

## **House of Lords Oral Question: Funding for implementation of DHSC Major Conditions Strategy – 18 September 2023**

For more information, contact Carlotta Rauch at [carlotta.rauch@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:carlotta.rauch@alzheimers.org.uk).

This briefing includes:

1. Suggested interventions
2. Background
3. Alzheimer's Society calls for the Major Conditions Strategy

### **1. Suggested Interventions**

---

- *My Lords, with ONS data showing that dementia is now the UK's biggest killer, it is vital that the Major Conditions Strategy is used to set in motion a long-term plan for action on the condition that can deliver the change people living with dementia need to see. Can the Minister provide urgent re-assurances that the Government will commit new funding to the Strategy, to ensure that its ambition to improve outcomes for people living with dementia can be realised?*
- *My Lords, dementia diagnosis rates fell significantly during the Covid-19 pandemic, and have been slow to recover. As of July 2023, the national dementia diagnosis rate for England was 63.8%. Can the Minister confirm if the Major Conditions Strategy will include a plan to recover dementia diagnosis rates to the national ambition of 66.7%, and whether an assessment has been made of the funding needed to achieve this?*
- *My Lords, the Major Conditions Strategy: case for change and our strategic framework, published on 21 August 2023, notes that the Government want their plans for dementia to be 'grounded in the experiences of people living with dementia and their unpaid carers'. With that in mind, can the Minister advise how his Department will be engaging with people affected by dementia as the development of the Major Conditions Strategy progresses, to ensure that their voices are at the heart of this Strategy?*

### **2. Background**

---

Around **900,000 people in the UK live with dementia in the UK** - a figure that is set to rise to **1.6m people by 2040**<sup>1</sup>. **ONS data also shows that dementia is now the UK's biggest killer**, so it's vital the Government makes dementia a priority both now and in the future.

With this in mind, **the Major Conditions Strategy must deliver bold and ambitious action on dementia specifically, setting in motion a fully-funded long-term plan for dementia, shaped by the voices of people living with the condition.**

The Government must also provide a timeline for delivery of the commitments made in the final Strategy, and any funding that accompanies them.

### **3. Alzheimer's Society calls for the Major Conditions Strategy**

---

Alzheimer's Society are calling on the Government to use the Major Conditions Strategy (MCS) to:

**Improve Diagnosis through a funded plan to recover rates to the national ambition:**

---

<sup>1</sup> **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](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-11/cpec_report_november_2019.pdf).

## Alzheimer's Society Briefing | Funding for implementation of Major Conditions Strategy

- The MCS must include a commitment for funding to bring the dementia diagnosis rate to meet the 66.7% target.
- The Government should then convene dementia stakeholders to set a more ambitious target above the current 66.7%.
- Diagnosis should be available regardless of background or locality. The MCS should include plans to support ICSs to **address regional variability in the diagnosis rate**, with a specific focus on under-served communities.

**Drive advancements in diagnosis methods** to deliver breakthrough dementia treatments as soon as they become available:

- The Government must ensure access to cost-effective approaches to detecting dementia sub-types, including cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) examination, brain scans, and imaging.
- We would also like a commitment from the Government to support the development of, and access to, new diagnostics and treatments for dementia.
- Participation of people affected by dementia in research must be increased, with more referrals to regional and national dementia research trials, capitalising on increased funding from the Dementia Mission.

**Deliver** for people affected by dementia navigating the health and social care system:

- People diagnosed with dementia should be provided a named professional coordinating post diagnostic support across health, social care and voluntary sector services.
- Local health systems must support primary care to return annual dementia care plan reviews to exceed pre-pandemic levels.
- An appropriate standard of training in dementia must be introduced for all health and social care staff to ensure the delivery of personalised care.

**Use data** to underpin the work of the Major Conditions Strategy, with better data collected on all aspects of dementia diagnosis and care through. This includes:

- A National Dementia Data Observatory to bring together existing data and develop further key performance indicators for dementia.
- A Care Quality Commission review of dementia services focusing on local systems and integration.
- A Government-led survey of people living with dementia to address health inequalities.