



# NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2008

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## Editorial

This quarter has been a very exciting time for Alzheimer Europe as it is becoming evident that dementia is being placed firmly on people's agendas.



Our campaign to make dementia a national health priority continues to gain support and our Paris Declaration has now secured signatures of 46 Members of the European Parliament with Philippe Busquin (Belgium), Carlos Coelho (Portugal), Linda McAvan (United Kingdom), Gay Mitchell (Ireland), Elisabeth Morin (France), Gérard Onesta (France), Jacques Toubon and Christine de Veyrac (France) being the latest MEPs to support the political priorities contained in our Declaration.

Equally, it is extremely encouraging to see governments giving dementia a higher priority, with France, Germany and the UK leading the way.

This quarter has seen such important policy developments as the announcement of the French Alzheimer's Plan, a German Centre for Neurodegenerative diseases and the first steps towards the development of a Dementia Strategy in the UK.

With this new commitment on a national level, we hope to see equal action on a European level. We are therefore particularly delighted that Alzheimer Europe was invited by the French Health Minister to join the steering committee for the upcoming French Presidency conference on Alzheimer's disease, from which we are hoping to have clear signals for a better collaboration on this issue across Europe.

You will find information on all these different initiatives in this newsletter, the latest updates on our own activities and those of our members, as well as a collection of recent scientific developments.

I also hope that you will enjoy the new look of our newsletter. We are currently in the process of developing our communication strategy and decided to increase the frequency of our newsletter with this one being our last quarterly before we move on to a monthly one.

For this new initiative to be successful, we will of course depend on your input and therefore invite you to send us information about relevant scientific or policy developments that you may be aware of.

Together, we can make dementia a European priority.

**Jean Georges**  
Executive Director

## Making dementia a European priority

Our campaign enjoys increasing support from MEPs with the following pledging their support in the first two months of 2008:



**Philippe Busquin**  
Belgium, PES



**Carlos Coelho**  
Portugal, EPP-ED



**Christine de Veyrac**  
France, EPP-ED



**Linda McAvan**  
United Kingdom, PES



**Gay Mitchell**  
Ireland, EPP-ED



**Elisabeth Morin**  
France, EPP-ED



**Gérard Onesta**  
France, Greens/EFA



**Jacques Toubon**  
France, EPP-ED

With their support, the number of Members of the European Parliament who have pledged their support to Alzheimer Europe by either signing the Paris Declaration or joining the European Alzheimer's Alliance has been increased to 56:

1. Battilocchio Alessandro (Italy, NI)
2. Bourzai Bernadette (France, PES)
3. Bowis John (United Kingdom, EPP-ED)
4. Busquin Philippe (Belgium, PES)
5. Cabnoch Milan (Czech Republic, EPP-ED)
6. Cederschiold Charlotte (Sweden, EPP-ED)
7. Coelho Carlos (Portugal, EPP-ED)
8. Corbey Dorette (Netherlands, PES)
9. Crowley Brian (Ireland, UEN)
10. Daul Joseph (France, EPP-ED)
11. De Veyrac Christine (France, EPP-ED)
12. Dickute Jolanta (Lithuania, ALDE)
13. Ettl Harald (Austria, PES)
14. Figueiredo Ilda (Portugal, GUE/NGL)
15. Griesbeck Nathalie (France, ALDE)
16. Grossetête Françoise (France, EPP-ED)
17. Hall Fiona (United Kingdom, ALDE)
18. Henin Jacky (France, GUE/NGL)
19. Hutchinson Alain (Belgium, PES)
20. Kohlicek Jaromir (Czech Republic, GUE/NGL)
21. Koppa Maria Eleni (Greece, PES)
22. Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou Rodi (Greece, EPP-ED)
23. Langendries Raymond (Belgium, EPP-ED)
24. Levai Katalin (Hungary, PES)
25. Lulling Astrid (Luxembourg, EPP-ED)
26. Masiel Jan Tadeusz (Poland, UEN)
27. Matsouka Maria (Greece, PES)
28. McAvan Linda (United Kingdom, PES)
29. McDonald Mary Lou (Ireland, GUE/NGL)
30. McGuinness Mairead (Ireland, EPP-ED)
31. Mikolasik Miroslav (Slovakia, EPP-ED)
32. Mitchell Gay (Ireland, EPP-ED)
33. Moraes Claude (United Kingdom, PES)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 34. Morin Elisabeth (France, EPP-ED)         | 46. Sterckx Dirk (Belgium, ALDE)            |
| 35. Muscat Joseph (Malta, PES)               | 47. Stihler Catherine (United Kingdom, PES) |
| 36. Myller Riitta (Finland, PES)             | 48. Surján László (Hungary, EPP-ED)         |
| 37. Niebler Angelika (Germany, EPP-ED)       | 49. Toubon Jacques (France, EPP-ED)         |
| 38. Onesta Gérard (France, Greens-EFA)       | 50. Ulmer Thomas (Germany, EPP-ED)          |
| 39. Panayotopoulos Marie (Greece, EPP-ED)    | 51. Vakalis Nikolaos (Greece, EPP-ED)       |
| 40. Papadimoulis Dimitrios (Greece, GUE/NGL) | 52. Vlasak Oldrich (Czech Republic, EPP-ED) |
| 41. Podestá Guido (Italy, EPP-ED)            | 53. Virrankoski Kyösti (Finland, ALDE)      |
| 42. Rogalski Boguslaw (Poland, UEN)          | 54. Weisgerber Anja (Germany, EPP-ED)       |
| 43. Roithova Zuzana (Czech Republic, EPP-ED) | 55. Willmott Glenis (United Kingdom, PES)   |
| 44. Schinas Margaritis (Greece, EPP-ED)      | 56. Wortmann Corien (Netherlands, EPP-ED)   |
| 45. Sinnott Kathy (Ireland, IND/DEM)         |   |

Similarly, our campaign continues to gather support from other European organisations with the following pledging their support in the first two months of 2008:



**Eurocarers - European association working for carers**



**European Union Geriatric Medicine Society**



**International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics – European Region**

Alzheimer Europe gratefully reports on the activities of the following Members of the European Alzheimer's Alliance.

**23 February 2008: Marie Panayotopoulos, MEP, supports Athens Alzheimer's Group**

Marie Panayotopoulos-Cassiotou, Member of the European Parliament, took an active part in a symposium organised by the Athen's Alzheimer's Association on 23 February.



In her presentation, she highlighted the importance of coordinating actions for people with dementia on a European level. As the chair of the Family Intergroup of the European Parliament, she also stressed the important impact of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias on carers.

She reiterated her whole hearted support to Alzheimer Europe's campaign to make dementia a European public health priority.

**25 February 2008: Françoise Grossetête, MEP, participates in steering committee for Alzheimer's conference of French Presidency**

As the chairperson of the European Alzheimer's Alliance, Françoise Grossetête, MEP, was invited by Roselyne Bachelot, the French Health Minister, to join the steering committee for the conference on Alzheimer's disease which the French Presidency of the European Union is planning on organising in the second half of 2008.



Françoise Grossetête welcomed the initiative and the priority accorded by the French Presidency to Alzheimer's disease and related disorders and promised the support and the collaboration of the European Alzheimer's Alliance.

## Alzheimer Europe news

### 20 December 2007: Lundbeck approves silver sponsorship for Alzheimer Europe in 2008



Lundbeck informed Alzheimer Europe of its decision to provide silver sponsorship to the activities of the organisation in 2008 for the amount of €20,000.

### 21 December 2007: Alzheimer Europe adopts position on anti-dementia drugs

The Board of Alzheimer Europe adopted a position on anti-dementia drugs on 21 December 2007. In this position, the organisation makes the following key points:

- Governments and regulators should not further restrict the access to anti-Alzheimer's drugs
- Treatment should be offered as part of a care package which takes into account the various needs of people with dementia and their carers
- Existing anti-dementia drugs should be made available under national reimbursement systems
- Doctors should discuss the likely benefits and side effects with people with Alzheimer's disease and their carers

### 21 December 2007: Merck Sharp & Dohme approves bronze sponsorship for Alzheimer Europe in 2008



Merck Sharp & Dohme informed Alzheimer Europe of its decision to provide bronze sponsorship to the activities of the organisation in 2008 for the amount of €10,000.

### 29 January 2008: GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) approves gold sponsorship for Alzheimer Europe in 2008



GSK informed Alzheimer Europe of its decision to provide gold sponsorship to the activities of the organization in 2008 for the amount of €40,000.

### 11 February 2008: Alzheimer Europe participates in EMEA workshop on neurodegenerative diseases



The European Medicines Agency organised a workshop on neurodegenerative diseases with a focus on dementia on 11 February 2008. Alzheimer Europe was represented at the meeting by Sigurd Sparr and Jean Georges.

At the meeting, the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) presented the outcome of the consultation on the new guideline on medicinal products for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

### 14 February 2008: Alzheimer Europe welcomes Commission Transparency Initiative

In its response to European Commission consultation on its Transparency Initiative, Alzheimer Europe broadly welcomes the Commission initiative and reiterates the organisation's own commitment to the principles of transparency and legitimacy.

In particular, Alzheimer Europe welcomes the European Commission's proposal to establish a register of interest representatives participating in the democratic system and in shaping the European political agenda.

Alzheimer Europe supports the European Commission's willingness to link the register to a Code of Conduct specifying how interest representatives should behave when sharing the interests of the people they represent.

Alzheimer Europe agrees that adherence to the Code of Conduct is a prerequisite to being part of the Commission's voluntary register.

### 22 February 2008: Alzheimer Europe issues first draft position on end-of-life care

As part of its project on end-of-life care, Alzheimer Europe prepared a draft position on end-of-life care for people with dementia including the appropriate support of carers.

The draft is the result of discussions carried out in a multidisciplinary group of experts in the field of palliative care, medicine, psychiatry and psychology, as well as carers in collaboration with the Board of Alzheimer Europe and its members associations.

This first draft has gone out for consultation to the expert group before being sent out for wider consultation to all the member organisations of Alzheimer Europe.

### 25 February 2008: Alzheimer Europe takes active part in steering committee for Alzheimer's conference of French Presidency

As part of its recently adopted Alzheimer's Plan, the French government announced that it would prioritise dementia during the French Presidency of the European Union in the second half of 2008 and dedicate a high profile conference to Alzheimer's disease and related disorders on 30 and 31 October.



A steering committee for the conference was set up in which representatives from various French ministries are included, as well as the European Commission, ministries from Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. Equally, Françoise Grossetête, the chairperson of the European Alzheimer's Alliance and both the French Alzheimer's association and Alzheimer Europe were asked to participate in the first meeting of the steering committee on 25 February in 2008.

Jean Georges, Executive Director of Alzheimer Europe warmly welcomed the initiative of the French Presidency: "Alzheimer associations are hoping to see clear signals from the European Union to give dementia a higher priority. A European action plan on dementia and an exchange of best practices between Member States would greatly improve the situation of the 6.1 million people with dementia in the European Union."

### 28 February 2008: European Commission consults Alzheimer Europe on mental health strategy for the elderly

As a follow-up to its Green Paper on Mental Health, the European Commission will organise a EU high-level conference on June 13, 2008.

The aim of the conference is to establish a European Pact on Mental Health. The pact will

be a declaration of will of the Member States and stakeholders to engage in longer-term exchange and cooperation on the role of mental health, well-being and disorders in the context of their respective activities.

Alzheimer Europe was invited to participate in a preparatory meeting of the "older people" group for the conference on 28 February and to advise on the planned activities and input on the consensus paper to be issued at the conference.

Commissioners Kyprianou, Spidla and Figel will supervise the organisation of this conference and Mr Barroso has expressed his intention to participate.

### 29 February 2008: Alzheimer Europe submits second interim report of its project "European Collaboration on Dementia – EuroCoDe"

On 29 February, Alzheimer Europe finalised the second interim report of the Commission funded project "European Collaboration on Dementia – EuroCoDe".

The report contains:

- A comparative report on the level of social support provided to people with dementia and their carers in Europe
- An overview of International, European and national guidelines on the diagnosis and treatment of dementia
- An inventory of national guidelines on psycho-social interventions and European indicators on such interventions
- An overview of European prevalence studies
- A draft report on the socio-economic impact of dementia
- A report on the current understanding of the risk and protective factors in dementia.



[www.dementia-in-europe.eu](http://www.dementia-in-europe.eu)

## AE Networking

The following meetings were attended by representatives of Alzheimer Europe:

Date	Meeting	AE Representative
3 December	Meeting with Dorette Corbey, MEP in Brussels, Belgium	Dumas Annette
3-4 December	Meeting on "Predictivity, genetic testing and insurance" of the Steering Committee for Bioethics of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France	Gove Dianne
4 December	European Homecare Conference of EUKOMED in Brussels, Belgium	Dumas Annette
6 December	European Life Science Circle in the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium	Dumas Annette
6 December	CHES Roundtable on European Health Strategy in Brussels, Belgium	Dumas Annette
7 December	Patients' and Consumers' Working Party of the European Medicines Agency in London, United Kingdom	Georges Jean
10 December	Meeting with DODS and Parliament Magazine in Brussels, Belgium	Georges Jean & Dumas Annette
13 December	Management Board of European Medicines Agency in London, United Kingdom	Georges Jean
20 December	Health grouping of NGOs affiliated to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France	Gove Dianne
9 January	European Parliament Carers' Interest Group in Brussels, Belgium	Dumas Annette
10 January	Meeting with representatives of Johnson & Johnson in Brussels, Belgium	Georges Jean & Dumas Annette
23 January	Health grouping of NGOs affiliated to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France	Gove Dianne
29 January	Training seminar for patient organisations involved in EMEA activities in London, United Kingdom	Georges Jean
29 January	Meeting with GlaxoSmithKline in London, United Kingdom	Georges Jean
30 January	Meeting with Alzheimer's Disease International, Pfizer and Eisai in London, United Kingdom	Georges Jean
31 January	European Commission conference on "Europe's looming demographic crunch" in Brussels, Belgium	Dumas Annette
5 February	Planning Meeting for 19 <sup>th</sup> Alzheimer Europe Conference in Brussels, Belgium	Georges Jean
6 February	Executive of the European Patients' Forum in Brussels, Belgium	Georges Jean
7-8 February	Lundbeck Symposium in Vienna, Austria	Georges Jean
11 February	Workshop of the European Medicines Agency on Neurodegenerative Diseases in London, United Kingdom	Sparr Sigurd & Georges Jean
12 February	Planning Meeting for 19 <sup>th</sup> Alzheimer Europe Conference in Brussels, Belgium	Georges Jean & Dumas Annette
13 February	European Parliament Conference "Cancer in wide screen" in Brussels, Belgium	Dumas Annette
23 February	Alzheimer's Symposium of the Athens Alzheimer's Association in Athens, Greece	Georges Jean
25 February	Steering Committee for the Alzheimer's Conference of the French Presidency in Paris, France	Georges Jean
26 February	Planning Meeting for 19 <sup>th</sup> Alzheimer Europe Conference in Brussels, Belgium	Georges Jean
27 February	European Life Science Circle Meeting on animal research in Brussels, Belgium	Dumas Annette
27-28 February	Patient and Consumer Working Party of the European Medicines Agency in London, United Kingdom	Georges Jean
28 February	Preparatory meeting for Commission conference on Mental Health in Luxembourg, Luxembourg	Dumas Annette

## European developments

### 5 December 2007: European Commission launches public consultation on reform of EU Pharmacovigilance system

The public consultation process regarding the "Strategy to Better Protect Public Health by Strengthening and Rationalising EU Pharmacovigilance" has been launched by the European Commission.

Stakeholders were invited to comment on Section 3 (which presents the legislative strategy and the key proposals for legislative change) or Section 4 (which presents the detailed proposals to change EU legal texts).

The Commission is expected to adopt proposals to the European Parliament and Council in 2008.

We provide full references to all articles on our website  
[www.alzheimer-europe.org](http://www.alzheimer-europe.org)

### 6 December 2007: Commissioner Kyprianou announces Mental Health Conference

At the meeting of European Health Ministers on 6 December, Health Commissioner Markos Kyprianou announced a conference on Mental Health to be held on 13 June in Brussels. Commissioner Kyprianou and Dr José Barroso, the President of the European Commission will participate in the conference.



Discussion will cover four key areas:

- Prevention of suicide
- Mental health in youth and education
- Mental health in workplace environments
- Elderly people

### 13 December 2007: European Commission invites contributions on code of Conduct for Interest Representatives

Following the Green Paper on the European Transparency Initiative COM (2006)194, the European Commission invites citizens and organisations to give their opinions on the

nature of the items to be included on the draft Code of Conduct of Interest Representatives.

The Code contains a limited number of clear and concrete rules, indicating how interest representatives are expected to behave when representing their interests.

### 20 December 2007: European Council approves Innovative Medicines Initiative



At its meeting of 20 December, the Council of Ministers adopted a regulation establishing four Joint Technology Initiatives including the "Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI)".

Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs) aim to address "strategic areas where research and innovation are essential to European competitiveness" defining common objectives and combining funding and knowledge.

The IMI is a partnership between the European Community and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA). The IMI aims to "strengthen the European pharmaceutical sector by accelerating the development of safe and more effective medicines for patients".

### 20 December 2007: The European Commission publishes "Report on current practice with regard to provision of information to patients on medicinal products"

After a survey on the varying practices of Member States with regard to information on medicines, the European Commission published its findings on 20 December. In the report, the Commission declares its intention to propose to the European Parliament, and the Council by the end of 2008, amendments to the current rules on the provision of information to patients. The aim of the amendments will be to reduce the inconsistencies in access to information and put the interests of patients first.

### January 2008: European Commission rules out fixed deadline for phasing out non-human primates in scientific experiments

In its reply to a Written Declaration of the European Parliament, the European Commission declared that "a timetable with a fixed deadline to phase out all use of non-human primates is not possible at present, as the scientific development has not yet reached

the stage that would make such programming realistic”.

This was the conclusion to the Commission reply to the European Parliament’s declaration on primates in scientific experiments. The key points by the Commission were:

- Today, primates are used only in exceptional circumstances when no alternative method or species is relevant for the purpose of the study.
- 67% of primates are used in safety and efficacy regulatory studies.
- Most commonly used species (such as marmosets, vervets, baboons) are not listed in the CITES list of endangered species.
- The last use of Great Apes in the EU was reported in 1999. The Commission is examining the possibility to ban the use of Great Apes in the EU. A similar approach is being considered for wild-caught animals with scientifically justified exceptions.
- Today, primates are unavoidable in several vital research areas including immune-based diseases, neuro-degenerative disorders, and infectious diseases.
- 12 out of 17 diseases listed by the WHO under the programme to fight epidemics and pandemics (supported by the European Parliament in a recent resolution) require the use of non-human primates during the development, production or testing of the related vaccines and medicines.
- Although some 3R techniques have been successfully developed and applied, the current scientific knowledge does not allow for full replacement of non-human primates in all areas of biomedical research today, nor in the near future.

**10 January 2008: Commission calls for candidates for the Committee for Advanced therapies**

A public call for expressions of interest which relate to the appointment by the Commission of members and alternates representing clinicians and patients’ associations at the Committee for Advanced Therapies of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) has been published by the European Commission.

**16 January 2008: European Commission launches inquiry into pharmaceuticals**



Neelie Kroes, the European Commissioner for Competition Policy, has explained the Commission’s decision to carry out a competition inquiry into the pharmaceutical sector in Europe, saying “We have

launched this inquiry because pharmaceuticals markets are not working as well as they might. Individuals and governments want a strong pharmaceuticals sector that delivers good products and value for money. But if innovative products are not being produced, and cheaper generic alternatives to existing products are being delayed, then we need to find out why and, if necessary, take action”.

The inquiry will concentrate on addressing two questions:

- The agreements between pharmaceutical companies to see whether they infringe the EC Treaty’s prohibition on restrictive business practices and
- Whether companies have created artificial barriers to innovative or generic product entry, to see whether such practices infringe the EC Treaty’s ban on abuses of dominant positions

The Commissioner has asked for feedback. She will issue an interim report in the autumn and final report in the spring of 2009.

**21 January 2008: EU Health Programme published in 11 languages**

The Second Programme of Community Action in the field of Health 2008-2013, which came into force on 1 January 2008, has now been published by the Directorate General for health and Consumer Affairs (DG SANCO) in 11 languages.

**5 February 2008: Commission launches public consultation on legal proposal on information on medicinal products**

The European Commission’s Directorate General for Enterprise (DG Enterprise) is inviting opinions on the key ideas of a legal proposal which aims to ensure that all EU citizens have equal access to information on medicinal products.

This initiative follows the “Report on current practices with regard to the provision of



information to patients on medicinal products” which found that there exists a need for harmonisation of the way in which information on medicinal products is provided.

The deadline for responses to the public consultation is 7 April 2008.

**9 February 2008: European Commission calls for experts for the second programme of Community action in the field of health.**



A call for expressions of interest was launched to draw up a list of experts to assist with the second programme of Community action in the field of health (2008–2013) which aims at:

- Improving people's health security
- Promoting health
- Generating and disseminating health information and knowledge

Successful candidates will be involved in the following activities:

- Reviewing applications for Community financial support (for projects, conferences, operating grants, joint actions) submitted in accordance with the aims of the health programme and policies, the general principles and the selection and award criteria for funding under the programme, and the related information packages;
- Reviewing technical and/or financial reports on completed or ongoing projects;
- Monitoring and evaluating activities under the programme in the light of its objectives and having regard to previously-funded projects in the public health programme and related projects in other Community programmes;
- Any other task in support of the second programme in the field of health, including dissemination activities.

Closing date for registration of interest is 30 October 2010.

**19 February 2008: European Parliament postpones EU Directive on electromagnetic fields**

The European Parliament has approved the Commission's request for a four-year postponement of EU Directive 2004/40/EC. The delay will enable time for a comprehensive risk assessment of the Directive and a

stakeholder consultation, after which amendments to the Directive can be made.

The Directive lays down the minimum health and safety requirements at work where workers are exposed to risks from electronic fields. However, the current published Directive has the effect of denying a scan to those people who may require assistance (for example, the elderly) during MRI (magnetic resonance imaging), as it prescribes that healthcare staff may not help patients during the MRI imaging process itself. MRI is an essential tool for the diagnosis of certain forms of dementia, as well as for treatment and research programmes in the field of dementia.

The postponement is a direct result of the lobbying by the Alliance for MRI, of which Alzheimer Europe was an active member. "It is essential that this major advance in healthcare technology is not threatened by burdensome legislation when concerns can be addressed through responsible guidance to medical and service personnel," stated the Alliance for MRI.

We provide full references to all articles on our website  
[www.alzheimer-europe.org](http://www.alzheimer-europe.org)

**28 February 2008: European Public Health Information and Knowledge System launched.**

The European Public Health Information and Knowledge System (EUPHIX) is aimed to assist policy makers, other professionals and interested citizens by offering scientific information and data in the areas of:



- The status of European health
- Health determinants
- Health interventions and systems
- Health policies
- The demography of European countries
- Cross cutting health themes (eg. Children's Health, the environment)

EUPHIX is funded by DG SANCO within the framework of the European Community Public Health Programme.

**29 February 2008: Commission publishes results of consultation on "Future Challenges" in the fields of health and consumer protection**

In November 2007, the European Commission's Health and Consumer Protection

Directorate (DG SANCO) published an online consultation document regarding its "Future Challenges Paper 2009-2014". DG SANCO has now released details of the comments various stakeholders submitted.

## Policy Watch

### 4 December 2007: UK MPs undertake inquiry into the prescription of antipsychotic drugs.

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Dementia (APPG) is examining the prescribing of antipsychotic drugs to people with dementia and have invited individuals and organisations to submit views on the following:

- How widespread is the use of antipsychotic drugs for people with dementia in care homes?
- Why are people with dementia in care homes being prescribed antipsychotic drugs?
- To what extent is the use of these drugs appropriate?
- What alternatives are there to the use of antipsychotics?
- What steps should be taken to ensure the appropriate prescription of antipsychotic drugs for people with dementia?

The findings will be published in March 2008.

### 5 December 2007: Eisai and Pfizer will appeal High Court decision on Alzheimer's drug in the UK

The court ruling which effectively denied medication to people with Alzheimer's disease in the early stages in the UK will be challenged by the drug companies Eisai and Pfizer as leave to appeal has been granted by the Court of Appeal.

The drug companies claim that the basis upon which the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) made its calculations for the cost of the medication was not transparent.

Although the Alzheimer's Society has decided not to continue to pursue this case in court, its spokesperson said "we support any challenge that could mean people with Alzheimer's get fairer access to the only drug treatment for the disease."

### 5 December 2007: Human Genetics Commission calls for stricter controls for genetic testing

The Human Genetics Commission (HGC) wants to see tighter regulation for companies offering genetic testing kits. Currently there is no requirement for an independent review when genetic tests are launched and there is growing concern that people could be either unnecessarily alarmed or falsely reassured by these tests.

Therefore, the HGC calls on the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency to ensure that any such test is not only suitable but also that personnel giving the test should be trained to give advice. Christine Patch, member of the HGC and consultant genetics counsellor at Guys Hospital in London explains "If you are offering a service for people who want to know about their risk then there are standards you should meet. You need to offer full information on what it might mean and what you can do with the results. You need pre- and post-test counselling."

Recommendations by the HGC include a review of the European Directive on genetic tests to ensure loopholes are removed, putting an end to advertisements for tests with significant health implications and putting in place a new system of regulation for those tests which are not protected by the European Directive such as non-medical 'lifestyle' tests.

The Department of Health is considering the recommendations made.

### 10 December 2007: UK Department of Health plans to reform social care and support independent living

The Department of Health (DH) announced its vision for "Putting people first" an initiative which outlines plans for the future of adult social care in Britain.

The new system is to be introduced in April 2008 and will take three years to implement.

The plans were drawn up after collaboration between ministers, local government, the National Health System (NHS), social care, professional and regulatory organisations.

The key areas of reform include :

- Allocation of personal care budgets, paid directly into the bank accounts of those people who are entitled to receive help
- Performance-related rewards for high-quality care homes, home care and day services

- Initiatives to ensure access to advice and advocacy about community services
- Investment for support programmes that keep older people healthy
- Better coordinated and efficient support in the community.

The British prime minister says that the scheme “puts real control into the hands of those in care and their carers.” The initiative has been welcomed by many groups within the UK.

**12 December 2007: Scottish Government’s strategy makes dementia a national clinical priority.**

Dementia has been officially recognised as a critical healthcare challenge by the Scottish Government in its announcement of its strategy on long term conditions, as part of the “Better Health, Better Care” plan.




Alzheimer Scotland has welcomed this as well as news that the implementation of the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Notebook (SIGN) guideline 86 (Management of patients with dementia) will be assessed.

Kate Fearnley, Health and Community Policy Director of Alzheimer Scotland said *“It is very positive that everyone with a long-term condition will have a self-management plan – this is rarely the case currently for people with dementia. We welcome the commitment to investing in training and support for people with long term conditions and their carers: with the right help to manage the difficulties dementia can bring, people with dementia and carers can have a better quality of life and avoid preventable problems.”*

Alzheimer Scotland also warned of the need to allocate resources in line with the expected 75% increase in the number of people with dementia over the next 25 years.

**10 January 2008: UK Commons Health Committee inquiry calls for a rethink over drug assessments**

 Following strong criticisms from patient organisations, drug companies and clinicians, regarding the work of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), the UK Select Committee on Health carried out an inquiry. Its terms of reference included:

- Why NICE’s decisions are increasingly being challenged

- Whether public confidence in the Institute is waning
- NICE’s evaluation process
- The speed of publishing guidance
- The appeal system
- A comparison with the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network and
- The implementation of NICE guidance.

This is the second review the Committee has carried out regarding the work of NICE. Amongst other recommendations, the Committee calls for:

- The cost-effectiveness of medicines to be judged not only in terms of medical costs, but also in terms of their wider-social benefits
- The threshold at which the impact of expensive drugs is deemed to outweigh their cost to be subject to independent scrutiny.

Neil Hunt, the Chief Executive of the Alzheimer’s Society says, “today’s report confirms that people with Alzheimer’s disease should not have been denied access to drugs. This is a victory for common sense. It is good news for patients. We hope the Department of Health will implement the suggested reforms. This will reduce the number of challenges against NICE, such as ours on Alzheimer’s drugs, and enable it to regain the public confidence it has lost (...) for years the Alzheimer’s Society has campaigned to have the benefits that drug treatments bring to carers sufficiently recognised by NICE. We hope changes will be made immediately to address this important issue.”

**17 January 2008: UK regulator grants permission for the creation of human-animal embryos for research**



Following consultations, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) granted one-year research licences to King’s College London and Newcastle University, which allows them to create hybrid embryos. « Cytoplasmic hybrid » embryos will be made by empty eggs from cows being injected with human DNA. The production of stem cells with genetic defects will enable researchers to gain a better understanding of certain types of disease and how best to treat them.

The study of diseases known to have genetic causes, such as some forms of Alzheimer’s disease, is to be the focus of the King’s

College London team, led by Dr Stephen Minger. The Newcastle University researchers, led by Lyle Armstrong, hope to use the technique to “understand how stem cells develop into different tissues in the body”.

Future research of this nature may be effected if the Human and Fertilisation Bill finishes its passage through Parliament and becomes law, because the Bill contains a requirement that consent be given by the donors. This is not the case at present and as many donors are anonymous, retrospective permission would not be possible.

**We provide full references to all articles on our website**  
[www.alzheimer-europe.org](http://www.alzheimer-europe.org)

**24 January 2008: UK Public Accounts Committee calls for dementia to be made a National Health Service priority**



The Committee of Public Accounts (PAC) has published its report “Improving Services and Support for People with Dementia”, which Neil Hunt, the Chief Executive of the Alzheimer’s Society said, laid bare the “appalling state” of dementia care in the UK.

This report examined current dementia practices regarding four areas :

- The prevalence and cost of dementia and the development of a Departmental strategy
- Diagnosis and early intervention
- Access to and quality of support services
- Acute hospital admission and care home experiences.

The problems identified were that :

- Unlike cancer, dementia has not been an NHS priority despite an annual cost of £14 billion
- No single individual is responsible or accountable for improving dementia services
- Many people remain undiagnosed
- There exists a lack of awareness regarding dementia amongst the public and some professionals
- The provision of support is complex as multiple health and social care providers are required

- Often carers do not get their needs assessed
- Specialist dementia care supply does not meet demand
- Hospital care for people with dementia often not well-managed

It calls for the following measures to be taken :

- A clear timetable for implementation, evaluation and reporting to be developed for the current National Dementia Strategy
- The appointment of a Senior Responsible Officer to offer leadership for dementia
- The improvement of diagnosis by greater support for General Practitioners (GPs), development of guidance on the important of early diagnosis and good diagnostic practice
- The increased awareness of the symptoms and treatments available for dementia by an awareness campaign
- The use of a contact point for people with dementia and their carers to assist them with the coordination of care between the various service providers
- The development of an action plan by local health organisations giving priority to assessing and meeting the needs of carers
- The assessment of care home staff’s qualifications and training needs followed by adequate resource allocation
- The introduction of a care record be carried by carers of people with dementia in order that paramedics may make an informed decision regarding hospital admittance or home treatment .

The UK Health Minister, Ivan Lewis, said that bringing the condition “out of the shadows” was now one of the Department of Health’s priorities and a national plan would be published in the autumn.

**30 January 2008: UK Report highlights inconsistencies in social care**

The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) published their report on the state of social care in England 2006-7 which found a widening gap in social care and, as the Social Care Minister, Ivan Lewis, admitted, the CSCI

"has uncovered enormous variations in the way councils interpret the rules".

Commenting on the report, Paul Cann, Director of Policy and External Relations at Help the Aged said that "social care has become a distress service, helping only those in critical need". Neil Hunt, Chief Executive of the Alzheimer's Society commented: "What sort of society do we live in where people with dementia are increasingly losing vital lifelines such as day care and home care services and those forced to pay privately are struggling with poor quality of life? Everyone deserves to have their basic care needs met...The government urgently needs to address these issues in the National Dementia Strategy and Green Paper on Social Care."

The UK Care Services Minister, Ivan Lewis, has announced an inquiry into the "postcode lottery" of care for the elderly to address inconsistencies raised by the CSCI report.

### 1 February 2008: French President unveils plan to fight Alzheimer's disease




Speaking at Sophia Antipolis University in Nice, France, President Sarkozy announced a five year plan to fight Alzheimer's disease with four objectives:

- To gain a better understanding of the disease
- To offer patient and family support
- To improve the quality of life for people with the disease and their carers
- To address the ethical issues faced by the person with Alzheimer's disease and carer

Ms Lustman has been appointed as the overall co-ordinator and she will oversee the implementation, monitoring and communications of the plan. Euro 1.6bn will be allocated toward the plan and will include investments in research and the creation of a Foundation for Scientific cooperation involving public-private partnerships.

President Sarkozy stated: "France wants to help fight against Alzheimer's within 10-15 years, as the disease is among those whose evolution can be staved off. In a few years, patients' suffering will be nothing like that of today, and perhaps we can eradicate Alzheimer's altogether."

### 1 February 2008: Audit Scotland calls for better planning, management and funding of nursing care



The Scottish policy of "Free personal and nursing care" (FPNC) was first introduced in 2001 for people aged 65 and over, with the key aim of "removing current discrimination against older people who have chronic or degenerative illnesses and need personal care".

In 2007 Audit Scotland, the Scottish Parliament's watchdog, was charged with reviewing this policy focusing on:

- The evaluation of robustness of financial planning, monitoring and reporting arrangement of FPNC
- An examination of the current costs and funding allocations for FPNC
- An identification of the financial impact of FPNC on older people, the Scottish Government and councils

Audit Scotland found:

- Evaluation of the impact of the policy to be difficult and the initial assessment of the financial implications of introducing the policy to be lacking
- Variations across Scotland in how the policy has been implemented, the eligibility criteria employed and understanding of what free personal care means in practice.
- A growing shortfall in central funding for FPNC, with an expectation of this to increase.

The report calls for:

- The clarification of policy ambiguities
- An agreement on a national eligibility framework
- An improvement on the monitoring of the policy and of its full costs
- A review of the allocation and distribution of funds for FPNC
- Clearer information for older people regarding FPNC
- An evaluation of long-term consequences of reducing domestic homecare services
- The publication of clear information regarding eligibility criteria for FPNC

The Audit Scotland study complements the independent review of the policy by Lord Sutherland, whose report is due to be published in March 2008.

Nicola Sturgeon, Scotland's Health Secretary, commented "The new government is committed to this policy. It is a good policy and we will take the action necessary to make sure that it lasts for the long-term".

The Audit Scotland's review was welcomed by Alzheimer Scotland, who had previously highlighted the problems of insufficient services and variability in care provision in their report "The Dementia Epidemic – Where Scotland is Now and the Challenge Ahead".

**5 February 2008: UK King's College London launches palliative care institute**



University of London

The British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, officially opened "The Cicely Saunders Institute of Palliative Care".

Undergraduate, masters and postgraduate teaching in palliative care for students and healthcare professionals from around the world will be offered. The aims are:

- To advance understanding in palliative care and treatment for patients
- To improve interaction between patients and healthcare professionals

The Institute will focus on the following research areas:

- Breathlessness, fatigue, sleeplessness and pain
- Ethnic and social exclusion of populations, including the elderly
- Diseases including cancer, neurological diseases, kidney disease and HIV.

The Head of the Department of Palliative Care, Policy and Rehabilitation of King's College London, Professor Irene Higginson, said "Currently there is no organisation in the world that is solely dedicated to the research and improvement of services in palliative care. As the population lives longer, due to reductions in acute disease, many more people will need palliative care and support to help them live as well as possible until they die. To improve this situation, research is urgently needed."

**February 2008: Independent report highlights UK health system inadequacies for people with dementia**

"Reform", an independent, non-party group who suggest improvements to public services, has published its 4<sup>th</sup> annual report in which it

highlights specific areas in which the National Health Service (NHS) is failing people with dementia.

**REFORM**

The report cites the National Audit Office's 2007 report in which a comparison between France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK showed (i) that the UK took the longest to diagnose Alzheimer's disease and (ii) that the proportion of doctors, who agreed that early treatment can delay the progression of the disease, was lowest in the UK. It also cites the 2008 Public Accounts Committee's findings that "the Department has not given dementia the same priority status as cancer and coronary heart disease. As a result the NHS has not afforded dementia the same focus for improvement."

Reform call for the NHS to make a concerted attempt to improve value in terms of service quality and access and for a new framework and policy direction to be employed.

**12 February 2008: Inconsistencies in the application of long term care criteria result in £180 million compensation payout.**

Following the English Health Service Ombudsman's report on "National Health Service (NHS) funding for long term care", which found an absence of clear and consistent national criteria for continuing care funding, £180 million has now been paid out in compensation.

So far, the average payment has been £90,000 to some 2000 people, who had been forced to pay for long-term nursing care during 1996 and 2004 instead of receiving the free treatment they were eligible for. 1300 outstanding claims will be assessed before the end of March.

The Department of Health issued new guidelines in 2007 which aim to standardise eligibility criteria for free long-term NHS care. However, Mervyn Kohler, of Help the Aged, says, "There are still many inconsistencies in practices. People are being forced to navigate their way through a confusing and inaccessible system of funding, at a time when a tangle of red tape is the last thing they need."

**12 February 2008: German Research Minister announces plans for Centre for Neurodegenerative Diseases**



Annette Schavan, the German Federal Minister for Education and Research, announced plans to create a "German Centre for Neurodegenerative Diseases". The Centre will see scientists and doctors work

alongside each other in order to address the demands arising from an increase in life expectancy and demographic development of the population.

Alzheimer's disease will be among those neuro-degenerative diseases which will be studied. The research will focus on

- Causes
- Prevention
- Early diagnosis
- Therapies
- Care

The Minister dedicated euro 50 to 60 million per year to the Centre and its partners. Invitations have been sent to medical faculties throughout Germany asking them to submit applications to be part of this Centre.

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[www.alzheimer-europe.org](http://www.alzheimer-europe.org)

**19 February 2008: Luxembourg Parliament paves the way for the legalisation of euthanasia**



Two bills, relating to palliative care and the legalisation of euthanasia, were adopted by the Luxembourg Parliament in their first readings. The governmental bill, 5584, on palliative care and advance directives and the Private Members' bill, 4909, entitled "the Right to die with dignity", if adopted, will result in:

- Further development of palliative care both in hospitals and the home
- The provision of a legal basis for advance directives allowing for the right to refuse certain treatment in the event that there is no hope for recovery
- A statutory right to a five-day leave of absence for carers caring for a patient in the terminal stage of a disease
- Protection from prosecution of doctors who, within guidelines, withdraw/stop life sustaining treatment.

**22 February 2008: Listening events held across the UK to develop Dementia Strategy**

In order to draft the first ever National Dementia Strategy, the Department of Health have asked the Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP) to lead an "engagement

and listening exercise" throughout England which runs from January through until the end of March 2008. An External Reference Group, chaired by Neil Hunt, Chief Executive of the Alzheimer's Society, has been convened with three working groups reflecting the themes of the strategy which are:

- Improving awareness of dementia
- Early diagnosis and intervention
- Improving the quality of Care

Individuals and organisations at regional and local level are invited to give their views on the above areas, with their submissions being in the context of:

- Who/what organisations need to show leadership and what organisations should be involved in each theme?
- What are the early wins for each theme?
- What are the key outcomes for each theme?
- What needs to happen in this region to achieve these outcomes?

The feedback given at the events or online will be considered when developing and implementing the Department of Health's Dementia Strategy, due to be published in October 2008.

**From our Member Organisations**

**12 December 2007: Alzheimer Portugal's nursing home project secures financial support of the Cascais Municipality.**



Alzheimer Portugal have secured the financial backing toward their "Alapraia Project" which aims to establish a nursing home and day care centre specifically for people with dementia. An agreement between Alzheimer Portugal and the Mayor of Cascais will result in 40% of the project's building costs being met by the municipality of Cascais.

The Alapraia Project has also received help from the government through its "PARES" programme as well as a team of architects and engineers who work free of charge



The centre should be completed by 2009.

**27 December 2007: Alzheimer's Society launches its new policy on electronic tagging and safer walking technology for people with dementia**



Leading the  
fight against  
dementia

The Alzheimer's Society has released new guidance on safer walking technology and calls for more research into its use and ability.

Neil Hunt, the Chief Executive of the Alzheimer's Society says "we know new technology is available and could offer benefits to people with dementia and their carers. There is a careful balance to strike between empowering people and restricting their movement and this technology can certainly never be used as an alternative for high quality dementia care."

**1 January 2008: Riita Korhonen succeeds Pekka Laine as Chair of the Finnish Alzheimer's Society**

At its December Annual General Meeting, the Finnish Alzheimer's Society elected Ms. Riita Korhonen as the new chairperson of the organisation and she took office on 1 January 2008.

Riita Korhonen is running an architectural firm and designed many of the buildings belonging to the University of Kuopio, among others the Brain research Institute of Kuopio. She is the long time chairperson of the Kuopio branch and was elected several times as the Vice-Chairperson of the Annual General Meeting. Riita was also a former member of the Finnish Parliament.



In the position of chairperson, she succeeds Pekka Laine whose role was recognised by the Annual General Meeting as he was promoted to the position of first Honorary Chairperson of the Alzheimer's Society of Finland due to his contributions to the movement in Finland but also internationally. Pekka is a well known dementia advocate and currently serves on both the Boards of Alzheimer Europe and Alzheimer's Disease International.

**29 January 2008: Conference participants deplore limited access of people with Alzheimer's disease to treatment in Bulgaria**

On 29 January a conference was organised by the company Libra AG in Sofia, which was attended by representatives of Alzheimer

Bulgaria (Civil Association for Alzheimer's disease), the Bulgarian Neurology Association, the Medicine Academy and the Company Merz.

The high cost and difficulty in obtaining reimbursement of anti-dementia drugs was highlighted. In Bulgaria the price of these medicine equates with the average pension and it is not refundable by the state

**February 2008: Alzheimer Scotland launches webpage dedicated to the Scottish Dementia Working Group**



The Scottish Dementia Working Group (SDWG) is made up of people with dementia, or a related condition, who "campaign to improve services for, and attitudes towards, people with dementia".

**February 2008: Romanian Alzheimer's Society reports on their current research and social initiatives**

The Romanian Alzheimer's Society, Societatea Alzheimer, reports on some of their key initiatives in the first quarter of 2008.



In February 2008 the association organised a national forum on different aspects of Alzheimer's disease. The conference entitled: "News in the treatment of major psychiatric diseases" was jointly organised by the Society and Pfizer.

A new research programme is to be established with the Research Centre of Clinical Psychology of the Spiru Haret University.

In order to help the police department of Bucharest understand the issues surrounding dementia, the Society established a protocol which results in the police receiving specific training regarding the problems for people with dementia and the measures to be taken to protect them. The first stage is a workshop which will cover medical, social and legal aspects of Alzheimer's disease.

An awareness campaign is being devised which will entail the Society making some short movies with caregivers of people with Alzheimer's disease.



## Other European Organisations

### 22-23 November 2007: Conference discusses quality of nutrition in care homes

The Belgian Food and Health Plan (BFHP) organised an international workshop on the quality of nutrition in care homes, which brought together international experts and policy makers. The aim was to identify ways in which under-nourishment can be tackled.



Sabine Henry, Vice-Chairperson of Alzheimer Europe, participated in the meeting and gave a presentation on the experiences of people with dementia and their carers.

### 9 January 2008: Carers' Interest Group in European Parliament voices disappointment about absence of carers in European health strategy

Members of the Special Interest Group on Carers voiced their disappointment that carers are not referred to in the health strategy of the Directorate General for Health and Consumer Affairs (DG SANCO). They called for various measures to be taken on behalf of carers including:

- Addressing the ever-decreasing 'informal pool' of carers (due to more women entering the workforce);
- Gathering data on the economic value of the contribution by carers;
- Mainstreaming carers issues in all policies;
- Recognition that the frustration and isolation are the same for paid and unpaid carers;
- Defining "informal care";
- Training/retraining of carers and
- Inclusion of stakeholders and grass roots organisations in approach

Robert Madelin, speaking on behalf of DG SANCO, recognised the "need for a better understanding in terms of the issues and interests of carers" and stated that "healthy ageing is a key part of the strategy and carers obviously come into that domain". He invited feedback regarding how the health strategy can work from carers and advocacy groups. Annette Dumas represented Alzheimer Europe at the meeting.

## Science Watch

### November 2007: New study suggests that medication for high blood pressure may reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease



The Icahn Research Institute, at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York has identified the drug, valsartan, as being capable of reducing the development of certain types of cognitive deterioration in mice. This may suggest that some drugs used for high blood pressure may protect against the development of Alzheimer's disease.

However, the studies have yet to be carried out in humans and Professor Pasinetti, who conducted the research, said, "The use of these drugs for their potential anti-Alzheimer's disease role is still highly experimental."

### 8 November 2007: Neurochem stops phase 3 trials of Alzhemed in Europe

The Canadian company, Neurochem, announced, that in the light of the disappointing results of its North American Phase 3 trial, it has decided to stop all European clinical trials of tramiprosate which was to be marketed as Alzhemed.


### 13 November 2007: French "Three City Study" suggests frequent consumption of fruits, vegetables, fish and omega-3 rich oils may decrease the risk of dementia

French researchers "analysed the relationship between dietary patterns and the risk of dementia or Alzheimers disease". In the "Three City Study" carried out in Bordeaux, Dijon and Montpellier, 8085 people without dementia were monitored over a four-year period to see if they developed dementia. 281 incident cases of dementia, of which 183 were AD, were found by an independent committee of neurologists.

In an article published in *Neurology* (2007; 69:1921-1930), the researchers concluded that:

- Daily consumption of fruit and vegetables was associated with a reduced risk of dementia,
- Weekly consumption of fish was associated with a reduced risk of dementia and Alzheimer's disease, but only for people without the ApoE4 gene.

### 15 November 2007: European Medicines Agency publishes public-friendly information on memantine and rivastigmine on their website



On 15 November, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) published public-friendly information on memantine and rivastigmine, the two centrally authorised medicines for Alzheimer's disease and/or dementia with Parkinson's disease in the European Union.

The documents provide a summary of the European Public Assessment Report (EPAR) and explain how the Committee for Medicinal products for Human Use (CHMP) reached their recommendations on how to use the medicines after assessment of the efficacy and safety studies provided by the company.

The publication of these EPAR summaries is part of the drive by EMA for greater transparency and availability of information on medicines for the general public. These summaries are available in all official languages of the European Union, as are the Summary of Product Characteristics (SPC) and Package Leaflets for these products. More detailed information on the scientific discussion of the product is only available in English.

Since EMA only publishes information on centrally authorised products, no information on donepezil (marketed as Aricept) or galantamine (marketed as Reminyl) is available on the EMA website.

### 27 November 2007: Review of trial data shows no evidence of cholinesterase inhibitors delaying the onset of Alzheimer's disease

The National Center for Epidemiology, Surveillance and Health Promotion, National Institute of Health in Rome, and the Section of Epidemiology, Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London reviewed 8 trials which ranged from 24 weeks to a 3 year period. These trials had been conducted to see whether it was possible to delay the progression from mild cognitive impairment (MCI) to Alzheimer's disease.

The researchers found no evidence that cholinesterase inhibitors (ChEIs) are successful in preventing the progression from mild cognitive impairment and in delaying the onset of Alzheimer's disease or dementia.

Nevertheless, the validity of the trial results was also questioned, since MCI has not been clearly defined as a clinical condition.

The researchers therefore concluded that a standardised diagnosis of MCI needs to be established before further trials are conducted.

### 29 November 2007: Hypertension may exacerbate Alzheimer symptoms

New research presented to the Radiological Society of North America suggests that the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease may be exacerbated in those patients with high blood pressure as it causes the blood flow to the brain to be restricted.

The study group was made up of 68 elderly people of which 38 had high blood pressure. 20 of the group had Alzheimer's disease and half of these also had high blood pressure. Blood flow was measured using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and was shown to be lower in all people with high blood pressure but considerably lower in those people with both high blood pressure and Alzheimer's disease.

Consequently co-author of the study, Oscar Lopez, said "The study demonstrates that good vascular health is also good for the brain... Even in people with Alzheimer's disease, it is important to detect and aggressively treat hypertension and also to focus on disease prevention."

We provide full references to all articles on our website

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### 2 December 2007: Five-year study suggests certain drugs given to people with dementia may shorten their lives and worsen verbal and mental abilities

A recent five-year study carried out by Professor Clive Ballard of King's College London, and funded by the Alzheimer's Research Trust, which tracked the use of anti-psychotic medication has concluded that at best their effectiveness is questionable and at worst may even be harmful to patients.

Clive Ballard's study shows that patients die, on average, several months earlier and suffer quicker deterioration of mental and verbal abilities when taking anti-psychotic drugs prescribed for dementia. It was found that whilst the drugs may help patients with severe behavioural symptoms on a short-term basis, there was no evidence of long-term significant benefits.

These findings are supported by earlier work which raised concerns that such drugs may increase the risk of strokes for people with dementia and increase the risk of mortality. In

addition, research published in the New England Journal of Medicine in October 2006 by the University of Southern California Keck School of Medicine also found anti-psychotic drugs to be useless against Alzheimer's symptoms.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines stipulate this medication should only be used as a last resort yet despite this nearly half of dementia patients in care homes are given anti-psychotic medication.

The annual cost of these drugs is £80million and the Alzheimer's Society Chief Executive, Neil Hunt, says "It is absurd that we are wasting millions of pounds prescribing these drugs when this money would be much better spent training health professionals in dementia care" and he welcomes the announcement of the first All Party Parliamentary Group for Dementia of an inquiry into the overuse of this medication.

The five year-study "Neuroleptics: do they accelerate cognitive decline and exacerbate neuronal loss?" is due to be published in 2008.

**6 December 2007: New research on ageing may help us understand Alzheimer's disease**

Research published in Neuron by scientists from Harvard University suggests that memory and learning decline with age may be due to the brain's gradual loss of white matter which is required for communication between one major region of the brain and another.

93 healthy people from 18 to 93 were compared using medical imaging techniques which enabled the researchers to study the effect on communication between the different regions of the brain.

Rebecca Wood, of the Alzheimer's Research Trust, said "if we can better understand the normal effects of the ageing on a brain then we can differentiate it from Alzheimer's and improve diagnosis."

Professor Clive Ballard, of the Alzheimer's Society, agreed saying "understanding how the brain changes as people age is an important part of the fight to protect against cognitive diseases such as dementia." However, he cautioned that additional research is required to "establish if the pattern of change is related to age only or to vascular changes in the brain".

**7 December 2007: New research shows exercise may reduce risk of Alzheimer's disease**

The risk of getting Alzheimer's disease may be reduced by a third with regular exercise

according to research presented to the British Nutrition Foundation's (BNF) 40th Anniversary Conference.



The Conference heard new research findings which showed a "reduced risk of cognitive impairment, dementia or Alzheimer's or some combination of these with improved fitness". A review of 17 prospective and 3 case control studies from Europe and North America was carried out by Professor Ken Fox from Bristol University. The subjects were monitored between a 5 and 21 year-time frame.

These findings are supported in a separate study which linked lack of exercise to depression and dementia.

Although the reasons exercise was shown to be so beneficial remain uncertain, vascular system benefits and chemical releases to the brain were suggested.

The Director General of the BNF, Judy Buttriss, concluded, "as people were living longer, the implications for such studies were enormous".

**10 December 2007: Microsoft funds studies to research memory recall with assistance of new camera**

A camera, called SenseCam, enables people to watch their whole day's events (images, conversations and emotions) condensed into a few minutes' viewing.

It has been developed by Microsoft and the company is currently funding six studies which hope to establish whether the camera can:

- act as a memory aid for patients with a form of epileptic amnesia,
- facilitate recollection in patients with dementia,
- act as a rehabilitation tool for patients with cognitive and memory impairment,
- help patients to reminisce,
- improve memory retention in patients with severe brain injuries,
- lead to general improvements in memory.

These projects will be reviewed in June 2008.

**12 December 2007: New study explores potential link between dietary sugar and Alzheimer's disease**

New research has found that the brains of mice, given the equivalent of five cans of sugary drinks a day, showed twice the amount

of brain deposits (amyloid plaque) associated with Alzheimer's Disease.

The researchers were unable to conclude whether the results arose from higher sugar intake or higher calories but concluded « these data underscore the potential role of dietary sugar in the pathogenesis of Alzheimer's disease and suggest that controlling the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages may be an effective way to curtail the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease.

The study was carried out by the University of Alabama and has been published in the Journal of Biological Chemistry.

**19 December 2007: New research links physical activity with lower risk of vascular dementia**



Research published in Neurology online looked at the effect physical activity had on the risk of development of Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia in the elderly. 749

Italian subjects aged 65 and over were monitored over a four-year period.

It was found that if one exercises for 30 minutes most days, the risk of dementia may be cut by more than one third. This study did not find physical activity to reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease, although it was recognised that more research is required in this area.

Commenting on the study, Dr Susanne Sorensen, Head of Research at the Alzheimer's Society, said: "A healthy heart leads to a healthy brain and this study adds to the growing body of evidence that keeping fit can help reduce your risk of developing dementia.

"The comparison between people with vascular dementia and people with Alzheimer's disease is particularly interesting. More research is now needed to determine whether physical activity can prevent one type of dementia to a greater extent than another."

**7 January 2008: Study shows no benefits for people with Alzheimer's disease using aspirin**



Since some studies showed that aspirin may have some protective role in the prevention of Alzheimer's

disease, the University of Birmingham carried out a trial to assess the benefits of aspirin as a potential treatment for people with Alzheimer's disease.

The study consisted of 310 people with Alzheimer's disease who were randomly assigned to receive aspirin or placebo. Monitoring occurred at 12-week intervals for the first year then annually and measurements were taken regarding cognitive and functional abilities.

The researchers found that in people with "typical Alzheimer's disease", treatment with low-dose aspirin had no worthwhile benefit and increased the risk of serious bleeds.

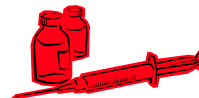
**9 January 2008: Study examines link between lead and formation of plaques associated with Alzheimer's disease**

A study published in the Journal of Neuroscience suggests there may be a link between lead exposure during infancy and the risk in later life of developing the plaques associated with Alzheimer's disease. A group of baby monkeys given formula milk containing lead, had higher levels of Alzheimer-related proteins in their brains after 23 years than the control group (which had received lead-free milk). Nasser Zawia, of the University of Rhode Island, led the research team.

The study has been received with caution by the Alzheimer's Society which pointed out that no link was established between lead exposure and Alzheimer's disease, nor did the study monitor signs of dementia and/or behavioural changes in the monkeys. Susanne Sorensen, Head of Research at the Alzheimer's Society, concludes: "It's likely that a number of lifestyle and environmental factors help cause Alzheimer's disease or speed up its progression in some people [...] but most of these only raise the risk a tiny bit. More research is needed to investigate if early life events can influence brain changes that increase the risk of Alzheimer's disease."

**9 January 2008: Perispinal administering of Etanercept may relieve symptoms of Alzheimer's disease**

Etanercept, a drug used for arthritis, works by "mopping up the surplus of a chemical called TNF-alpha, which plays a central role in Alzheimer's disease."



A report published in the Journal of Neuroinflammation claims that when etanercept was administered by injection into the spine of a patient with late-onset Alzheimer's disease, fast, substantial cognitive improvement resulted. This outcome supports similar conclusions of a 2006, six-month pilot

study. Both studies were led by Edward Tobinick MD from the Department of Medicine, Institute for Neurological Research in Los Angeles.

Sue Griffin, Director of Research at the Donald W Reynolds Institute on Aging at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and at the Geriatric Research and Clinical Centre in the VA Hospital Little Rock, calls for the “medical and scientific communities to investigate further and characterise the physiologic mechanisms involved”.

### January 2008: Pilot study considers how to facilitate discussions for families on end-of-life issues

A pilot study published on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website, found that health care and public health professionals are better able to target approaches to encourage elders and their families to discuss end-of-life preparation and preferences (EOLPP) prior to a crisis, if they first know the obstacles to, and the facilitators for, discussion. The importance of EOLPP discussion was considered, noting that, “It is ironic that, in the hospital setting, families are the players with the least knowledge [...] Yet they are burdened with what seems to them untenable responsibility”. The study assumes that given the right time and right intervention, all elders and adult-children will eventually discuss EOLPP.

The study consisted of 15 elders and 15 younger adults being interviewed about EOLPP. The author of the study was Anne P Glass, Assistant Director, Institute of Gerontology, College of Public Health, University of Georgia Institute of Gerontology, USA.

Five obstacles to discussing EOLPP were found to be :

- A belief in the need to protect the adult-children from the fact of their parents' death
- A trust in others to make the decisions
- That the preferences were unknown
- That the family were rarely together and/or the difficulty in finding the appropriate time to discuss the topic
- An avoidance of discussing death due to fear

However, four facilitators which helped families talk about EOLPP were highlighted :

- An acceptance of death
- An existence of a religious faith or spirituality

- A prior experience with death
- A perception that EOLPP discussion was a way to help the family

The pilot study was subject to limitations :

- The participants had not provided feedback on the study.
- The participants were willing to be interviewed and therefore willing to discuss issues surrounding EOLPP – this may differ from the general public.
- The study assumes that elders and adult-children will eventually discuss EOLPP, but this may not be the case for some categories.
- The sample was made up of American, primarily female and white subjects – this is not a true representative sample of elders.

The paper calls for more research to be carried out in order that interpersonal and societal interventions may be identified.

We provide full references to all articles on our website

[www.alzheimer-europe.org](http://www.alzheimer-europe.org)

### 14 January 2008: Galantamine shows possible benefit in the treatment of primary progressive aphasia

A study carried out by the Cognitive Neurology and Alzheimer Research Centre, USA examined the effect of galantamine on two types of frontotemporal degenerative disease (a) frontotemporal dementia (FTD) and (b) primary progressive aphasia (PPA).

Thirty six people with behavioural variety FTD and primary PPA were treated in an open-label period of 18 weeks and a randomized, placebo-controlled phase for 8 weeks with galantamine.

Although no significant difference in either behaviour or language was found, during the withdrawal phase a treatment effect in the global severity score in favour of those people who had received galantamine was shown in the PPA group. In addition, the language scores of the PPA group who had received galantamine, remained constant whereas the placebo group's scores deteriorated.

The study, led by Andrew Kertesz, concludes, “galantamine is not effective in the behavioural variety of FTD, but a trend of efficacy is shown in the aphasic subgroup which may be clinically significant.”

### 16 January 2008: Study questions role of statins in preventing Alzheimer's disease

Statins, cholesterol-lowering drugs, have been thought to be useful for reducing the risk of Alzheimer's disease. However, research published in *Neurology* suggests that there is no association between the use of statins and the prevention, or rate of progression, of Alzheimer's disease.

The author of the study, Zoe Arvanitakis MD, MS, Associate Professor of the Department of Neurological Science at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago and member of the American Academy of Neurology, acknowledged that the study was "limited in that there were relatively few statin users among those who died [...] future studies will need to look at the possibility of associations of statins with other pathologic changes of Alzheimer's disease not examined in this study."

### 25 January 2008: Researchers test infra red therapy for treatment of Alzheimer's disease



Following a UK study of mice which showed cognitive improvement after being exposed to infra-red light, clinical trials with patients who have age-related memory problems are due to commence in 2008.

The study with the mice entailed daily, six-minute exposure to infra-red light for a ten-day period which resulted in improved cognitive performance of the middle-aged mice. The research, led by Dr Abdel Ennaceur, was conducted by the University of Sunderland, Sunderland Pharmacy School in conjunction with the University of Durham, School of Biological and Biomedical Sciences.

The Alzheimer's Society said "We look forward to further research to determine whether it could help improve cognition in humans."

### 28 January 2008: Study suggests lack of exercise to increase vulnerability to disease as well as ageing process

A study published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* by researchers at King's College, London, UK, has concluded that the process of ageing, evidenced by biological changes, is quicker in those people who have a sedentary lifestyle.



Researchers measured the lengths of telomeres which are DNA that "bookend" our chromosomes, protecting our cells. As we age, these telomeres shorten resulting in our being more susceptible to cell damage, which, in turn, causes disease.

The research suggested that a link may exist between increased physical activity and longer telomere length.

The study consisted of 2401 volunteers, made up from identical twins and fraternal twins aged between 18 and 81, who completed questionnaires covering levels of physical activity, health and lifestyle.

Dr Cherkas, from the Twin Research and Genetic Epidemiology Unit which carried out the research, stated, "overall, the difference in telomere length between the most active subjects and the inactive subjects corresponds to around nine years of ageing."

Dr Jack Guralnik of the US National Institute on Aging, stated that more research is required before a direct link is made between ageing and physical activity, explaining, "Persons who exercise are different from sedentary persons in many ways, and although certain variables were adjusted for in this analysis, many additional factors could be responsible for the biological differences between active and sedentary persons."

### 30 January 2008: Study examines the potential use of deep brain stimulation for memory recall in people with Alzheimer's disease

An initial safety study to see if the memory of six people with early Alzheimer's disease can be helped by the use of deep brain stimulation is being led by Professor Lozano, Professor of Neurosurgery at the Toronto Western Hospital, Canada.

The technique entails placing electrodes in the brain, then stimulating them with electrical impulses and has previously been used to help to treat Parkinson's disease, chronic pain, severe headaches and depression. However, it was following experimental treatment to suppress appetite in an obese patient that doctors unexpectedly found the patient to experience vivid memories. The surprise findings have been published in the *Annals of Neurology*.



Susanne Sorensen, Head of Research at the UK Alzheimer's Society, stated, "The observations of memories recovery made during this attempt to treat extreme obesity, could be just such a

'stroke of luck'. We hope that the findings can be replicated and the knowledge used in the planning of future research that may eventually lead to new treatments."

**7 February 2008: Study finds rapid formation of amyloid plaques in mice**

Amyloid plaques in the brain are associated with Alzheimer's disease. A study on mice, to investigate the relationship between such plaque formation and the changes in local neuritic architecture, has found that the plaques associated with Alzheimer's disease formed over a 24 hour period. Further, the Alzheimer's-associated neuronal changes appear next to the plaque site within 1-2 days of the plaque forming.

The study was carried out by teams from the Alzheimer's Disease Research Laboratory, Massachusetts General Hospital, Massachusetts, USA and the Department of neurology, Washing University School of Medicine, Missouri, USA and led by Bradley T.Hyman.

**16 February 2008: British Government promotes UK-Chinese science collaboration.**

A two-year project has commenced which aims to "promote collaborative UK-Chinese science in the areas of regenerative medicine, stem cells, drug discovery and traditional Chinese medicine".

The British Government has asked Dr Stephen Minger (Director, Stem Cell Biology Laboratory, Wolfson Centre for Age-Related Disease, King's College London) to lead the project which will strengthen the links between the UK and Chinese scientists as well as



offer the opportunity to investigate the use of traditional Chinese medicines in current practice.

**19 February 2008: Computers may support Alzheimer's diagnosis by examining MRI scans**

Research carried out by the Wellcome Trust Centre for Neuroimaging, University College London, UK highlights the possible use of computers in examining and classifying MRI scans in order to improve the early and reliable diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease.

**Dementia in Society**

**9 November 2007: "Away from her" is now available on DVD**



The DVD of the movie "Away from her" was released on 9 November. This film tells the story of a couple, who after a relationship of five decades, have to face separation for the first time when the wife, Fiona (played by Julie Christie), is found to have

Alzheimer' disease. Her forgetfulness seems to worsen when she is institutionalised and transfers her affections from her husband to Aubrey, a wheelchair-bound mute patient in the nursing home.

The film stars Gordon Pinsent, Julie Christie, Michael Murphy and Olympia Dukakis.

**12 December 2007: Bestselling author Terry Pratchett announces he has Alzheimer's**



Terry Pratchett, the bestselling author of the Discworld fantasy and children's books, put an announcement entitled "An Embuggerance" on a friend's website in which he states that he has been diagnosed with a rare form of early onset Alzheimer's.

He goes on to say that he is taking the news "fairly philosophically" and, that it should be interpreted as "I am not dead."

**1 January 2008: Maureen Nolan dies with Alzheimer's disease**

Maureen Nolan, the mother of the Irish singing group "The Nolans" died of Alzheimer's disease. Maureen was instrumental in the formation



of the group in the 1970's, but she did enjoy her own singing career as a soprano at the Royal Irish Academy.

One of her daughters, Coleen, a TV presenter on the talk show, Loose Women, had talked previously of her mother's deterioration due to Alzheimer's disease, has taken time off to grieve for her mother. A spokeswoman explained "Although her mum's death wasn't unexpected, it's still been shocking for her".

**February 2008: German Theatre group launches a short play about Alzheimer's disease**

"Die Akte Auguste D" (the Auguste D file) is a play which combines the human and poetic

sides of Alzheimer's disease. It is based on conversations between Dr. Alzheimer and his patient, details of which were recorded in the medical files. The aim of the play is to raise awareness of Alzheimer's disease by taking away the horror, making the disease more understandable and showing the poetic power of the world of forgetfulness.

One of the authors, Ulrike Hofmann, believes the play to be particularly suited to conferences, symposia and anniversary events as it provides information about the disease in an artistic manner in a short time. The current play lasts 60 minutes but the authors say that this can be adjusted to suit various requirements.

## New Publications

**November 2007: New report on the care of older people highlights the need for action to eradicate bad care practices.**



The care standards watchdog, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) has published "Rights, risks and restraints. An exploration into the use of restraint in the care of older people". The report considers the use of restraint in the care of older people in the context of balancing people's rights to freedom to make choices whilst ensuring that they are safe from harm.

The study found "examples of the use of restraint which were unacceptable and infringe people's human rights to dignity and choice [...] (which) give cause for concern". It also recognised resource constraints which can force decisions which may not be the preferred option. Similar conclusions were reached by the Alzheimer Society's study "Home from Home". Neil Hunt, the Chief Executive of the Alzheimer's Society said of the CSCI report, "This [report] makes tough reading for any involved in or using older people's care services. It should provide a wake up call that we can no longer leave people in the front line of care to cope alone without adequate resources; proper inspection and regulation; and specialist dementia training."

To overcome the problems found, the CSCI recommends

- adherence to Mental Capacity Act requirements when using restraint
- recognition of the fact that difficult decisions regarding restraint should be taken not just by the day-to-day carers, but by all interested parties (care providers, council

commissioners, government, regulators and the public)

- clarification of the term "restraint" as current guidance only refers to physical restraint and the CSCI challenges this by introducing a much wider definition
- adherence to their guiding principles if people are at risk of harm, with the starting point being the human rights of older people
- a reduction in the use of restraint by (i) adopting a clear policy which is clearly understood by all parties, (ii) a greater understanding of each older person so appropriate solutions may be adopted, (iii) greater support for staff in terms of awareness and supervision as well as the management and culture of care in the care home.
- the recognition by councils that they have a responsibility to allow for high quality care with adequate numbers of trained and skilled staff. The CSCI refutes the argument that a lack of resources maybe an excuse for bad practice.

The CSCI plans to take the report forward by

- publishing updated guidance on their website
- holding discussions with providers to ensure issues about restraint are addressed
- continuing to report on the use of restraint

**We provide full references to all articles on our website**

[www.alzheimer-europe.org](http://www.alzheimer-europe.org)

**November 2007: AGE publishes brochure on Healthy Ageing**



AGE has published its Healthy Ageing brochure which highlights examples of good practice, recommendations and policies for healthy ageing. An overview is given of various policies (social, economic, housing, transport, technological, educational) which have an impact on health.



**November 2007: Two new books from the Alzheimer's Society introduce innovative approaches to dementia care.**

New insights are offered into dementia care by the Alzheimer's Society in its new books "Being" and "Evidence-based approaches for improving dementia care in care homes".



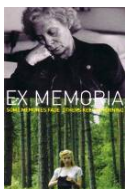
"Being" (£20) by David M Sheard, Director of Dementia Care Matters, highlights how people's feelings must be at the centre of supporting people living with dementia. It illustrates how this person-centred approach can be applied to our personal and work lives but also within the culture of organisations.

The importance of dementia-specific training and support is discussed in "Evidence-based approaches for improving dementia care in care homes" (£40).

This book also gives practical training materials on its accompanying CD. Its author, Jane Fossey, explains, "we are aiming to not only increase people's knowledge about dementia but to help them foster a positive attitude towards people with dementia and implement the skills they need to give good care."

Neil Hunt, Alzheimer's Society Chief Executive says, "These publications will question preconceived ideas about how we support people with dementia and ensure the best quality care."

**November 2007: Film released about care and dementia**



Developed with the UK's Bradford Dementia Group, "Ex Memoria" is a short film which is based on real events. It depicts a day in life of an elderly lady with dementia, Eva, who lives in a care home. The film is accompanied by learning materials from the Bradford Dementia Group.

The Alzheimer's Society (UK) said, "this film should be shown to all carers of people with dementia; including families, care home and hospital staff in all disciplines" and Helen Walker, Dementia Training Manager of Alzheimer's Australia said the film is "thought provoking –real- something that can reach in and touch the hardest heart and give a clearer understanding of living with dementia."

Ex Memoria was nominated for best short film at the 2006 British Independent Film Awards.

The DVD can be purchased online ([www.exmemoriafilm.co.uk](http://www.exmemoriafilm.co.uk))

**December 2007: New book on "Competence Assessment in Dementia"**



Dr. Gabriela Stoppe of the University Psychiatric Hospitals, Basel has written a book on behalf of the European Dementia Consensus Network (EDCON) which gives a comprehensive overview of competence assessment of dementia in Europe. It considers the clinical symptoms of competence, ethical and legal issues, specific areas of competence and illustrates some of the different approaches used within Europe.

**12 December 2007: Mental Health Europe publishes directory of good practices for combating social exclusion of people with mental health problems**



Mental Health Europe (MHE) has published a directory of collected good practices to help combat social exclusion of people with mental health problems on its website.

The directory investigates which factors influence the development of best practices including policy, organisational issues and initiatives.

**13 December 2007: Robert Schuman Foundation publishes 10 easy-to-read fact sheets on the Lisbon Treaty**

Following the signing of the Lisbon Treaty, 10 easy-to-read fact sheets have been published by the Robert Schuman Foundation. Within the context of the Treaty, the areas covered are :

- Sheet 1 : The Treaty's purpose
- Sheet 2 : How the EU will work
- Sheet 3 : Decision making process
- Sheet 4 : Citizens' powers
- Sheet 5 : Responsibility
- Sheet 6 : Freedom, security and justice
- Sheet 7 : Economic issues
- Sheet 8 : Social issues
- Sheet 9 : Enlargement policy
- Sheet 10 : External Action

**31 January 2008: Alzheimer Europe's care survey results published in peer-reviewed scientific journal**

The Dementia Carer's Survey provides insight into carers' needs, differences that exist between countries with regard to dementia care and the level of satisfaction of carers with utilised services.

The information is a product of over one thousand completed questionnaires by carers. It was carried out by the Alzheimer associations in France, Germany, Poland, Spain and Scotland and was developed by Alzheimer Europe in collaboration with H Lundbeck AS.

A summary of the survey has been published in the International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry and highlights the following issues for carers:

- The time spent caring increases with disease severity;
- The most problematic symptoms for carers to cope with were difficulties associated with activities of daily living (such as going to the lavatory or washing), and behaviour symptoms, with the most difficulties being caused by changing levels of memory/confusion;
- The provision of information on all aspects of Alzheimer's disease is felt to be inadequate and
- The level of care for the elderly was considered as good by only 17% of carers

The article concludes by calling for "further development of services and information provision to help carers in their everyday caring".

The author of the article, Jean Georges who is the Executive Director of Alzheimer Europe, commented "Dementia is a major public health problem and the impact on carers' lives is enormous. Nevertheless, carers want to continue caring for their loved ones, but need better information and support. The participating Alzheimer associations hope this publication will help in our campaign to improve dementia services".

**February 2008: UK Alzheimer Society publishes Alzheimer Book of Activities**



The "Alzheimer's Society book of activities" by Sally Knocker, brings together ideas for carers and people with dementia on topics such as:

- Making the most of your local community
- Music and movement
- Food
- Reminiscence
- Gardening
- Games
- Arts and crafts
- Everything to do at home
- Activities for people in the later stages of dementia

**5 February 2008: Alzheimer's Society launches guide to choosing care homes**

The UK Alzheimer's Society has published its guide to choosing a care home entitled, "Putting Care Right". The guide examines ten areas for consideration for people when selecting a care home:

- Dignity and respect
- Friends and family
- Care staff
- Outside space
- Care and treatment
- Bedrooms and living areas
- Toilets
- Activities
- Accessibility
- Location

**11 February 2008: Website of the EU Social Protection and Social Inclusion Process launched**

A new website, which replaces the websites on Social Situation and Demography, Social Protection and Social Inclusion, has been launched by the EU.

The site covers the role played by the EU in coordinating Member States' action to:

- Combat poverty and social exclusion
- Reform social protection systems
- Assess new demographic and social developments

It also gives examples of their work.

## AE Calendar

The following meetings will be attended by representatives of Alzheimer Europe:

Date	Meeting	AE Representative
5-6 March	Management Board of the European Medicines Agency in London, United Kingdom	Georges Jean
10 March	Centre for New Europe Lunch on Health Technology Assessment in Brussels, Belgium	Dumas Annette
11 March	Meeting with representatives of Parliament Magazine in Brussels, Belgium	Georges Jean & Dumas Annette
12 March	INFODAY on the Public Health Programme of the European Commission in Luxembourg, Luxembourg	Georges Jean
17 March	European Commission Conference on Elder Abuse in Brussels, Belgium	Henry Sabine & Dumas Annette
17 March	Meeting of Patient organisations of the Patients' and Consumers' Working Party of the European Medicines Agency in London, United Kingdom	Georges Jean
25 March	Planning Meeting for 19 <sup>th</sup> Alzheimer Europe Conference in Brussels, Belgium	Georges Jean & Dumas Annette
27-29 March	5th International Pharmaco-Economic Conference on Alzheimer's Disease in Newark, USA	Georges Jean
30 March	Alzheimer Europe Palliative Care Expert Group in Brussels, Belgium	
31 March	EuroCode Working Group Meetings in Brussels, Belgium	
1 April	Alzheimer Europe Board in Brussels, Belgium	
1 April	European Alzheimer's Alliance Lunch-debate in Brussels, Belgium	
22-25 May	18 <sup>th</sup> Alzheimer Europe Conference "Breaking Barriers" in Oslo, Norway <a href="http://www.alzheimer-conference2008.org/">http://www.alzheimer-conference2008.org/</a>	



## Future Conferences

Dates	Meeting	Place
27-29 March	5th International PharmacoEconomic Conference on Alzheimer's Disease <a href="http://www.ipecad.org/">http://www.ipecad.org/</a>	Newark, USA
6-8 May	Embracing the challenge: Citizenship and Dementia <a href="http://www.dementiacentreni.org/">http://www.dementiacentreni.org/</a>	Belfast, United Kingdom
29 May-1 June	36 <sup>th</sup> Congress of the European Association of Geriatric Psychiatry <a href="http://www.forumcongress.com/eagp/">http://www.forumcongress.com/eagp/</a>	Kos, Greece
12-16 July	6 <sup>th</sup> FENS Forum of European Neuroscience <a href="http://fens2008.neurosciences.asso.fr/">http://fens2008.neurosciences.asso.fr/</a>	Geneva, Switzerland
26-31 July	11 <sup>th</sup> International Conference on Alzheimer's disease and related disorders <a href="http://www.alz.org/icad/overview.asp">http://www.alz.org/icad/overview.asp</a>	Chicago, USA
1-2 August	3 <sup>rd</sup> IANA Symposium on Alzheimer's and nutrition <a href="http://www.serdi-fr.com/ABQ.htm">http://www.serdi-fr.com/ABQ.htm</a>	Albuquerque, USA
23-26 August	12 <sup>th</sup> Congress of the European Federation of Neurological Societies <a href="http://efns2008.efns.org/">http://efns2008.efns.org/</a>	Madrid, Spain
3-5 September	6 <sup>th</sup> International Conference on Frontotemporal Dementias <a href="http://www.ftd2008.org">www.ftd2008.org</a>	Rotterdam, Netherlands
17-19 September	1 <sup>st</sup> Conference: Clinical Trials on Alzheimer's disease <a href="http://www.ctad.fr/">http://www.ctad.fr/</a>	Montpellier, France

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