DEMENTIA PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

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Background

The drivers of change over 30 years have been:

- Civil society through Alzheimer’s organisations
- Understanding of what is involved in good dementia care and support
- The recognition of dementia as a chronic disease and the potential for dementia risk reduction
- The recent focus on creating dementia friendly societies
Background

Australia in the 1980s

- We learnt about prevalence rates and the ageing of the population and that around 50% of residents in nursing homes in Australia had dementia
- Review of Aged Care recommended an innovative program for people living with dementia
- Positive industry response reinforces the importance of designated dementia supplements to provide appropriate dementia care and cover costs involved
Work with Alzheimer’s Australia

- CEO of Alzheimer’s Australia 2000-2014
- In 2000 little change since 1985 in respect of public policy and dementia
- Government policy founded on mainstreaming dementia
- No recognition of dementia as a public health issue
- Changes since 2000 a result of the advocacy work of people living with dementia and strong evidence base developed by Alzheimer’s Australia
Work with Alzheimer’s Australia

- 2012 aged care reforms provided a $270 million package to tackle dementia
- This included making Dementia a national health priority
- There was funding for timely diagnosis, dementia supplements, dementia and acute care, dementia risk reduction and younger onset dementia keyworkers
- There is now additional funding of $200m for dementia research
Role of Alzheimer associations

- Alzheimer associations have to be the agents of change.
- Great work of many organisations over the last decade show how revolution must be driven by civil society.
Priorities and recommendations

Three priorities for transformational change

• To tackle stigma through social action
• To establish dementia as a priority through national action plans around the world
• To give priority to supporting Alzheimer’s associations in low and middle income countries

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Societies must reduce stigma through social action

- Dementia Friendly Communities/Champions/Dementia Friends
- Action through the UN
- WHO Healthy Ageing
- Consumer directed models of care
- Social engagement and legal frameworks

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MAKING DEMENTIA A PRIORITY

National dementia action plans must be developed
• Incorporating awareness, timely diagnosis, care, rehabilitation, dementia and risk reduction and research
• Need to communicate effectively
• Need for a stronger focus on the quality of care

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Low and middle income countries

Where there is often low awareness, few services and the problem by 2050 will be greatest

- ADI to continue to support and strengthen organisations
- Well represented at WHO Ministerial Conference
- Partnering with other international NGOs
- Global Alzheimer’s and Dementia Action Alliance

ADI member associations in 2015: 83 in total
CONCLUSION

In 1985 in Australia we were not aware of the full extent of action needed on dementia

In 2000 not a lot had changed and could not have dreamed we would positioned as we are today

Working together we have earned the right to dream of a better future for people with dementia and their families

We know what to do to achieve our dreams