



Diversity and dementia from the perspective of patients' associations

Paola Barbarino, CEO
Alzheimer's Disease International



ADI: Our work



About ADI

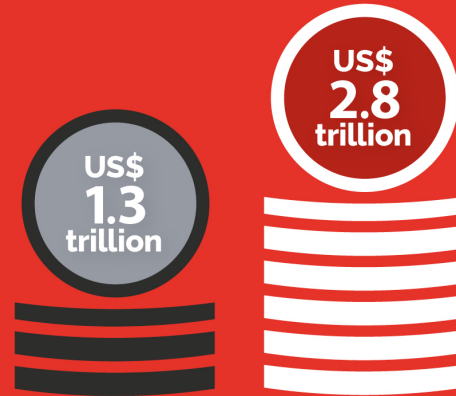
- Established in 1984
- Umbrella organisation of 105 Alzheimer and dementia associations around the world
- We represent our members at the WHO, the UN, OECD and other global and regional bodies
- Promoter of World Alzheimer's Month and Publisher of the World Alzheimer Report and others

Our vision is prevention, care and inclusion today, and cure tomorrow

Global Impact of Dementia

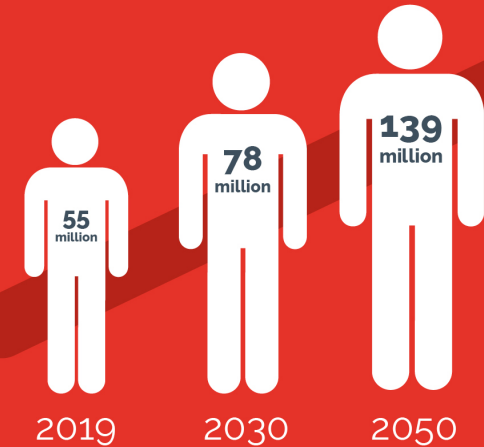


Every 3 seconds
someone in the world
develops dementia



The total estimated annual worldwide
cost of dementia is over US\$ 1.3 trillion.
This figure is forecast to rise to
US\$ 2.8 trillion by 2030*

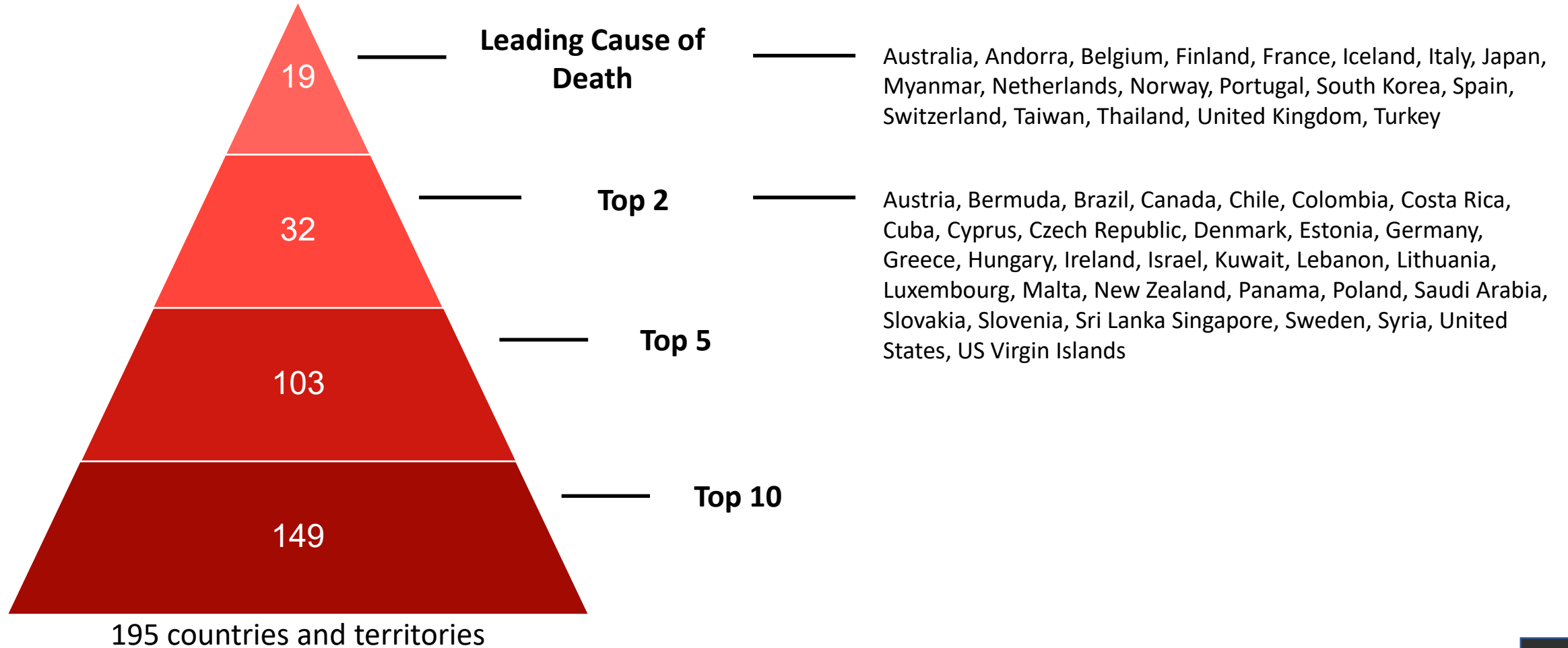
*WHO Global status report 2021



Estimated growth in number of
people with dementia 2019–2050*

*WHO Global status report 2021

Predicted dementia mortality by 2040



Dementia Mortality

- Per the WHO Global Health Observatory in 2021, dementia was the 7th leading cause of death globally.
- In Europe, dementia rose from the 10th leading cause of death in 2000 to the 4th leading cause of death in 2021. (European health report, 2024.)
- In early 2025, ADI published a commentary in Nature Reviews Neurology revealing striking data that dementia will become the 3rd leading cause of death globally by 2040 and among the top 10 causes of death in 166 countries.
- Among all G7 countries, dementia is in the top 6 causes of death.
- Dementia is currently the leading cause of death in Italy.



[nature](#) > [nature reviews neurology](#) > [comment](#) > [article](#)

Comment | Published: 13 January 2025

Dementia is a neglected noncommunicable disease and leading cause of death

[Lewis Arthurton](#), [Paola Barbarino](#) , [Robert Anderson](#), [Ben Schlaepfer](#), [Nazak Salehi](#) & [Martin Knapp](#)

[Nature Reviews Neurology](#) **21**, 63–64 (2025) | [Cite this article](#)

761 Accesses | 21 Altmetric | [Metrics](#)

WHO Global Action Plan



Dementia as a public health priority



Dementia awareness and friendliness



Dementia risk reduction



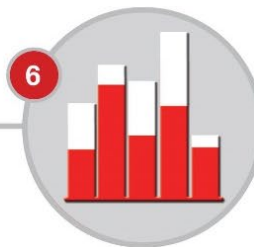
Dementia diagnosis, treatment, care and support



Support for dementia carers



Information systems for dementia



Dementia research and innovation



All 194 Member States committed to implement these seven action areas and a National Dementia Plan by 2025.

Diversity matters

- Diversity and culture have a large impact on the dementia care and support continuum at every stage.
- As a membership organisation with members in over 100 countries, we see these differences appear within diagnosis, post-diagnosis care, long-term care, dementia design, etc.
- A “one size fits all” approach does not work for tackling dementia globally, nor locally, it is imperative that we work within cultural contexts, embrace diversity and face the challenges head on.



Member Case Studies



Zimbabwe Alzheimer's and Related Disorders Association (ZARDA)



- ZARDA hosts a Morning Tea and Sing-along twice a year
 - February 2026 Morning Tea had record number of attendees, including Carers and PLWD.
- The sing-along events focus on uniting people through music, especially older songs that the elderly attendees would enjoy.
- These events bring together people from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities, who may not normally mix socially. The uniting factor is they all have felt the impact of dementia.
 - This is a huge accomplishment as Zimbabwe is still quite polarised, people tend to not mix with other areas of the city and stick to what they know.



“The fact that people attend the Tea and Sing-along prove that dementia does not segregate across racial lines and highlights the power of shared human experience.”

Turkish Alzheimer Association (TAA)

Twining with Germany

- In collaboration with German Alzheimer Association, TAA organized a series of information meetings in Germany to raise awareness about Alzheimer's disease and intensify the dissemination of information within the Turkish community abroad
- The aim of this program is to intensify the exchange of information and experience between countries and to strengthen institutional cooperation in the field of Alzheimer's disease.
- The topics of these meetings have ranged from the importance of early diagnosis, the social and psychological burdens on patients and their families, and current care services. As well, future opportunities for sustainable cooperation between the two countries.



Demenz Selbsthilfe Austria

- LGBTQI+ and gender initiatives
 - The Austrian Ministry of Social Affairs published a report on *Women and Men with Dementia – Recommendations for Person-Centred and Gender-Sensitive Communication*
 - In addition, there are specialist events key diversity topics including one such online workshop titled *Invisible Biographies? LGBTIQ+ Life Realities in the Context of Dementia*
 - Diversity and inclusion is deeply entrenched in the Austrian Dementia Strategy
- Development of ACCESS Dementia – a multilingual platform for resources concerning dementia for PLWD, healthcare professionals, and family caregivers.
- *DigIDe* – digital tool aimed at early detection of dementia for individuals with intellectual disabilities.
- Health System Videos developed by the Austrian government in 11 different languages for immigrant support.





Counterpoint Japan

~Towards a truly inclusive society ~Ageing in different cultures~

<https://counterpointjapan.wixsite.com/my-site-6>



The Japan experience started by caring for prominent British botanist, the late Venetia Stanley-Smith, who had Alzheimers at the end of her life.



Importance of communication in the mother tongue and sharing cultural background



Establishment of Counterpoint Japan in 2022

Mission

A network for the multilingual mutual support of non-Japanese (with the help and contributions of Japanese members) who plan to spend the rest of their lives living in Japan.

Long-term goals

To establish an organization and to provide a multilingual residential group care home for non-Japanese speakers



LFA Kyoto ~Life full of Smiles & Joy~



<https://lfa-kyoto.org/>

Ageing first-generation Koreans in Japan - it became difficult for them to communicate in Japanese

They isolate from Japanese society and even from their non-Korean speaking family member

AAJ trained people in the language, culture, and customs of Korea to serve as home helpers

Elfa: established in 2001

Goal: To live “together”—both with the majority of Japanese society and with the diverse minorities who will continue to live in Japan— by sharing the same time and space.

Multilingual /Cultural
Services

Care Services for the Elderly
& People with Disability

Meal Delivery Services
&
Cafe

Multicultural Education

International Exchange
program

Canada and USA



A photo of Dan Bourrier, who runs the 'Sharing Circle' Support Group for care partners in Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation in Manitoba, Canada.

The group offers care partners the opportunity to meet and learn from others in a safe space where they can share stories, laugh and help each other, with a focus on the unique experiences of caring for someone living with dementia in an Indigenous community.



Latino Representation in Dementia Research event held by the Alzheimer's Association in the USA.

Australia



CARING FOR SPIRIT

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
ONLINE DEMENTIA EDUCATION

[HOME](#) [ABOUT THE PROJECT](#) [LIVING WITH DEMENTIA](#) [RESEARCH AND OTHER RESOURCES](#) [TRAINING MODULES](#) [CONTACT US](#)

Growing old well is something we all want for our communities. What we know, is that growing old well is influenced by many things that happen throughout our lives. Getting dementia can have an effect on our mind, body and spirit.



Dementia and Our Mob

What is dementia and how does it affect our mob?



Healthy Mind, Body and Spirit

There are many reasons why people get dementia. But there are things that we can do that help keep our mind, body and spirit well.



Still Me, Still Deadly: Living with Dementia

When someone has dementia it can seem like the real them has gone missing. But having dementia, or caring for someone with dementia can be easier when we know about the signs and symptoms.

Dementia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Information, advice and support on dementia for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Dementia Australia website may contain images, voices and names of deceased persons.



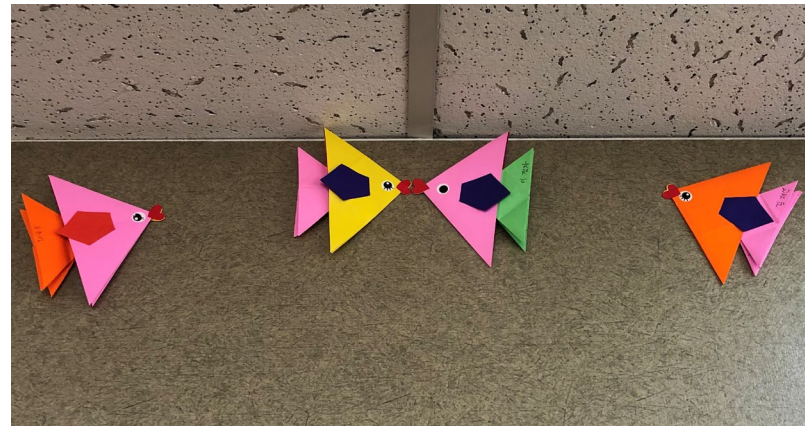
Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on the Dementia Australia website.

Caring for Spirit, an online dementia education platform for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia

Diversity in Care Homes

Republic of Korea/Morocco

- Using arts and crafts to incorporate different cultures in dementia care homes.



Diversity in Hospitals & Care Homes

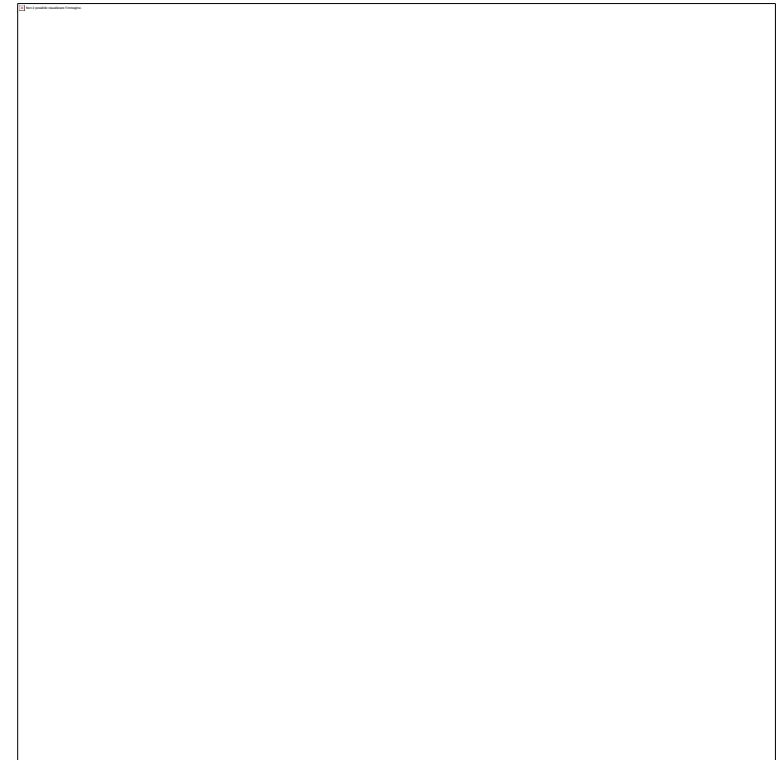
Macau SAR

- Add animal characters around the doctors' offices in hospitals to improve the mood of patients and relax them during their tests.
- Display traditional Western signage (for Portuguese residents living in Macau) to make them more comfortable and remind them of home.



Call to Action

- It is so important to remember that a certain approach to dementia care will not be applicable to all cultural contexts.
- As demonstrated by the ADI members, cross-cultural connections increase our inter-societal bonds, and help us all forge ahead and persevere through the challenges that dementia poses, together.
- Within local and global contexts, it is imperative to prioritise diversity and support within the dementia care and support continuum.





Lyon 2026

37th Global Conference of

**Alzheimer's Disease
International**

Solutions for Today and Tomorrow

Lyon, France 14 -16 April 2026






Alzheimer's Disease International

The global voice on dementia

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