NEARLY 60% OF PEOPLE WORLDWIDE INCORRECTLY BELIEVE THAT ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE IS A TYPICAL PART OF AGING

71% of People Think That the Government is Responsible for Helping to Find a Cure or Way to Prevent Alzheimer’s Disease

Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness Month Initiates a Global Conversation about the Realities of Alzheimer’s Disease and Urgent Need to Address the Alzheimer’s Crisis

CHICAGO – June 19, 2014 – Alzheimer’s is a fatal, progressive disease impacting at least 44 million people worldwide yet it is widely misunderstood. According to an Alzheimer’s Association® 12-country survey, 59 percent of people surveyed incorrectly believe that Alzheimer’s disease is a typical part of aging and 40 percent of people believe that Alzheimer’s is not fatal. During the inaugural Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness Month this June, the Alzheimer’s Association is initiating a global conversation about the Alzheimer’s crisis and asking people around the world to use their brains to fight the disease.

The survey, conducted in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, Germany, Japan, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom, also found that 37 percent of people surveyed incorrectly believe that you have to have a family history to be at risk for Alzheimer’s disease. The Alzheimer’s Association 2014 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts and Figures report released in March found that nearly a quarter (24%) of Americans hold the same mistaken belief, despite advancing age being the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer’s.

“Alzheimer’s is a devastating disease that slowly robs people of their independence and eventually their lives,” said Harry Johns, president and CEO of the Alzheimer’s Association.

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“Sadly, Alzheimer’s disease knows no bounds. Anyone with a brain is at risk for Alzheimer’s disease, so everyone with a brain should join the fight against it.”

Despite lack of understanding of the severity of Alzheimer’s, it is still one of the most feared diseases. When asked what disease or condition they were most afraid of getting, a quarter of people selected Alzheimer’s (23%), second only to cancer (42%). When asked what disease or condition they were most afraid of a loved one getting, a third of people in Japan (34%), Canada (32%) and the UK (33%) selected Alzheimer’s. When considering health priorities, 96 percent of people surveyed said that being self-sufficient and not depending on others – an inevitability as Alzheimer’s disease progresses – is important. Being able to pay for long-term care (88%) and caring for elderly parents at home (86%) were also important. These feelings are nearly universal with 98 percent of Americans saying that be self-sufficient and not depending on others is important (98%), as is the ability to care for elderly parents at home (91%) and being able to pay for long-term care (89%), according to the Alzheimer’s Association Facts and Figures report.

**Government Responsibility**

Unless something is done to change its course, worldwide prevalence of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias will soar to 76 million by 2030 and threaten economies around the globe. A large majority of people surveyed – 71 percent – say that the government is responsible for helping find a cure or way to prevent Alzheimer’s.

“Despite an obvious and large knowledge gap, people around the world still recognize the threat the Alzheimer’s crisis presents and hold their government accountable for finding a cure and prevention,” said Johns. “In the U.S. and among the G7, federal governments have committed to preventing and effectively treating Alzheimer’s disease by 2025. We must hold our leaders responsible for investing in the research needed to realize that goal.”

**Country and Age Breakdown**

- The mistaken belief that Alzheimer’s is a typical part of aging was highest in India (84%), Saudi Arabia (81%) and China (80%).
- The UK and Mexico had the highest recognition that Alzheimer’s is not a typical part of aging (62%), but 37 percent and 38 percent, respectively, were still misinformed.

- More than half of people surveyed in Germany (56%) and Mexico (55%) and Brazil
(53%) do not realize that Alzheimer’s is fatal.

- While 40 percent were misinformed, more people ages 18-34 (60%), 35-44 (61%), and 45-44 (58%) agreed that Alzheimer’s is a fatal disease than people ages 60+ (53%).

Get Involved

During Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness Month, people around the world will come together on a special day to raise awareness and funds for the fight against Alzheimer’s disease. On June 21, teams will participate in The Longest Day®, a sunrise-to-sunset event to honor the strength, passion and endurance of those living with Alzheimer’s and their caregivers. To start or join a team, visit alz.org/thelongestday.

Other ways to join the fight against Alzheimer’s disease during June include:

- Share the facts – Post and tweet about Alzheimer’s disease and brain risk throughout the month. If you have a brain, you are at risk for Alzheimer’s disease.
- Be social – Turn Facebook purple using an END ALZ graphic as your profile picture.
- Go purple – Wear purple all month but especially on Saturday, June 21, the longest day of the year, to support those facing the devastation of Alzheimer’s disease every day.
- Use your brain to learn about Alzheimer’s disease – Take the Brain Tour at alz.org (available in 15 languages).

For more information on Alzheimer’s disease and the inaugural Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness Month, visit alz.org/abam.

Survey Methodology

The Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness Month International Survey was conducted by Abt SRBI. A total of 6,307 adults age 18+ were surveyed in local languages May 22-June 4, 2014 in three modes:

1) Surveys were conducted online by sampling online panels in Australia (n=500), Brazil (n=501), Canada (n=500), Denmark (n=533), Germany (n=501), Japan (n=500), Mexico (n=502), Saudi Arabia (n=500), and the United Kingdom (n=500). Online panels were sampled in multiple replicates in proportion to the age and gender demographics of the panels, and quota ranges were used to limit skews by age and gender. For these online samples, a credibility interview of plus or minus approximately 5.1 percent is assumed for each country.
2) Surveys were conducted by telephone by Random-Digit-Dialing (RDD) sampling of landline and mobile phone households in China (n=500) and India (n=500) by in-country market research agencies under the direction of Abt SRBI. The survey questions were fielded on an omnibus survey in each country. The final samples are probability-based samples but are demographically skewed. The sample in China is disproportionately urban and over-represents younger adults. The sample in India is almost entirely urban and under represents older adults. The margin of sampling error for each country is plus or minus approximately 4.4 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence interval.

3) The survey in Nigeria (n=500) was conducted face-to-face in respondents’ households by cluster sampling urban populations and randomly selecting households and individuals within households. The survey questions were fielded on an omnibus survey. The resulting interviews comprise a probability-based, representative sample of the urban population of Nigeria. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus approximately 4.4 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence interval.

Alzheimer’s Association
The Alzheimer’s Association is the world’s leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer’s care, support and research. Our 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. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer’s. For more information, visit www.alz.org.

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