



18th September, 2023,

Deputy Duncan Smith
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Dear Deputy Smith,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following Parliamentary Question, which was submitted to this Department for response.

PQ Number: 38060/23

To ask the Minister for Health to provide the latest figures on the number of people affected by dementia and Alzheimer's and their breakdown according to age groups and severity; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dementia is a chronic, multi-factorial and progressive condition. It is not a disease in itself but an umbrella term for a range of conditions, which cause changes to the brain. There are over 400 subtypes of dementia, with the most common form being Alzheimer's disease, followed by vascular dementia and mixed Alzheimer and vascular dementia. Other common forms of dementia include Dementia with Lewy Bodies (DLB), Fronto Temporal Dementia and less common types such as Huntington's disease, Parkinson's disease dementia and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (O'Shea et al. 2018).

The process for determining dementia severity is complex and requires consideration of many different factors. These factors include the vast array of dementia subtypes outlined above, the various symptoms and functional impairments that each dementia subtype presents with, the fact that each person living with dementia is distinct and as such their presentation is multifactorial and variable, and finally as people age their risk of developing other frailty markers and comorbidities increases. Existing comorbidities and respective medications being used to treat them, can often have a significant impact on the cognitive and functional status of a person with dementia and thus, level of severity. There is currently no national data collection system in place to categorise dementia severity in Ireland.

At present, it is estimated that there are approximately 64,000 people living with dementia in Ireland; this number is expected to rise to 150,000 by 2045. Please see table 1 below which outlines the estimated number of people affected by dementia versus their age.

Table 1: Estimated number of persons living with dementia in Ireland vs Age (Health Atlas Ireland, HSE: data generated 2020)

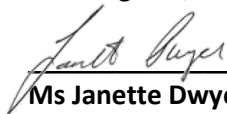
Age	Estimated Prevalence 2020			Estimated Prevalence 2045		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
0-4	0	0	0	0	0	0
5-9	0	0	0	0	0	0
10-14	0	0	0	0	0	0
15-19	0	0	0	0	0	0

20-24	0	0	0	0	0	0
25-29	0	0	0	0	0	0
30-34	299	159	458	376	187	563
35-39	348	189	537	373	188	561
40-44	373	194	567	334	170	504
45-49	348	177	525	315	161	476
50-54	319	161	480	298	154	452
55-59	286	147	433	293	159	452
60-64	255	1180	1,435	336	1,679	2,015
65-69	1,993	1,601	3,594	3,130	2,618	5,748
70-74	2,964	3,687	6,651	4,892	6,214	11,106
75-79	4,576	5,484	10,060	8,824	10,530	19,354
80-84	5,790	8,205	13,995	13,798	18,534	32,332
85+	7,019	18,389	25,408	24,634	51,936	76,570
TOTAL	24,570	39,573	64,143	57,603	92,530	150,133

It should be noted, that the Dementia Model of Care which was published on May 31st, 2023. The model outlines pathways of care for all people living with dementia; from identification of symptoms/signs, through to assessment, diagnosis, and communication of a diagnosis, care planning and post-diagnostic support. The model sets out a range of targets and practice recommendations to advance the treatment, care and support for those living with dementia in Ireland.

The HSE remains committed to the development of services for older people, including dementia-specific care services that support people with dementia to live as independently, and for as possible in their own homes.

Kind Regards,



Ms Janette Dwyer
Assistant National Director,
Services for Older People, Change & Innovation