's Disease
International**

The global voice on dementia

57a Great Suffolk Street
London SE1 0BB
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)20 7981 0880
Email: info@alzint.org
Web: www.alzint.org

Minister Zdrowia
Pan Adam Niedzielski
Ministerstwo Zdrowia
Ul. Miodowa 15
00-952 Warszawa Polska
kancelaria@mz.gov.pl

22 November 2021

Re: National Dementia Plan in Poland

Dear Pan Adam Niedzielski,

In 2017, Poland, along with all 194 WHO Member States, unanimously adopted the World Health Organisation's (WHO) [*Global Action Plan on the Public Health Response to Dementia*](#) with the primary objective of the plan being the creation of national dementia plans and strategies. However, the recent [*WHO Global Status Report on the Public Health response to dementia*](#), released in August 2021, aimed at tracking the progress of Member States towards achieving the outcomes of the plan, has demonstrated that Poland is failing to uphold their 2017 commitment and thus its promise to provide adequate care and support to those living with dementia, carers and the public.

This report comes at a poignant time - currently 55 million people are living with dementia (14.1 in the European region alone), a number projected to rise to 139 million by 2050. Dementia costs the global economy USD \$1.3 trillion dollars, a number predicated to more than double by 2030. While these projections are striking, it is likely that the true population of those living with dementia is being grossly underestimated. Recent research has shown that COVID-19 is associated with long-term cognitive dysfunction and an acceleration of Alzheimer's disease symptoms in some individuals, meaning that many more may develop the condition over the coming years than was previously anticipated. Inadequacies in the current diagnosis process of the condition also mean that these projections may grossly underestimate the true scale of the problem. **Every three seconds someone in the world develops dementia; drawing us closer to the precipice of a global public health crisis. Time is running out to act.**

Alzheimer's Disease International, as the federation of 105 Alzheimer and dementia associations from around the world, strongly believes that dedicated, funded national dementia plans, created by expert, multidisciplinary teams, including those living with dementia and their carers, is the best and most robust way to manage the multifaceted challenges of dementia to healthcare systems, to governments, society and, of course, to those people directly impacted by the condition.

Well managed plans are also cost effective. The cost of dementia care (both informal and formal) is a considerable economic burden, with 40% of the costs relating to informal care, 40% to the social care sector and 20% to the medical sector, but there are ways to lessen the cost for countries -be they in higher income or lower income brackets- in the long run through joined-up, cohesive, and financed national dementia plans.

We are working with the Polskie Stowarzyszenie Pomocy Osobom z Chorobą Alzheimerą, a civil society organisation, to help them further develop and build capacity in the dementia space in your country, and they play a vital role in advancing the seven action areas identified in the WHO Global action plan in Poland. It is my hope that as Minister of Health, you will play an influential and crucial role in accelerating progress towards a plan/strategy in your country and will avail yourself of the help that Polskie Stowarzyszenie Pomocy Osobom z Chorobą Alzheimerą and ADI are ready to offer. This is a real opportunity for Poland to inspire other countries to move forward with plans of their own – both within Europe and beyond.

We look forward to hearing from you. Alzheimer's Disease International and Polskie Stowarzyszenie Pomocy Osobom z Chorobą Alzheimerą stand willing to assist your Ministry in any way possible.

Kind Regards,



Paola Barbarino, CEO
Alzheimer's Disease International

c/c:
Zbigniew Tomczak
Przewodniczący Zarządu
Polskie Stowarzyszenie Pomocy Osobom z Chorobą Alzheimerą
ul. Emilii Plater 47
00-118 Warszawa
alzheimerpl@gmail.com