



# A Charter of Rights for People with Dementia

## Participation

People with dementia have the right to be provided with accessible information and necessary supports to enable them to exercise their right to participate in decisions and policies which affect them.

People with dementia have the right to live as independently as possible with access to recreational, leisure and cultural life in their community.

People with dementia have the right to full participation in care needs assessment, planning, deciding and arranging their care, support and treatment.

## Accountability

Public and private bodies, voluntary organisations and individuals responsible for the care and treatment of people with dementia should be held accountable for the respect, protection and fulfilment of their human rights and adequate steps should be adopted to ensure this is the case.

## Non-discrimination and equality

People with dementia have the right to be free from discrimination based on any grounds such as age, disability, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, membership of the travelling community, civil and family status.

## Empowerment

People with dementia have the right to access appropriate levels of care providing protection, rehabilitation and support. People with dementia have the right to help to attain and maintain maximum independence, physical, mental, social and vocational ability, and full inclusion and participation in all aspects of life.

People with dementia have the right to access opportunities for community education and lifelong learning.

People with dementia have the right to health and social care services provided by professionals and staff who have had appropriate training on dementia and human rights to ensure the highest quality of service.

## Legality

People with dementia have the right, regardless of diagnosis, to the same civil and legal rights as everyone else. Where someone lacks capacity to take a specific action or decision due to their cognitive condition, anyone acting for them must have regard for assisted decision making (capacity) legislation in Ireland.

Where rights are not observed, the right to seek remedy through effective complaint and appeal procedures.



## A Charter of Rights for People with Dementia

People with dementia have the same human rights as every other citizen. The Alzheimer Society of Ireland and the Irish Dementia Working Group have developed this charter<sup>1</sup> to highlight what rights matter to people with dementia. They are based on internationally agreed human rights and are intended to promote the respect, protection and fulfilment of all human rights of people with dementia.

This is an important step because it is widely recognised that people with dementia face cultural, social and economic barriers to fulfilling their rights.

The Charter<sup>2</sup> can be used as a resource and support to empower people with dementia to exercise their rights in daily life. It is also a tool for those who support them, policy makers and service providers.

This Charter of Rights for People with Dementia also reflects other legal provisions in Irish law such as the Equality legislation, the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) legislation, Health Information Quality Authority (HIQA) standards, and other relevant legislation, that focus on people's rights.

### About The Alzheimer Society of Ireland

A national non-profit organisation, The Alzheimer Society of Ireland is person centred, rights-based and grassroots led, with the voice of the person with dementia and their carer at its core.

### About the Irish Dementia Working Group

The Irish Dementia Working Group is a group of people who have been diagnosed with dementia that meet to share their experiences and advocate on issues that are important to them. The working group is resourced and supported by The Alzheimer Society of Ireland.

<sup>1</sup> This charter is based on the Scottish Charter of Human Rights developed by the **Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Alzheimer's**.

<sup>2</sup> The charter has been informed by the "PANEL" approach to human rights-based policy and practice, endorsed by the United Nations.