

# Join the Global Dementia Friends movement

## A Global Challenge

50 million people live with dementia worldwide and this number is growing by almost 10 million each year – the equivalent of a new case every 3 seconds. It is listed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as the world's 5th leading cause of death. People affected by the condition can face wide-ranging stigma and discrimination – often due to a widespread misunderstanding of the condition. This is why dementia awareness, education and action are crucial.

## United against dementia

Dementia-friendly initiatives have the power to change the way we think, act and talk about dementia on a global scale.

The dementia-friendly approach originated in Japan and was then championed by Alzheimer's Society in England and Wales. Now it has been adopted by countries around the world. It is capturing the imagination of communities, policy makers and researchers globally and is recognised in national dementia policies and the WHO Global Action Plan on Dementia.

Dementia Friends promotes dignity and respect for all living with dementia, this volunteer-led movement tackles the stigma and discrimination people with dementia can face globally.

Alzheimer's Society's Dementia Friends programme is the UK's biggest ever initiative to change people's perceptions of dementia. Dementia Friends is about learning more about the condition in an easy and engaging way as well as the small ways everyone can take action to support those living with the condition.

## How does Dementia Friends work?

### Dementia Friends five key messages:

- Dementia is not a natural part of ageing.
- Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain.
- Dementia is not just about losing your memory.
- It's possible to live well with dementia.
- There is more to the person than the dementia.

To become a Dementia Friend, a person needs to understand these five key messages and then commit to at least one action that will make their community a more dementia-inclusive place.



In England and Wales these themes are explored through a number of routes:

- 1. Face-to-face Information Sessions** delivered by volunteer Dementia Friends Champions. These last for around one hour.
- 2. Online route** which consists of a five minute video following and hearing the experiences of three people living with dementia.
- Working with **Partner organisations** to make their workforce Dementia Friends through a variety of tools available.

### Global Dementia Friends Network

Alzheimer's Society is committed to supporting other countries to develop their own Dementia Friends programmes and dementia-friendly initiatives.

There are over 14.3 million Dementia Friends around the world and at least 40 countries are already developing programmes. Under the Global Dementia Friends Network, hosted by Alzheimer's Society, countries are working together to share, support and collaborate for a truly global dementia-friendly movement.

‘Through Dementia Friends we have become bolder, and we have more purpose. We have always raised awareness of dementia but now we are actually enabling people to commit’.

Desirée O. Vlekken,  
CEO & Founder of 4get-me-not  
Alzheimer's Organisation,  
United Arab Emirates

认知症好朋友  
Dementia Friends

Dementia Friends Thailand  
An Alzheimer's Society and Thailand Alzheimer's Association of Thailand initiative

Dementia Friends Hong Kong  
Hong Kong Alzheimer's Society's Initiative

Forget US NOT  
勿忘我

Dementia Friends Pakistan  
An Alzheimer's Pakistan Initiative

Dementia Friends  
An Alzheimer's Society and Singapore Alzheimer's Society initiative

Dementia Friends BRUNEI  
A Dementia (BRUNEI) initiative

Dementia Friends  
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## How is Dementia Friends replicated?

Every country's Dementia Friends programme is delivered in a unique way, depending on the cultural context and the size and capacity of the delivery organisation. Some countries choose to replicate the Dementia Friends programme exactly as in England and Wales, others adapt the materials to ensure the content is relevant to their local populations and some design their own brand and programme completely.

### **All Dementia Friends programmes share the following aims:**

- Raise awareness of dementia
- Challenge stigma about dementia
- Help participants understand how dementia affects a person and spread positive messaging
- Encourage behaviour change and action
- Count the number of people who participate

## How does the Global Dementia Friends Network work?

The Global Dementia Friends Network is a group of countries working in unison to raise awareness of dementia around the world and to challenge stigma through Dementia Friends programmes. We share learnings and best practice and engage as a Network through a number of channels:

- Quarterly e-newsletters and webinars
- Face to face workshops
- Private Facebook group
- Capacity building webinars
- One to one support in programme development

## Why join the Global Dementia Friends Network?

By actively challenging stereotypes and raising awareness through simple and accessible information, Dementia Friends is working to transform communities to enable those living with the condition to feel more included and empowered and to help realise their rights.

At the 70th World Health Assembly in May 2017, the 'Global action plan on the public health response to dementia 2017-2025' was adopted by World Health Organisation Member States. One key target states that '50% of Member States must have at least one dementia-friendly initiative by 2025'. By joining the Global Dementia Friends Network you will not only be positively contributing to this target but also leading the movement to change attitudes about dementia in your country and beyond. By collaborating and learning from each other, together as a Network, we can work together to champion the rights of people affected by dementia.

**Be part of the movement – create Dementia Friends in your country and join the Global Dementia Friends Network.**

### **For more information**

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