

Levelling Up White Paper – Oral Statement – 2nd February 2022

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1. Suggested Questions

- *Alzheimer's Society currently support three Centres of Excellence, which address the urgent need for more research into dementia care. With these Centres currently based in Exeter and Newcastle, would the Minister agree that these are an excellent example of what the Government hopes to achieve and that an expansion of this model provides a real opportunity to level up medical research across the whole of the UK?*
- *It is great to see a focus on R&D in this White Paper. In 2019, the Government promised to implement a Dementia Moonshot, by increasing dementia research funding to £800m over the next decade. We know that every £1 of public Research and Development funding will stimulate around £2 of private investment over the next 15 years. Does the Minister agree that the delivery of this Moonshot complements the aims of this White Paper, to level up through innovation across the entirety of the UK?*
- *The White Paper rightly recognises the important role Research and Development can play in levelling up the UK. Ensuring that Universities across the whole country have the funding and support to attract and retain the brightest and best researchers, particularly in medical research, will be vital to this. Can the Minister expand on how this White Paper will complement other Government commitments, such as the promise to double dementia research funding, through a Dementia Moonshot?*

2. About dementia

There are an estimated 900,000 people living with dementia in the UK.¹ Dementia is a progressive, long-term health condition. It has been estimated that 70% of care home residents and over 60% of home care recipients are people with dementia.²

LSE figures, commissioned by Alzheimer's Society, show the cost of dementia care will nearly treble over the next two decades. The total cost of dementia to the UK economy without substantive intervention, including costs to the NHS, paid social care and unpaid care, has risen to £34.7bn and will rise further to £94.1bn by 2040.³

3. Dementia research

Research can completely revolutionise how people with dementia are diagnosed, supported, cared for, and treated. A dementia diagnosis should not prevent a person being able to live a happy and

¹ Wittenberg, Raphael et al. Projections of older people with dementia and costs of dementia care in the United Kingdom, 2019-2040. 2019. Care Policy and Evaluation Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science. https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-11/cpec_report_november_2019.pdf.

² Alzheimer's Society. Dementia UK: Update. 2014. https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/sites/default/files/migrate/downloads/dementia_uk_update.pdf.

³ Wittenberg, Raphael et al. Projections of older people with dementia.

fulfilling life, and good quality research is one of the most important tools available to us to ensure this is possible.

At the 2019 General Election, the Conservative Party made a commitment in their manifesto to bring forward a 'Dementia Moonshot' and "double dementia research funding over the next decade". This would increase Government funding for dementia research from to £166m a year – resulting in an extra £800m for dementia research over the next 10 years.⁴

Alzheimer's Society currently supports and funds dementia research across the UK. This includes the funding of Centres of Excellence, which bring together top researchers to address the urgent need for more research into dementia care. The Centres of Excellence are currently based in Newcastle, Exeter, and London. Alzheimer's Society believes that this successful model could be replicated effectively and provides an opportunity to level up in academic institutions across the UK.

At **Newcastle University**, the Centre of Excellence is working to understand what 'good practice' is when it comes to support for people with dementia, understanding how different types of support affect the wellbeing of people with dementia and their families and what factors affect getting good support programmes put into practice.

At **Exeter University** Centre of Excellence, researchers are building an understanding of what the key indicators of living well and quality of life are as dementia progresses. They are also examining how patterns of service use and their cost are related to quality of life, and which are the best ones to use to enhance quality of life.

Last year, the APPG on Dementia published [Fuelling the Moonshot: Unleashing the UK's potential through dementia research](#), which investigated the state of dementia research in the UK and explored how the Government's promised extra funding could be used to support the sector. The report found that the Moonshot funding would help cement the UK's place as a world leader in dementia research, and also support the Government's plans for 'Levelling Up, by supporting research across the UK.

4. Levelling Up White Paper

The announcement of the Levelling Up White Paper, set out '12 Missions to Level Up the UK.' Included within these missions was the ambition that: *"By 2030, domestic public investment in Research & Development outside the Greater South East will increase by at least 40% and at least one third over the Spending Review period, with that additional government funding seeking to leverage at least twice as much private sector investment over the long term to stimulate innovation and productivity growth."*

The announcement went on to say *"the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) have committed to invest at least 55% of their domestic R&D funding outside the Greater South East by 2024/5... the Department for Health and Social Care will be increasing their medical research investment outside London, Oxford and Cambridge."*

Whilst we await more detail from the published full White Paper. Alzheimer's Society believes the way dementia research is undertaken across the UK provides a ready-made model for levelling up and further opportunity to expand on these successes.

⁴ Conservative Party Manifesto. 2019. <https://www.conservatives.com/our-plan>