

## **Special Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe 10-11 May 2022**

### **Statement submitted by Alzheimer's Disease International**

Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI), the global body representing 105 Alzheimer and dementia associations around the world, welcomes the draft resolution and this special session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe relating to health emergencies in Ukraine and neighbouring countries.

The impact of the Russian Federation invasion is being felt across the entire region and we express our support and solidarity with the Ukrainian people, and with the emergency and humanitarian services supporting those who remain in Ukraine and those who have fled.

Older people, especially those living with dementia, of which there are an estimated 651,000 in Ukraine, are amongst those being detrimentally impacted. The nature of dementia means that both those that have fled, and those that are left behind, have complex healthcare needs and we call on governments and support agencies to pay particular attention to this vulnerable constituency.

The staff from the local Alzheimer association fled the country and are now operating remotely from Geneva, with the support of our entire network.

Of particular priority is the need to ensure that vital dementia medicines (not yet on the Essential Medicines List) reach those that remain in Ukraine, including those in long term care settings.

We also know from our contacts in Ukraine, and support agencies on the ground, that families are having to make impossible decisions about relocating people living with dementia and if they are unable to do so, because of the condition, they remain in the country living in fear and confusion due to the constant threat of the war. We call on governments and humanitarian agencies to facilitate and assist with free, safe passage and support for those that want and need to leave.

The situation in Ukraine adds to the challenges to healthcare services already impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which also disproportionately affected older people and those living with dementia.

The long-term impact of this invasion is still to be ascertained but we are acutely aware of the disruption to diagnosis, treatment, care and support of those living with dementia in Ukraine.

We call on the WHO to give emergency consideration to the Ukraine situation at the forthcoming World Health Assembly.