



Alzheimer's Disease Association debuts new campaign and video to target dementia awareness and stigma in Singapore

The publicity campaign includes a three-part video series showcasing persons with dementia living well #DespiteDementia

Singapore, 26 September 2019 – Singapore's leading charity and social service agency in specialised dementia care, Alzheimer's Disease Association (ADA), has launched a brand-new publicity campaign titled **#DespiteDementia** to reduce social stigma of those living with dementia, families of persons with dementia and the communities around them.

#DespiteDementia also aims to target the current low knowledge levels in Singapore by increasing education and exposure about dementia in the community, and seeks to urge people to focus on what those living with dementia can still do despite living with the condition.

The campaign was officially launched on World's Alzheimer's Day on 21 September, as part of the festivities at an ADA-hosted carnival held at *SCAPE to commemorate World Alzheimer's Month. World Alzheimer's Month is commemorated every September around the world.

The campaign's first year is themed "Live **#DespiteDementia**", which focuses on how persons with dementia and their families need not alter their way and quality of life drastically in spite of the condition and its accompanying struggles. Persons with dementia can live a fulfilling life like everyone else, with the only difference being the extra care or reminders they may need from their support systems – such as family members, carers, neighbours or social service agencies.

This year's "Live **#DespiteDementia**" phase will include a series of three videos, each featuring how persons with dementia and their families go about their daily lives. These videos can be viewed on social media channels such as YouTube and Facebook, as well at ADA events, workshops and community talks throughout the year.

Subsequent phases of the campaign will support different themes centred around persons with dementia and the community.

Screened for the first time on 21 September, the first campaign video is titled "The Power of Family" and follows the lives of the Lim family. Peter Lim, 81, the head of the household, has been living with dementia for the past 10 years. His primary caregiver is his wife Quee Eng, 76, who is herself a breast cancer survivor. They have one child, Daniel, a 39-year-old who recently quit his full-time job to help care for his aged parents.

"Collaborating on this video with ADA was great for the whole family because it allowed my dad to share his personal story with the world. I think in Singapore, people still may not know what dementia is, or how to treat those around you who have dementia. My family and I have been stigmatised such as in restaurants, when my dad takes a bit longer to order his food. It's these kinds of seemingly small acts – the glares, the whispers or the impatience – that we as a community need to fight against," said Daniel.

"ADA has always been dedicated to providing quality services and support for persons with dementia and their caregivers. However, as the Singapore population ages, we feel that it is very important to continue increasing awareness in the community, and to tackle the stigma on dementia," said Mr Jason Foo, Chief Executive Officer of ADA, at the launch of **#DespiteDementia**.



“We hope that with this new national campaign, we can encourage all to start thinking about each person with dementia as unique individuals who can continue to lead normal lives in the community and have the same needs and abilities as you and I,” Mr Foo added.

“The Power of Family” video can be viewed at <http://alz.org.sg/despitedementia/>. The other two videos in the series will be released over the course of the next 12 months.

Behind #DespiteDementia

On 21 September, Alzheimer’s Disease International, the global network of 100 Alzheimer associations from around the world, released the World Alzheimer’s Report 2019 titled [Attitudes to Dementia](#). The report revealed the results of the largest survey ever undertaken to assess attitudes to dementia globally, with responses from almost 70,000 people across 155 countries and territories, including Singapore.

The World Alzheimer’s Report findings also largely mirror a local study done in Singapore in April 2019. Titled [Remember.For.Me](#), the nationwide survey was jointly conducted by ADA and the Singapore Management University (SMU) to shed more light on awareness of the disease and stigma levels in the country.

Global key findings (September 2019)	Singapore key findings (April 2019)
About 66% of people still think that dementia is a normal part of ageing	About 56% of the general public think their knowledge of dementia is low
Around 50% of persons with dementia feel ignored by healthcare professionals such as physicians and nurses	56% of persons with dementia said that others treat them as less competent Half of those with dementia feel ashamed of their condition, with stigma as the main reason
35% of caregivers globally have hidden the diagnosis of a person with dementia	30% of caregivers feel embarrassed while caring for their loved ones with dementia in public

Table 1: Comparison of global key findings against similar Singapore key findings

It is with these global and local findings in mind that the **#DespiteDementia** campaign was devised to target high stigma levels and low awareness, and to overall promote a more dementia inclusive society.

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About Alzheimer's Disease Association

ADA was formed in 1990 because of a growing concern for the needs of persons living with dementia and their caregivers. The Association hopes to reduce stigma by increasing awareness and understanding of dementia; enabling and involving persons living with dementia to be integrated and accepted in the community; and leading in the quality of dementia care services for persons living with dementia and their families. Striving towards a Dementia Inclusive Society through its four strategic service pillars – Centre-Based Care, Caregiver Support, Academy and Community Enabling – ADA aims to advocate and inspire the society to regard and respect persons living with dementia as individuals who can still lead purposeful and meaningful lives. For more information, visit <http://alz.org.sg/>.

About Alzheimer's Disease International

ADI is the international federation of Alzheimer associations around the world, in official relations with the World Health Organization. Each member is the Alzheimer association in their country who support people with dementia and their families. ADI's vision is prevention, care and inclusion today, and cure tomorrow. Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI), headquartered in London, believes that the key to winning the fight against dementia lies in a unique combination of Global Solutions and local knowledge. As such, it works locally, by empowering Alzheimer associations to promote and offer care and support for people with dementia and their carers, while working globally to focus attention on dementia. For more information, visit <https://www.alz.co.uk/>

About #DespiteDementia

#DespiteDementia is an awareness campaign by ADA that aims to tackle the stigma faced by persons living with dementia and caregivers. Based on findings from the first national survey on dementia in Singapore (dubbed: [Remember.For.Me](#)) by Singapore Management University and ADA in April 2019, it highlights a need to continue increasing awareness on dementia and combat the stigma that surrounds it. *#DespiteDementia* reminds all of us to love and learn about persons with dementia and encourage them to live life to the fullest despite living with the condition. For more information, visit <http://alz.org.sg/despitedementia>.

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