



NEWSLETTER

May 2011

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Editorial

In May Alzheimer Europe was invited to participate in a new project, NILVAD, which aims to develop a new Alzheimer's disease treatment. I am pleased that the European Commission has shown its support in this project by awarding it EUR 6 million.



We report on the fact that the Walloon region of Belgium has affirmed its commitment to developing an Alzheimer's plan with news that work has commenced on setting up a working group.

This month the German Association has responded to claims that well-known businessman Gunter Sachs may have taken his life due to his having Alzheimer's disease. The Association reaffirms that it is possible to have a life worth living with dementia and also highlights the clear need to address the stigma which can surround this disease.

The media can play a very important role in this and this month a British drama was aired which included a character with Alzheimer's disease. Such portrayals are vital to breaking the taboo surrounding dementia.

In May, I also attended a workshop by the European Foundation Initiative on Dementia on "Framing and reframing dementia". Alzheimer Europe looks forward to collaborating with the participating foundations on improving the image of dementia.

National Alzheimer associations work continuously to break the taboo of dementia by increasing awareness of the disease itself

and the issues which surround it and this month is no exception.

The Greek Alzheimer's association, GAARD, has developed a programme to help children understand dementia more and the Swiss association has been raising awareness of the costs associated with dementia.

In addition to raising awareness, the associations also provide a whole range of services for people with dementia and I am happy to bring news of a new day care centre opening in Turkey, a new project in Italy which aims to help track people with dementia who might get lost and a new project in the UK which aims to identify existing drugs which could be developed into treatments for Alzheimer's disease.

We carry our regular science watch section where we highlight the most recent published research on prevention, risk, diagnosis and treatment of dementia.

You will see from our list of meetings that the staff of Alzheimer Europe has been extremely busy this month attending various events. The 8th Dementia in Europe magazine has now been finalised and is ready for publication in June. We are now involved with seven projects, having recently joined the new NILVAD project.

The organisation of the 21st Alzheimer Europe conference in Warsaw is now well underway and the detailed programme has been published on our website.

Please remember to take advantage of our early bird registration for the Conference in Warsaw. It closes 30 June!

Jean Georges
Executive Director

European Alzheimer's Alliance

10 May 2011: Two MEPs join the European Alzheimer's Alliance



Vilija Blinkeviciute
S&D, Lithuania



Derek Vaughan
S&D, United Kingdom

Two new MEPs have joined the European Alzheimer's Alliance: Vilija Blinkeviciute and Derek Vaughan.

Vilija Blinkeviciute (S&D, Lithuania) sits on the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee. She is a substitute on the Employment and Social Affairs Committee and the Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee.

Ms Blinkeviciute, a former Social Security and Labour Minister in Lithuania, is the first Lithuanian MEP to join the Alliance.

Derek Vaughan (S&D, UK) sits on the Budget Committee. He is a substitute on the Budgetary Control Committee and the Committee on Regional Development.

Currently, the total number of MEPs in the Alliance stands at 52, representing 17 Member States of the European Union and all of the seven political groups in the European Parliament. Alzheimer Europe would like to thank the following MEPs for their continued support of the European Alzheimer's Alliance.

Belgium: Brepoels Frieda (Greens/EFA), Ries Frédérique (ALDE), Staes Bart (Greens/EFA), Sterckx Dirk (ALDE), **Bulgaria:** Parvanova Antonia (ALDE), Cyprus: Triantaphyllides Kyriacos (GUE-NGL), **Czech Republic:** Cabrnoc Milan (ECR), Kohlíček Jaromír (GUE/NGL), Roithova Zuzana (EPP), **Denmark:** Schaldemose Christel (S&D), **Finland:** Jaakonsaari Liisa (S&D), Jäättinenmäki Anneli (ALDE), Pietikäinen Sirpa (EPP), **France:** Audy Jean-Pierre (EPP), De Veyrac Christine (EPP), Griesbeck Nathalie (ALDE), Grossetête Françoise (EPP), Morin-Chartier Elisabeth (EPP), **Germany:** Niebler Angelika (EPP), Roth-Behrendt Dagmar (S&D), Ulmer Thomas (EPP), Weisgerber Anja (EPP), **Greece:** Chountis Nikolaos (GUE-NGL), Koppa Maria Eleni (S&D), Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou Rodi (EPP), **Ireland:** Aylward Liam (ALDE), Childers Nessa (S&D);

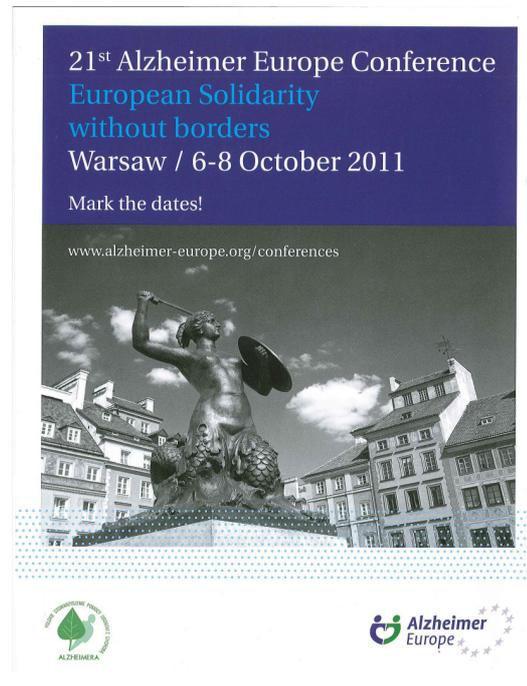
Crowley Brian (ALDE), McGuinness Mairead (EPP), Mitchell Gay (EPP), **Italy:** Panzeri Pier Antonio (S&D), Toia Patrizia (S&D), **Lithuania:** Vilija Blinkeviciute (S&D), **Luxembourg:** Lulling Astrid (EPP), **Netherlands:** De Lange Esther (EPP), van Nistelrooij Lambert (EPP), Wortmann-Kool Corien (EPP), **Portugal:** Coelho Carlos (EPP), Matias Marisa (GUE/NGL), **Romania:** Antonescu Elena Oana (EPP), **Slovakia:** Mikolasik Miroslav (EPP), Zaborska Anna (EPP), **United Kingdom:** Derek Vaughan (S&D), Hall Fiona (ALDE), Lynne Liz (ALDE), McAvan Linda (S&D), Moraes Claude (S&D), Simpson Brian (S&D), Taylor Keith (Greens/EFA), Watson Graham (ALDE), Willmott Glenis (S&D), Yannakoudakis Marina (ECR).

Alzheimer Europe

In this section, we report on our current news, including our projects and events.

31 May 2011: Detailed programme for Alzheimer Europe's 21st Annual Conference in Warsaw now on-line

The detailed programme of Alzheimer Europe's 21st Annual Conference, "European Solidarity Without Borders" is now on-line on the Alzheimer Europe website. The conference will take place from 6-8 October 2011 in Warsaw, Poland. (Please see <http://www.alzheimer-europe.org/EN/Conferences/Warsaw-2011/Detailed-Programme>)



21st Alzheimer Europe Conference
European Solidarity
without borders
Warsaw / 6-8 October 2011
Mark the dates!
www.alzheimer-europe.org/conferences

Alzheimer Europe Networking 2011

On 3 May 2011 (Brussels, Belgium), Annette attended the Mental Health Interest Group meeting on 'Stigma and Depression' in the European Parliament.

On 5 May 2011 (Brussels, Belgium), Annette met Dominic Paine and Jessie Duncan from DODS – Parliament Magazine, to discuss AE activities and opportunities for collaboration.

On 6 May 2011 (Paris, France), Annette met 3 representatives of France Alzheimer: Thierry Jarlet, Elsa Parlanges and Imad Taalabi.

On 9-10 May 2011 (Warsaw, Poland) Gwladys met with representatives of the conference organisers (Binsfeld Live), the hotel (Novotel) and the technical team (Lidex).

On 10, 19 and 25 May (Luxembourg, Luxembourg) Julie met with Jean-Paul Reuland from Binsfeld publications to discuss the next Dementia in Europe magazine

On 17-19 May 2011 (Noordwijkerhout, The Netherlands), Annette attended the second Interlinks Sounding Board conference.

On 11 May 2011 (Stirling, UK), Jean attended a workshop entitled "Framing and reframing of dementia" organised by the European Foundation Initiative on Dementia.

On 18 to 20 May 2011 (Lisbon, Portugal) Dianne attended the 12th congress of the European Association of Palliative Care (EAPC) in Lisbon. On 20 May 2011 (Brussels, Belgium), Annette attended the first meeting of the EU coalition of the We Do project.

On 20 May 2011 (Brussels, Belgium), Annette met V. Blinkeviciute (MEP) and two assistants to discuss the European Alzheimer's Alliance.

On 23 May 2011 (Brussels, Belgium), Annette attended the meeting on the future of EU research organised by Marisa Matias (MEP) in the European Parliament.

On 23 May 2011 (Brussels, Belgium), Annette met with Rosario Zincke Dos Reis from Alzheimer Portugal.

On 25 May 2011 (Luxembourg, Luxembourg) : Annette and Jean met Armelle Desplanques-Leperre, ALCOVE project leader.

On 26 May 2011 (Brussels, Belgium), Annette attended the Patient Stakeholder consultation organised by the JPNP.

On 27 May 2011 (Brussels, Belgium), Annette met Filip Domanski, Health Attaché, Polish EU Representation in Brussels, to discuss the Polish EU Presidency programme.

European developments

Here we report on developments from the European institutions and organisations which may impact people with dementia and/or their carers.

14 April 2011: Market authorisation recommended for Alzheimer drug

The European Medicine Agency's (EMA) Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) has recommended the granting of the marketing authorisation for the Rivastigmine Actavis (1.5mg, 3mg, 4.5mg and 6mg) hard capsules intended for the symptomatic treatment of mild to moderately severe Alzheimer's dementia. Rivastigmine Actavis is a generic drug.

Detailed recommendations for the use of Rivastigmine Actavis will be published in the European Public Assessment Report (EPAR) after the marketing authorisation has been granted by the European Commission.

16 May 2011: Draft proposed priorities for health research available on line

The draft proposed priorities for innovative health research (2012) have been published by the European Commission on-line. Health calls are proposed in four main areas:

- Biotechnology, generic tools and medical technologies for human health
- Translating research for human health (including research on the brain and related diseases, human development and ageing)
- Optimising the delivery of health care to European citizens and
- Other actions across the health theme.

The final version along with the final work programme is due to be published on 20 July 2011.

16 May 2011: The European Medicines Agency publishes qualification opinion of

novel methodologies in the pre-dementia stage of Alzheimer's disease

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) has published on-line its 'qualification opinion of novel methodologies in the pre-dementia stage of Alzheimer's disease: cerebrospinal fluid related biomarkers for drugs affecting amyloid burden'. [In particular, the opinion addresses the question as to whether the use of two cerebral spinal fluid (CSF) related biomarkers (AB1-42 and total tau) are qualified in selecting (ie to categorise) subjects for trials in early Alzheimer's disease as having a high probability of being in the prodromal stage of the disease as defined by the Dubois Criteria (2007)].

18 May 2011: OECD publishes report on long-term care

On 18 May 2011, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) published a report on long-term care (LTC): 'Help wanted? Providing and paying for long-term care'.

This report is the result of a 2-year project conducted between 2009 and 2010 through a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods. It looks at how countries can provide the necessary care for older people, despite the ageing demographic and societal changes.

The topics covered by the report are:

- the growing demand for LTC in the context of ageing societies,
- demographic projections and their implications for LTC labour markets and expenditure,
- the role of family carers and the impact of caring on carers' mental health, poverty and labour market participation; policies to support family carers,
- a review of employment and work conditions in formal LTC labour markets; strategies to attract and retain care workers to the sector,
- an analysis of public and private coverage schemes for LTC in OECD countries,

- financing policies to improve access while keeping costs under control,
- options to improve value for money from LTC services; efficient management of the interface between health and care.

The report is published by OECD and co-financed by the European Commission (DG Health and Consumers).

24 May 2011: European Commission allocates EUR 6 million to clinical trials for Alzheimer's disease

Within the context of the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), the European Commission has awarded EUR 6 million to an international research consortium known as NILVAD.

The aim of the consortium is to develop a new Alzheimer's disease treatment.

NILVAD is comprised of 18 European universities, hospitals and pharmaceutical companies and includes Alzheimer Europe. It is led by Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland. It will conduct clinical trials of NILVADIPINE to determine whether it can improve memory and slow the rate of progression of Alzheimer's disease. It is currently used to treat high blood pressure and has been shown to decrease the risk of developing dementia. The study will be conducted on around 500 people over an 18 month period.

We provide full references to articles on our website. Please visit the Alzheimer Europe website on:

www.alzheimer-europe.org

Policy watch

This section brings updates on developments in the field of dementia at a national level, such as news on national dementia strategies.

19 May 2011: The New Zealand government pledges \$44 million over four years to help address dementia

The 2011 budget of the New Zealand government includes an allocation of NZD 44 million (EUR 25 million) to help to look after people living with dementia. NZD 40 will be used to provide residential dementia services and NZD 4 million will be allocated to additional respite care for full-time carers of people with dementia. In addition, District Health Boards will provide an extra \$60 million over four years - an increase of 1.7 per cent for all aged residential care services.

Health Minister, Tony Ryall, said, "Dementia is a key issue for our country into the future and we are committed to working to ensure people suffering from dementia receive quality services and live as good a life as possible - whether they live at home or in secure residential care."

20 May 2011: Belgium begins work on a national plan and commits to supporting Alzheimer initiatives.

The Walloon Region (the French part of Belgium) has just decided to devote a budget of EUR 250,000 within the framework of the promotion of various actions in the fight against Alzheimer's disease. Therefore, besides the traditional means, the Walloon Region wants to promote research and set up a system to provide patients with care other than that involving medication/drugs. In the same way, an Alzheimer's Centre for Wallonia will be created.

At parliamentary level, on the initiative of the Deputy Chantal Bertouille (MR - Liberal Party), the key stakeholders will be auditioned with the aim of setting up a working group which will be responsible for developing all the legal initiatives and regulations needed to care for people with this condition. For Chantal Bertouille, it's about creating awareness of the implications of this disease which in the coming years will affect from 70,000 to 100,000 people in this area in which there are barely 3.5 million inhabitants.



Members' News

In this section we report on our members' latest initiatives and work.

2 May 2011: First day care centre opens in Istanbul, Turkey



The Alzheimer Society of Turkey opened the first Alzheimer Day Care Centre in Istanbul. The facility is provided by the Sisli Municipality of Istanbul, the running costs will be covered by the Society. Daily service will be provided free of charge to 20-30 people with dementia. Free meals and a transfer service to the Centre will also be provided.



Since the beginning of this year, the Society has been providing homecare services to 25 families free of charge. People with dementia are visited by trained nurses once weekly to check their health status and needs, and to provide help for their care.

3 May 2011: Alzheimer Uniti launches GPS project to help people with dementia

Alzheimer Uniti has launched the "Progetto Diogene" (The Diogenes Project) which is providing global positioning system (GPS) devices to people with dementia who are at risk, on an experimental basis. The device, in the form of a wristwatch or a pendant worn around the neck, continuously monitors the whereabouts of a person each time that they wander out of their usual established perimeter. The trial is in its first 3-month phase and involves twenty people with dementia. With the exception of two



people, who are in nursing homes, all are living at home.

This project has been implemented in order to help address the fact that there has been an increase in the number of missing people over the age of sixty-five in recent years in Italy and that sixteen percent of this group is represented by people with Alzheimer disease (with memory deficits and spatio-temporal disorientation, putting them at risk of getting lost). In addition, at a more advanced stage, people with Alzheimer's disease may also exhibit the phenomenon of wandering. In these two situations described above, the person might walk away from their home, leading to a situation where they might, for example, get injured or where they could fall victim to criminal behaviour. Therefore, Alzheimer Uniti urgently wanted to raise the awareness about this issue and also explore ways to address this situation by promoting research.

The project is sponsored by the Ministry of the Interior through the Commissioner for Missing Persons and supported by the Police and Carabinieri. It was preceded by awareness-raising work in these various institutions and by the training of the technical experts by Alzheimer Uniti. Alzheimer Uniti also selected those people with dementia who were most prone to these problems. The results of this project will be announced in September 2011 during the meeting at the Campidoglio (City Hall) for World Alzheimer's Day.

8 May 2011: German Alzheimer Association releases statement on the death of Günter Sachs



It has been suggested that former German businessman Günter Sachs took his life on 7 May 2011 due to the fear of Alzheimer's disease. The German Alzheimer Association has issued a press release in response to this. It states:

"Germany is home to some 1.2 million people with dementia, of whom about two-thirds have Alzheimer's disease. Most of them are cared for devotedly by family members, living for a long time in the home environment. Even with dementia, a life worth living is possible. This is reported by, amongst others, support groups of people with dementia in an early phase of the disease. "The group is full of potential," said one participant. Even when some capabilities have been lost, you can still manage to be active and find joy with what remains. This was the conclusion of nearly all of the forty people present.



"Of course, the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease at first a shock and the progressive loss of control over one's life causes deep anxiety," said Heike von Lützu-Hohlbein the chair of the national Alzheimer's Association. "The death of Günter Sachs also shows us that we need to do much to break the taboo of this disease and to give support so that people need not worry, in a care situation, and therefore becoming dependent on others." The German Alzheimer Association's 'Alzheimer's Phone' offers a point of



contact for people who may be concerned about Alzheimer's disease. This contact offers preliminary information and support."

Günter Sachs was a German documentary filmmaker, photographer author and industrialist.

We provide full references to articles on our website. Please visit the Alzheimer Europe website on:

www.alzheimer-europe.org

20 May 2011: The Alzheimer's Society has launched its Drug Discovery programme

The aim of the Alzheimer's Society Drug Discovery programme is to identify existing drugs which could be developed as effective treatments for Alzheimer's disease. Scientists have identified six drug candidates which are being subjected to further tests and, of these, three will be tested on people with dementia in clinical trials.

The Chief Executive of the Alzheimer's Society, Jeremy Hughes, said, "There are not enough clinical trials for dementia happening in the UK which is why Alzheimer's Society is responding by launching Drug Discovery. We need £4,000 every day for the next ten years and we are asking all those concerned with dementia to help us raise this. Together we can transform hundreds of thousands of lives."

20 May 2011: Swiss Alzheimer Association publishes updated figures on the costs of dementia and prepares to participate in conference



The Swiss Alzheimer Association has reported that the costs associated with dementia have risen by 11% from 2007-2009. They attribute this partly to an increased number of people with dementia (from 104,000 in 2007 to 107,000 in 2009) and also due to an increase in health costs.

In addition, the Association is preparing to participate in the first-ever conference on dementia organised by the department of health. The conference, entitled "the impact of dementia on the health and social politics in Switzerland" will take place on 29 August 2011. The Swiss Association will make a presentation on the needs of people with dementia and their carers and will take part in a round table discussion.

26 May 2011: Talking with children and adolescents about dementia in Greece

The Greek Association of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders (GAARD) has initiated a new informational programme about dementia targeted at children and adolescents in primary and secondary schools. The sixty minute interactive programme includes a story about two children whose grandmother has dementia and it provides basic information about the disease and possible ways of coping with it.



A spokesperson for the Greek Association said, "Dementia can be a very difficult situation for the whole family and talking to children and young people about it can prove a very challenging task. A child or an adolescent may be afraid to talk to adults about their worries or even embarrassed to show their feelings. Furthermore, there are a lot of children who don't know anything about the disease and how that might affect their families."

The informative material was created by the Greek Association of Alzheimer's Disease and by the Educational Institution of the Greek Ministry of Education. During the first phase of the programme, a workshop was held in the offices of GAARD, where the educational material was presented to almost 70 teachers of primary schools. Psychologists from GAARD have, so far, visited almost 80 schools and their feedback reflects the enthusiasm of the children in participating, interacting, sharing their experiences and asking questions about the disease.

The programme will be further extended from the new semester to other interested schools. The Greek Association believes that informing children and adolescents can better aid families in coping with the disease but also reduce social stigma.

Science Watch

This section has highlights of the most recent published research on dementia, including research on the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of the disease.

3 May 2011: Study examines the association of midlife overweight and obesity with dementia, Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia



A study has found that "both overweight and obesity at midlife independently increase the risk of dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and vascular dementia. Genetic and

early-life environmental factors may contribute to the midlife high adiposity-dementia association."

The study was carried out by Dr Weili Xu, Aging Research Center, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden and published in the journal of Neurology.

3 May 2011: Survey examines family member's perceptions of decision-making and outcomes of feeding tubes

A survey on 486 family members of people with dementia on their perceptions of decision-making and outcomes of feeding tubes found that "important opportunities exist to improve decision-making in feeding tube insertion."

The survey was carried out by Joan M. Teno, Professor of Community Health and Medicine and Associate Medical Director, Home and Hospice Care and colleagues and published in the journal of the American Geriatrics Society.

3 May 2011: Study examines the relationship between alcohol consumption and incident overall dementia



A study suggests that light-to-moderate alcohol consumption is inversely related to incident dementia. The study was conducted on over 3,000 people (aged 75 and over) who were free of dementia

at baseline and monitored after 1.5 years and at 3 years.

The Study was conducted by Siegfried Weyerer, Central Institute of Mental Health, Mannheim, Germany and colleagues and published in the journal Age and Ageing.

4 May 2011: Study suggests damage to some brains may occur 50 years prior to symptoms of Alzheimer's disease appearing

A study on the brains of nearly 400 healthy adults (aged 20 to 30) found that those adults who carried a variant of the CLU gene known as CLU-C showed a "distinct profile of lower white matter integrity that may increase vulnerability to developing the disease (Alzheimer's) later in life."

The study was carried out by Paul M Thompson, University of California (UCLA) and colleagues from the University of Brisbane and the Queensland Institute of Medical Research in Brisbane, Australia. It was published on line in the Journal of Neuroscience.

5 May 2011: Study examines reliability of telephone based assessments

A study has found that telephone-based assessments can reliably identify dementia in an ethnically diverse, older population. By using two telephone based measures [the Telephone Interview for Cognitive Status (TICS) and the Dementia Questionnaire (DQ)] researchers found that it was possible to discriminate between people with dementia from those without and people with mild cognitive impairment from people with dementia. It was not possible to distinguish people with MCI from those with people with normal cognition.

The study was carried out by Jennifer Manly, Columbia University Medical Center, New York, and colleagues and published in the Archives of Neurology.

5 May 2011: Study examines relationship between the level of brain hormone in the blood and Alzheimer's disease

A study has found that a blood test may be a potential biomarker for Alzheimer's disease. Following a process known as oxidation, researchers identified a correlation between the lack of ability to produce the hormone called dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA) and the degree of cognitive impairment found in Alzheimer's disease.

Carried out by Dr Vassilios Papadopoulos and colleagues at the Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC), Canada and the University of California at San Diego, the study was published in the Journal of Alzheimer's disease.

9 May 2011: Analysis of data reveals prevalence rates of dementia in women higher in women 90 years or older

Researchers who evaluated data from nearly 1,300 women found that the prevalence of mild cognitive impairment was higher in women 90 years or older than in women 85 to 89 years. They also found that the prevalence of dementia in women 90 and older was "approximately double that of women ages 85-89 years although the distribution of dementia subtypes was similar across all aged groups. Further, they found that women with dementia were on average older, less likely to have completed high school, more likely to live in a nursing home, more likely to have reported depression, a history of stroke and to have the gene apolipoprotein E ϵ 4 (APOE ϵ 4)".

The analysis was carried out by Kristine Yaffe of the University of California and colleagues and the report was published in the Archives of Neurology.

9 May 2011: Panel analyses studies to find evidence of risk factors for Alzheimer's disease

A panel organised by the US National Institutes of Health analysed studies to determine whether diet, exercise, nutritional supplements and chronic diseases affect a person's risk of getting dementia. The panel found that there is no strong evidence that any dietary or lifestyle changes can reduce the risk and that age is still the most reliable known risk factor for the disease.

Whilst there were studies which suggested certain factors could raise the risk of getting Alzheimer's disease (such as diabetes, high cholesterol and smoking) and some suggesting that some factors could lower the risk (eating a Mediterranean diet, taking folic acid, cutting back on alcohol and keeping brain and body fit), in each case the panel found that the evidence was not strong enough to be certain.

We provide full references to articles on our website. Please visit the Alzheimer Europe website on:

www.alzheimer-europe.org

13 May 2011: Study examines the relationship between delirium and adverse outcomes in people with dementia during hospitalisation

A study found that people with Alzheimer's disease who experienced delirium during hospitalisation faced higher incidence of adverse outcomes (i.e. Cognitive decline, institutionalisation and death).

The research was carried out by the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, VA Boston Healthcare System and the Aging Brain Center at Hebrew SeniorLife and reported on at the American Geriatrics Society Annual Scientific Meeting in Maryland, USA.

13 May 2011: Test to detect early signs of Alzheimer's disease available on-line

Researchers have developed a 'Cognitive Function Test' which aims to ascertain evidence of the risk of an individual (over 50) getting Alzheimer's disease.

The free 15 minute quiz is available on line and was developed by researchers at Oxford University on behalf of Food for the Brain, which is a non-profit organisation aiming to raise awareness of the links between nutrition and mental health. The test does not offer a diagnosis and the researchers encourage people to go to their GP for this.

15 May 2011: Study suggests new potential biomarker

A study investigated brain activation in people with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) as they completed a memory task which assessed their visual perception of the spatial relationships of objects. It was found that when asked to remember the location of low numbers of patterns, the hippocampus area of the brains of people with MCI showed significantly more activation than the control participants. At higher levels of difficulty, people with MCI showed significantly lower levels of activation. The hippocampus is known to be affected early in Alzheimer's disease. Researchers concluded that these findings suggest that people with MCI try to compensate by increasing brain activity but when the task becomes too difficult, the brain activity reduces and that this measure may be useful as a biomarker for the early detection of Alzheimer's disease.

The research was carried out by Barbara Sahakian, University of Cambridge, UK and colleagues and published in the journal Neuropsychologia.

17 May 2011: Study highlights early symptoms of Alzheimer's disease other than memory loss

A study suggests that "more than half of people who develop Alzheimer's disease before age 60 are initially misdiagnosed because they exhibit problems other than the memory loss that doctors normally check for." The study found that initial symptoms of early-onset Alzheimer's disease include changes in behaviour, language and vision.

The study was carried out by Dr. Albert Llado, Hospital Clinic of Barcelona, Spain and colleagues. It was published in the journal Neurology.

Dementia in society

In this section we report on how dementia is portrayed by the general media (for example, on television and in films).

3 May 2011: Alzheimer's disease portrayed in new TV drama



A new British drama, 'Exile', is a psychological thriller. The central character, Tom (played by John Simm), returns to his hometown to be reacquainted with his father and find out really

happened between them years before. The father, played by award-winning actor Jim Broadbent, had been a formidable man but his son now finds him living with Alzheimer's disease and being cared for by Tom's sister.

A review of the drama by James Walton stated: "The script and Jim Broadbent's performance combine to

create a portrait of Alzheimer's that's harrowingly believable."

13 May 2011: Monologues from interviews with people with dementia aired on the radio

The UK radio station 'BBC radio 4' aired a series of monologues called Ancient Mysteries which had been adapted from interviews in which people with dementia recalled their lives.

The programmes were reviewed by Gillian Reynolds who said: "These are the recollections of real people, written down by David Clegg and given voice by actors. Yesterday Richard Briers played a man finding it strange to be in a home and resenting attempts to occupy him with songs and tunes, arts and crafts. He knows he's not well but can't go home. "My brain's packing up and I don't blame it."

"Anne Reid played a woman, seeing some things in vivid detail, a balloon, a silver box, a silver umbrella. Are they scraps of old reality in a life that spans escape from Nazi Germany to growing up in Stepney, or confusions? "Life's very awkward, you know," she says. "The things you remember, the things you don't remember."

"This series was conceived and produced by Charlie Higson and Paul Whitehouse, writers who regularly transmute reality into comedy. Listening to Ancient Mysteries is like opening forbidden doors. Behind them there are strange things, scary, funny, shining, recognisable. It is strong stuff, but beautiful."

Ancient Mysteries was broadcast on 14 May on BBC Radio 4.

19 April 2011: Competitions launched in Germany

Two competitions have been launched in Germany:

- The Hertie Foundation grants in 2011 (amounting to EUR 25,000) have been announced. The award is given for commitment and self-help in the areas of multiple sclerosis and neurodegenerative diseases (including Alzheimer's disease). The closing date is 15 May 2011 and the award ceremony will take place later in the year.
- A call for creative written contributions (short stories, novels, essays, fairy tales and poems) which deal with the self-determination of people with disabilities or mental illness has been launched for the Caritas disability literary contest "Overcoming barriers". The texts must be easily understood and submitted before 30 June 2011.

11 May 2011: Award for contribution to nursing presented to the director of the Dementia Services Development Centre

Professor June Andrews, Director of the Dementia Services Development Centre at the University of Stirling, has won an international award to recognise her contribution to nursing. She was presented with the Robert Tiffany International Award at The Nursing Standard's Nurse Awards 2011 ceremony, which was

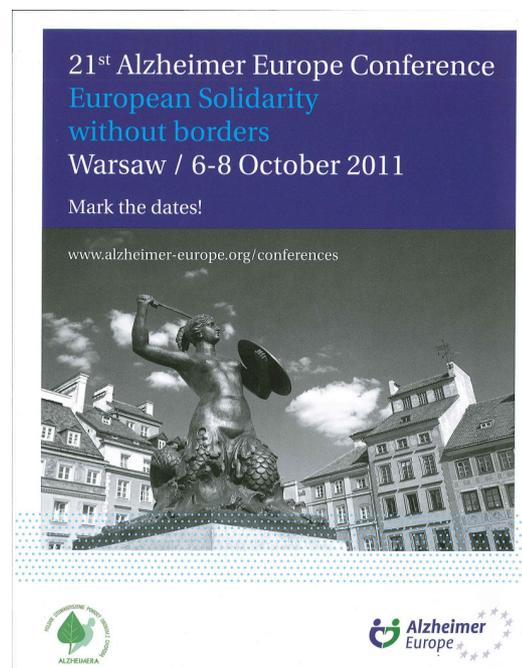
hosted by television celebrity Angela Rippon in London.

June Andrews said; "I am proud to be a nurse, and to be recognised by the nursing profession in this way is very special. Everything I am able to do is a result of the world class team here at the University of Stirling Dementia Centre. I have learned so much from people with dementia and their carers. They need as much help as we can possibly give them."



For the past 20 years Professor Andrews has been promoting evidence-based service improvement, both at home and abroad, and was appointed director of the DSDC in 2005.

She believes that dementia is a treatable condition and that international research on the design of effective services, combined with better nurse and carer training can make a huge difference.



21st Alzheimer Europe Conference
European Solidarity
without borders
Warsaw / 6-8 October 2011
Mark the dates!
www.alzheimer-europe.org/conferences

New resources and publications

By reporting on recently published books, reports and information videos on dementia we hope to offer updates on the current resources available to anyone who is affected by dementia.

12 May 2011: Website criticised for being irresponsible and misleading

The Advertising Standards Agency has declared the website "Vital Life Education", which promotes a book entitled "the Alzheimer's Reversing Breakthrough", as irresponsible and misleading. The website claimed the book had found a cure for Alzheimer's disease. The Agency said that misleading content was particularly targeted at vulnerable individuals such as those with severe Alzheimer's disease.

AE Calendar

Date	Meeting	AE Representative
2-3 June 2011	The first working group on the ethics of dementia research (Luxembourg, Luxembourg)	Dianne and Julie
6 June 2011	Meeting with Janssen (Brussels, Belgium)	Jean
14 June 2011	The Carers Interest Group meeting on the AHAIP in the European Parliament (Brussels, Belgium)	Annette
15 June 2011	EP Intergroup on Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity seminar on 'Improving Medicines for Older People' (Brussels, Belgium)	Annette
17 June 2011	European Parliament Information Seminar on dementia (Dublin, Ireland)	Jean
20 June 2011	Priority setting workshop of the Joint Programming in Neurodegenerative Diseases initiative (Rome, Italy)	Jean
20 June 2011	Informal meeting organised by Françoise Grossetête, MEP to discuss the European Health policy (Brussels, Belgium)	Annette
22 June 2011	Second EP lunch organised by Philippe Juvin, MEP, on clinical trials (Brussels, Belgium)	Annette
26-27 June 2011	AE Board (Brussels, Belgium)	AE Board and Staff
27-28 June 2011	AE Public Affairs Meeting (Brussels, Belgium)	AE member organisations, Board and staff
28 June 2011	AE lunch debate in the European Parliament when the ALCOVE project will be presented (Brussels, Belgium)	Jean, Annette

Future Conferences

Date	Meeting	Place
13-15 June 2011	14th Kuopio Bio-NMR Workshop: MRI of stroke, epilepsy and neurodegenerative diseases and the PredictAD Workshop, http://www.uef.fi/predictad-ws	Kuopio, Finland
22 June 2011	Arts and Dementia: Promoting quality of life of people with dementia and their carers through the creative arts, www.eminence-grise.co.uk	Oxford, UK
1-4 September 2011	Joint Conference on Ageing and Neuro-degeneration presented by the German Center for Neurodegenerative Diseases (DZNE) and the Max Planck Institute for Biology of Ageing (MPI), www.conference-ageing-neurodegeneration.de	Bergisch Gladbach, Germany
14-16 May 2011	27ème Congrès de la Société de Psychogériatrie de langue Française (SPLF) http://www.celsius-net.com/splf/	Toulouse, France
10-13 September 2011	15 th Congress of the European Federation of Neurological Societies (EFNS), www.efns.org/efns2011	Budapest, Hungary
6-8 October 2011	Alzheimer Europe's 21 st Annual Conference "European Solidarity without borders", http://www.alzheimer-europe.org/EN/Conferences/Warsaw-2011	Warsaw, Poland
20-23 October 2011	7 th International Congress on vascular dementia: Facing the challenges of dementia, http://www.cts.vresp.com/c/?KenesInternationalVA/e06f64a56d/5ba2f9d3c6/0d0ca1445f/ref5=db1	Riga, Latvia
3-5 November 2011	4th edition of our Clinical Trials for Alzheimer's Disease CtaD 2011, www.ctad.fr	San Diego, USA
2-4 November 2011	38 th Congress of European Association of Geriatric Psychiatry (EAGP), www.apgerontopsiquiatria.com	Porto, Portugal
8-11 November 2011	Thailand dementia 2011 and 14 th Asia-Pacific Regional Conference of ADI, www.azthaimeting.com	Bangkok, Thailand
9-12 May 2012	12th International Stockholm/Springfield Symposium on Advances in Alzheimer Therapy, www.ad-springfield.com	Stockholm, Sweden



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