



**Alzheimer's  
Australia**  
Living with dementia

Media Release 15 August 2006

## ***No time to lose* in the fight against dementia World Alzheimer's Day 21 September**

Alzheimer's Australia will mark World Alzheimer's Day on 21 September with the launch of a new report from Access Economics at a special community event in Melbourne with the theme *No time to lose*.

*No time to lose* is an urgent call to action by Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI) for communities around the world to improve the care and treatment of people with dementia, to increase funding for medical research and to inform people of every age that there are ways to reduce the risk of dementia.

Leading dementia researcher and former Chairman of ADI Professor Henry Brodaty warns that all countries, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, are facing a dementia epidemic.

"Every seven seconds somewhere in the world there is a new case of dementia," said Professor Brodaty. "This is a staggering statistic and shows how far reaching this condition is. The greatest impact will be in developing nations; it is important to act immediately."

Professor Brodaty said, "It is imperative that governments act immediately to create greater awareness of dementia and develop care services that are responsive to this growing epidemic. There is no time to lose."

National Executive Director of Alzheimer's Australia Glenn Rees said Alzheimer's Australia had commissioned a new report from Access Economics on behalf of the 15 Asia Pacific member organisations of ADI entitled, '*Dementia in the Asia Pacific Region: The Epidemic is Here*'.

The 15 ADI Asia Pacific member organisations are located in Australia, China, TADA Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong SAR, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

The report warns that dementia has the potential to have a devastating impact on the health systems of the Asia-Pacific and the quality of life of their peoples and makes recommendations for action.

It is estimated that the number of people with dementia in the world's most populous region, the Asia-Pacific, will grow almost fivefold by 2050.

Keynote speaker at the Melbourne event and other activities during national Dementia Awareness Month is Professor Marilyn Albert from Johns Hopkins University in the United States. Professor Albert, a neurologist, is one of the world's leading dementia researchers and will be reflecting on what has developed in the 100 years since Alzheimer's disease was first described and whether there will ever be a cure.

The World Alzheimer's Day event will be held at the Melbourne Park Function Centre starting at 10:00am and will include a media conference.

## **About dementia**

Dementia is a general term for more than 70 conditions causing progressive deterioration in thinking, memory and everyday abilities. While it is more common as people age, dementia is not a normal part of ageing.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia.

We are now entering a period of rapid growth in the prevalence of dementia. There are an estimated 212,000 people in Australia with the condition and by 2050 this number is projected to increase to 730,000.

In 2006 it is estimated there will be 54,000 new cases of dementia.

**To arrange media interviews and for further information on Dementia Awareness Month contact:**

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*Alzheimer's Australia gratefully acknowledges the Australian Government as the principal sponsor of Dementia Awareness Month 2006.  
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