



Public Health England

To: All Local Authority Directors of Public Health
All Local Authority Directors of Adult Social Services

Duncan Selbie
Chief Executive
Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
London SE1 8UG
Tel: 020 7654 8090
www.gov.uk/phe

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Dear everyone

Dementia is one of the biggest health and care challenges of our time. Around 670,000 people in England have dementia and this number is set to double in the next 30 years.

You will be aware of the Prime Minister's Challenge on Dementia and the ambition to create 1 million Dementia Friends by 2015.

You may already have received a note from the Local Government Association's Chairman Sir Merrick Cockell outlining his plan to make dementia a personal priority. I am writing to you personally to outline a core part of PHE's dementia plans, which complement and build on the above, and hope that you will be able to give your support to the creation of a social movement of friends for people living with dementia. Local authorities have a key role to play in the creation of this movement and in helping support people with dementia to continue to live safe, dignified and, as far as possible, fulfilling lives.

PHE is working together with the Alzheimer's Society to launch a national multi-media campaign in April 2014, which aims to inspire and support the creation of a movement of friendship in which everyone in society plays a part to help people with dementia live well for longer.

Its objective will be twofold; to create a greater understanding of dementia in the wider community and the small things that can be done to make a real difference to people living with the condition. And to help friends maintain (and sometimes repair) friendships through the course of dementia.

As part of this campaign PHE have developed two short on-line interactive videos highlighting the everyday issues that someone living with dementia might face. One is for "families and friends" the other aimed at the wider "community" including the public sector, business and voluntary sector. Our aim is simple – to inspire people to sign up to be a "dementia friend" by providing an understanding of dementia and the small things they can do to help people with dementia live well.



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Local authorities can participate in this campaign in the following ways:

- i. Externally – by amplifying the campaign messages through local channels to raise awareness of the issue and encourage people in the community to “be a friend” and join the movement
- ii. Internally – by encouraging employees, particularly those that have contact with the public, to undertake the on-line learning module and become a “friend”

Participation in this campaign is easy, just get the most appropriate person in your organisation to contact the PHE partnerships marketing team at partnerships@phe.gov.uk and they can provide everything you need to take part, including promotional materials for your workplace.

I would appreciate it if you could bring this letter to the attention of the chair of your health and wellbeing board and I do hope you are able to support this campaign. By working in partnership, we hope to get everyone in England talking about dementia and create a social movement of friends for people living with dementia.

Best wishes

Yours sincerely

Duncan Selbie
Chief Executive

cc: Sir Merrick Cockell, Chair Local Government Association
All Local Authority Chief Executives