

News Release

## **Women contribute over 58 billion hours globally per year to caring for people with dementia, yet receive no wage**

*Alzheimer's Disease International & Karolinska Institutet report shows disproportionate number of women are tasked with the role of informal dementia carer in households globally*

- **Women contribute 71% of informal dementia care hours**
- **Informal dementia care provided is equivalent to 40 million full time workers**
- **Every three seconds someone in the world develops dementia**
- **Dementia became a trillion-dollar disease in 2018**
- **Employers and labour laws need to adapt to increasing numbers of employees with a care giving role.**

**London, 4 July 2018** – Women continue to be disproportionately affected by dementia as they provide 71% of informal dementia care hours globally, according to a report out today from Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI) and the Karolinska Institutet.

The ADI report, *Global estimates of informal care*, from lead author Anders Wimo of the Department of Neurobiology, Care Sciences and Society at the Karolinska Institutet in Sweden, revealed that the annual global number of informal care hours provided to people with dementia living at home was about 82 billion hours. Women contribute 58 billion (71%) of these hours, highlighting the continued disproportionate gender impact of dementia.

Paola Barbarino, CEO of ADI, says, *"This report reveals not only the huge cost to society of providing informal care but the disproportionate impact of dementia on women; as women provide a substantial proportion of informal care. Because of this, women are more likely to reduce their work hours to part time, interrupt careers, or stop work completely, to be able to provide care to someone living with dementia.*

*"Not only is there a gender imbalance in informal dementia care, but more women live with dementia than men, the prevalence is higher for women than for men; women are more at risk of developing dementia and the symptoms they live with are often more severe.*

*"Looking forward, employers and labour laws will need to adapt to increasing numbers of employees with an informal care giving role as the number of people living with dementia increases globally."*

Every three seconds someone develops dementia – yet most people with dementia do not receive a diagnosis or support. Today, almost 50 million people worldwide are living with dementia. As populations continue to age, the prevalence of dementia is expected to increase to 152 million people by 2050.

Cost of care for informal caregivers is undoubtedly a complex area but regardless of how the costs are expressed and calculated, it is obvious that the contribution of informal caregivers is substantial. Most informal caregivers are family members and many caregivers express positive experiences in this situation. However, being an informal caregiver can also be

stressful in terms of coping, depression, impact on social networks and work patterns and morbidity.

Anders Wimo, from Karolinska Institutet says, *“This report reveals the cost of caring for people with dementia is a substantial, yet people with dementia rely a lot on help from an informal carer who receives no paid wage or salary. The major providers of dementia care are the families of the person living with dementia but with different patterns of care in different parts of the world.”*

In ADI's 2015 World Alzheimer Report, it estimated the global societal economic impact of dementia to be \$US818 billion, a figure now (2018) surpassing \$US1 trillion per year.

The *Global estimates of informal care* report presents global estimates of informal care hours, compares the global distribution of caregiver time estimates, with that of costs, and highlights gender patterns in informal caregivers.

ADI chair Glenn Rees says, *“It is high time governments around the world gave a higher priority to training, and to flexible respite and home-based services, to better support the invaluable informal work of carers.”*

**ENDS**

*For further reading:*

[Women and Dementia: A global research review](#) – Alzheimer's Disease International  
[Women and Dementia – A Global Challenge](#) – Global Alzheimer's and Dementia Action Alliance

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### **About Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI)**

ADI is the international federation of 90 Alzheimer associations around the world, in official relations with the World Health Organization. ADI's vision is prevention, care and inclusion today, and cure tomorrow. ADI believes that the key to winning the fight against dementia lies in a unique combination of global solutions and local knowledge. ADI works locally, by empowering Alzheimer associations to promote and offer care and support for persons with dementia and their care partners, while working globally to focus attention on dementia and campaign for policy change. For more information, please visit [www.alz.co.uk](http://www.alz.co.uk).