



**CONTACT:**

Laura Cilmi, 202.638.8673, lcilmi@alz.org

Alzheimer's Association media line, 312.335.4078; media@alz.org

**Harry Johns, Alzheimer's Association President and CEO, Elected Chair of the World Dementia Council**

*Elected to two-year term to oversee the 24-member charity*

**CHICAGO, IL, December 14, 2017** – The World Dementia Council (WDC) has elected Alzheimer's Association President and Chief Executive Officer Harry Johns as its new Chair. In his role Johns will assume responsibility for leading the organization's work to coordinate global efforts against dementia.

Formed in 2014, the WDC is comprised of 24 senior leaders in research, academia, industry and NGOs from six continents, representing high-, middle-, and low-income countries. The WDC facilitates a global conversation about solutions for dementia. Johns will lead the organization in its work to overcome barriers to research and innovation; increase global investment in dementia; improve treatment and care for people with dementia; and meet the G8 Dementia Summit's commitment to find a cure or a disease-modifying therapy by 2025.

"I am honored my peers have selected me to lead the WDC at this crucial time," said Johns. "Dementia is one of the most urgent global public health challenges of our time. I look forward to working together with all our members and the wider stakeholder community to tackle the global challenge of dementia with ever more vigor."

An estimated 47 million people are living with dementia worldwide, and this number is expected to nearly triple by 2050. The worldwide costs of dementia are \$818 billion and it will become a trillion-dollar disease by 2018. Dementia is particularly challenging for low- and middle-income countries. The WDC is working to ensure all countries are providing support to people who are at risk of dementia, those who are living with the disease and their care partners; and to make sure that every effort is made to combat dementia, including through the development of new, effective treatments.

Johns has been a member of the World Dementia Council since its early days in 2014, following the G8 Dementia Summit in 2013, recognizing a global commitment by governments that more work was needed to accelerate progress toward effective treatments and cures. He will replace Yves Joanette who has served as Chair since February 2016.

In announcing Johns as Chair, and Jeremy Hughes of the U.K.-based Alzheimer's Society as Vice Chair, Joanette said he and current Vice Chair Raj Long, "look forward to working with Harry and Jeremy in the coming months to ensure a smooth transition in the Council's leadership when they take up the baton next Spring."

In May 2017, the WDC published the Global Care and Support Statement (Global Care Statement) on the importance of care and support for those affected by dementia and their families. Developed by the WDC's Care Global Team, led by Johns, the Global Care Statement states that everyone affected by dementia has a human right to receive the highest quality care and support possible; to be treated with dignity; and to be entitled to full and effective participation and inclusion in society.

Johns was appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services in 2011 to serve as a member of the U.S. government's Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services. He also serves as CEO of the Alzheimer's Impact Movement and on the Board of Research!America.

**Alzheimer's Association®**

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and

enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's. For more information, visit [alz.org](http://alz.org).

# # #