

Better together, better remain – for better dementia research and care

As professionals concerned for people with dementia today and dedicated to finding more effective treatment and prevention for dementia tomorrow we value our membership of the European Union and are deeply concerned by the prospect of exit. The European Union has made dementia research a priority and has made substantial funds available for research that is driving faster, more effective clinical trials that are our best hope of finding a disease modifying therapy. With its strong science and translational research base the UK is making a considerable contribution to these studies.

Two of the most important programmes internationally in our field – the European Medical Information Framework (EMIF) and the European Prevention of Alzheimer's Dementia (EPAD) - are funded through the Innovative Medicines Initiative, a funding stream including both EU funding and matching funds from Pharmaceutical industries. EMIF is a programme enabling access to a wide range of data and EPAD harnesses these data to facilitate a standing adaptive trial for prevention of Alzheimer's disease. These two studies alone have a total budget of over €110 million including funding from EU and in-kind resource and direct funding from Pharma. Both are led from, and bring over €17 million in direct funding to the UK.

These are just two examples of UK led European initiatives and we are delighted that there are many others. In the IMI programme of public-private partnerships alone, the UK is a partner in 68 out of 71 funded programmes, with 280 UK entities receiving funding. Of the four IMI programmes that are focused on dementia, 24 UK institutions receive funding and we expect continued UK success in programmes currently under consideration. In addition to IMI, dementia funding across Europe receives strong support from schemes such as the Centres of Excellence Network and the Joint Programme in Neurodegeneration Research. These collaborative programmes bring UK researchers together with the best scientists from across Europe, bring substantial funding to the UK, leverage funds from industry and help to make the UK world leading in research to understand mechanisms and generate therapies for dementia.

This research is dependent on the free movement of scientists across Europe. Our labs are full of brilliant young – and older – researcher workers from across Europe, working effectively alongside their UK trained colleagues. This brings knowledge, skills and a vibrancy and energy to our work that would be missing were we not to be part of the European Union. Instead we fear that the best, brightest and most ambitious of our researchers would head elsewhere to be at the forefront of research and our own researchers and academics would not benefit from working in Europe.

As well as research, our membership in the European Union enhances the patient and carer voice and contributes to best practice. Through our collaboration in Europe we have learnt from clinical service developments, refined tests and diagnostics and through working closely with pan-European

patient organizations, such as Alzheimer Europe, we are able to speak with a clearer, louder and more consistent voice.

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