News Media Contacts
• Mike Campea, Alzheimer’s Association, mcampea@alz.org, 312.604.1659
  Alzheimer’s Association media line, media@alz.org, 312.335.4078
• Julija Hunter, Weston Brain Institute, Canada, julijahunter@gmail.com, 416-721-8790
• Kirsty Marais, Alzheimer’s Research UK, press@alzheimersresearchuk.org,
  0300 111 5 666 or 07826 559233

ALZHEIMER’S ASSOCIATION, WESTON BRAIN INSTITUTE AND
ALZHEIMER’S RESEARCH UK JOIN FORCES TO FORM INITIATIVE
TO FUND VITAL BRAIN DISEASE RESEARCH

Global collaboration announced as G7 leaders meet to drive progress on dementia

(CHICAGO, TORONTO & LONDON) February 11, 2015 – Three leading research funders from the
UK and North America have joined forces to launch a new global initiative called MEND or, MEchanisms of
cellular death in NeuroDegeneration, with a fund of $1.25 million USD (£820,000/$1.56CDN) for targeted
research into brain diseases that cause dementia, such as Alzheimer’s.

Alzheimer’s Research UK, the Alzheimer’s Association based in the U.S. and the Weston Brain Institute in
Canada, whose participation in MEND is funded by Selfridges, announce the collaboration in response to the
G7 health leaders’ commitment to collectively and significantly increase funding for dementia research, as
announced at their December 2013 summit. G7 health leaders are meeting in Bethesda, Maryland (U.S.), this
week to review progress on their goal to identify a cure or disease-modifying treatment by 2025.

Today, 44 million people are living with dementia worldwide, and that number is set to almost double by
2030 and more than triple by 2050, according to Alzheimer's Disease International: World Alzheimer Report
2014.

MEND demonstrates significant leadership and commitment from nonprofit funders in advancing dementia
research. Its funding will focus on pioneering new projects to understand the causes of brain cell death, a key
goal for research into neurodegenerative diseases including Alzheimer’s, frontotemporal dementia and dementia
with Lewy bodies. These diseases cause a range of debilitating symptoms, including memory loss, difficulty
with language, visual hallucinations or problems with movement, but they all share the same hallmark – the
death of brain cells, including neurons and glia. In recent years there has been significant progress in scientists’
understanding of these diseases, but these advances have also highlighted key areas where there are still gaps in
knowledge. The mechanisms underlying brain cell death not yet fully understood, and the significance and
commonality of this hallmark across multiple brain diseases is a key reason for the MEND initiative. Finding
answers to this important question could provide vital new clues to help fight these diseases.

"We are encouraged by the potential of this unified effort to guide the development of treatments across
several neurodegenerative diseases,” said Maria Carrillo, Ph.D., Chief Science Officer for the Alzheimer’s
Association, the world’s largest nonprofit funder of Alzheimer’s disease research. “This work will not only
accelerate and improve our chances of finding ways to preserve brain health throughout aging, but will
contribute toward achieving the goal of effectively treating Alzheimer's by 2025, as set out by the U.S.
National Plan to Address Alzheimer’s disease.”
“Dementia is a global problem and its solutions will require global collaboration. As charities dedicated to improving people’s lives we have an important role to play in this challenge, and Alzheimer’s Research UK is delighted to be joining forces with other leading organisations from across the world in this united effort. We now understand more than ever about the diseases that cause dementia, but there are still key questions to be answered to help us learn how to fight them. This challenge will help us gain crucial insight to help drive forward efforts to find much-needed new treatments,” said Dr. Eric Karran, Director of Research at Alzheimer’s Research UK, the UK’s leading dementia research charity.

“The Weston Brain Institute was established to be a catalyst in a transformational new chapter in the fight against neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer’s. The global epidemic of dementia underscores the importance of activating international collaborations like MEND, a program aimed at funding a critical knowledge gap,” said W. Galen Weston, Chairman and President of The W. Garfield Weston Foundation, which launched the Weston Brain Institute. “The Institute is pleased to work with its MEND partners, including Selfridges, to accelerate high priority research with the potential to lead to treatments for multiple brain diseases of aging.”

Selfridges’ funds will be managed and allocated by Weston Brain Institute.

MEND is open to applications from scientists around the globe, and researchers will be encouraged to collaborate on projects, sharing knowledge and resources in order to speed up progress. It’s hoped the scheme will also help answer fundamental questions about the similarities and differences between different diseases, such as whether the underlying mechanisms that cause cell death differ from one disease to another, and why each disease affects different types.

About the Alzheimer’s Association
The Alzheimer’s Association is the world’s leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer’s care, support and research. It is the largest nonprofit funder of Alzheimer’s research. The Association’s mission is to eliminate Alzheimer’s disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Its vision is a world without Alzheimer’s. Visit www.alz.org or call 800.272.3900.

About Alzheimer’s Research UK
Alzheimer’s Research UK is the UK's leading charity specialising in finding preventions, treatments and a cure for dementia. We rely on donations to fund our vital dementia research. To help us defeat dementia, donate today by visiting www.alzheimersresearchuk.org or calling 0300 111 5555. We are currently supporting dementia research projects worth over £23 million in leading Universities across the UK. Our Defeat Dementia campaign, a pledge to raise £100 million in five years to grow the research field and accelerate progress towards new treatments and preventions, was announced by the Prime Minister at the G8 legacy event on 19 June 2014.

About the Weston Brain Institute
The Weston Brain Institute is Canada’s largest privately funded national initiative aimed at accelerating breakthrough discoveries for the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases of aging, including Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). The Institute directly supports Canada’s world-class neuroscience research community and focuses on high-risk, high-reward projects, independent of commercial potential, that address the existing translational gap in neurodegenerative research using an innovative fast-track granting model. The Institute is supported by The W. Garfield Weston Foundation. www.westonbraininstitute.com; twitter: @westonbrain #MENDInitiative; facebook: WestonBrainInstitute

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