A lot has happened since my first newsletter in May. The first Global Legacy event was held in London, where I outlined the achingly slow progress in dementia research and set out the urgent need to increase investment in order to tackle this growing problem. The World Dementia Council has made significant progress in identifying the underlying barriers to increased research and funding. At our second WDC meeting at the OECD in Paris we set out how we are going to tackle these problems, with three clear work streams and a number of new WDC members to help shape our work. You can read our full communiqué here.
These will focus on:

Integrated Development; optimising the path of medicines from research through to market by reducing barriers & encouraging regulatory flexibility.

Finance and Incentives; looking to increase investment in dementia research and drug development.

Open Science and Big Data; so that information can be shared more widely and there is a collective global effort to find a cure.

In addition, we are considering the growing body of evidence on the link between lifestyle risk factors and dementia, with a view to raising awareness and exploring the science. You can see some examples of recent studies at the top of the page.

With the legacy events on 11th and 12th September, jointly hosted by Canada and France, focusing on greater partnership between academia and industry and in Japan on 6th and 7th November on excellence in prevention and care, there is a real sense of momentum building on our global work.

I hope you find this letter interesting. Please forward it on to colleagues and friends who you think may also like to receive it. Those wishing to be added to our mailing list should email: world.dementia@dh.gsi.gov.uk

My best wishes,

Dr Dennis Gillings CBE
World Dementia Envoy
On 11th and 12th September, experts from across the dementia community are meeting at the second Global Legacy Event in Ottawa, jointly hosted by France and Canada on increased partnership between Academia and Industry. A series of discussions and workshops will focus on:

- Exploring collaborative opportunities for research into novel diagnostic, pre-emptive and therapeutic approaches to dementia, as well as into new models of care, by bringing together academia and industry;
- Providing a better understanding of the impact of the paradigm shift in pharmaceutical research on the development of new drugs against dementia and find appropriate incentives to engage the medical device and IT industries in this field;
- Fostering a collective approach to problem solving through the pooling of resources and the sharing of cohorts, data and best practices.

Speaking at the event, World Dementia Envoy, Dr Dennis Gillings will say:

“With no cure for dementia on the horizon but over 36 million people living with dementia around the world, urgent action is needed. Due to barriers to investment just three drugs have been developed in over 15 years, that’s simply not good enough. Without urgent global action to speed up research and increase investment, the G7 countries will not meet their target date of 2025 to find a disease-modifying therapy or hopefully, cure.”

“With Canada and France leading the way on what is needed to be done, this event shows how academia and industry can work together to produce results. It is only by creative, innovative thinking and sharing data that an effective treatment will be found.”

For more information you can visit the website for the event here.
The first of the Global Legacy Events was held in London on 19th June, with a string of commitments to increase investment and speed up dementia research.

**UK Prime Minister, David Cameron,** committed to new action to accelerate **progress on dementia drugs**, with a focus on patents, funding and patient access to new medicines.

He also wrote to **other G7 leaders** marking the progress made since the 2013 G8 Summit and setting out the need for collective actions that will ensure the work is sustained on a truly global basis, including exploring the possibility of developing a Global Charter.

The UK launched the **world’s biggest study into dementia** led by the **MRC** with major industry partners such as AstraZeneca and GSK.

**Alzheimer’s Research UK** launched a new **£100 million research campaign**; this builds on the announcement made last year by the **Alzheimer’s Society** to spend at least £100 million over the next 10 years on dementia research.
We can’t use the trade-off ‘care today, cure tomorrow’.

We need global collaboration: support from global leaders like OECD and WHO.

It can’t be business as usual, or we won’t find a cure or disease modifying therapy by 2025.

We need to stretch beyond G7 countries, this is a world problem.

Governments need to stretch beyond health ministries, to finance, trade and other departments.
The World Dementia Council held its second meeting at the OECD in Paris on 23rd July, where it discussed a series of reports on finance, data and regulatory barriers.

You can read the full communiqué resulting from the meeting [here](#).

It was decided that the WDC’s ongoing work would be divided into three work streams to be led by: Raj Long, Senior Regulatory Officer, Integrated Development, Global Health at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; JP Morgan; and OECD/WHO.

Progress on all of the work streams is being documented by George Vradenburg, WDC member, Chairman of USAgainstAlzheimer’s and Convener of the Global CEO Initiative on Alzheimer’s.

The three areas are:

**Integr**ed development

- Establish common understanding of state of gaps in current research science working with global experts. Work with leading regulatory agencies in the context of the research gaps to collectively evaluate any potential innovation opportunities in current regulatory pathways.

**Finance**

- Looking to increase investment in dementia research and drug development.

**Open Science and Data**

- So information can be shared more widely and there is a collective global effort to find a cure.
The World Dementia Council has welcomed five new members, each with a wealth of expertise in their field.

**Dr. Daisy Acosta**
Honorary Vice-President
Alzheimer’s Disease International

**Professor Philippe Amouyel**
General Director
Fondation Plan Alzheimer
France

**Professor Joël Ménard**
Professor of Public Health
Faculty of Medicine
Paris-Descartes

**Harry Johns**
President and CEO
Alzheimer’s Association

**Meera Pattabiraman**
Chairperson
Alzheimer’s and Related Disorders Society of India

**Departing WDC member:**

**Yves Leterme** has now left his role as Deputy Secretary General of the OECD and will soon be replaced on the WDC by an OECD colleague.
In July, Dr Gillings met EU Commissioner for Health, Tonio Borg, to discuss the work of the World Dementia Council and its priorities.

Commissioner Borg suggested a joint working group be set up to ensure that the Commission do all it can to support the work of the WDC. The Commissioner was very enthusiastic about the leadership of Prime Minister David Cameron and his initiative the Dementia Challenge, as well as the work of the WDC. He wanted to help maintain continuity of effort at the European Commission level and would encourage a follow up meeting with his successor.

The annual Alzheimer’s Association International Conference was held in Copenhagen on July 15-16, where a series of studies on prevention and risk factors were unveiled.

These included research showing the potential of eye and smell tests to detect Alzheimer’s, the possibility of cataracts surgery slowing cognitive decline, as well as a number of studies showing how lifestyle interventions, exercise for the body and brain as well as reducing risk factors such as high blood pressure, diabetes and cardiovascular disease, can all reduce instances of dementia. For a full list of the reports discussed at the conference, see here.

Addressing the summit, Dr Gillings said:

“Many of these findings support what we’ve long thought: what is good for the heart is good for the head. So just by exercising both bodies and minds, eating well and cutting out smoking and drinking as many as a third of these cases could be prevented.

“I’m extremely keen to do more to raise awareness of this around the world so that people realise that there IS something they can do to cut their risk of getting the disease, in much the same way awareness about the link between sugar consumption and type two diabetes has been rapidly increased in recent years.”
Click [here](#) for more information about the [Dementia Challenge](#) and [here](#) for more information about the [World Dementia Council](#).