**Influencing dementia policy: letter to local government policymakers**

**Introduction**

The letter below has been prepared for tide carers to share with local government policymakers, including local councillors and/or elected mayors, to raise awareness of the Front of Mind campaign and seek a meeting to explore opportunities for local improvements.

We would suggest the following process for tailoring and sending the letter:

* Use the website of your local council to identify relevant local councillors, their preferred salutation, and their email address. Many local council websites will have a ‘Find your councillors’ section
* Copy and paste the contents of the template letter into an email, remembering to include the small print at the bottom and to fill in the highlighted sections
* Use the subject line: *Front of Mind: giving people with dementia and unpaid carers the support they deserve*

If you have any questions on using this letter, please contact the Incisive Health team at frontofmind@incisivehealth.com, or the tide team at carers@tidecarers.org.uk.

**Template letter**

Dear [insert],

As a resident of [insert council name], and an unpaid carer for someone with dementia, I am writing to introduce the Front of Mind campaign. The campaign is a joint effort between tide ([together in dementia everyday](https://www.tide.uk.net/about-us/our-vision-mission/)) – a charity working to improve the lives of people with dementia and their carers – and Roche.

In our area, and across the whole UK, people living with dementia and unpaid carers are facing unfair and unacceptable challenges in accessing the support and care they need from health and social care services. For example, people with dementia often struggle to receive a timely and accurate diagnosis – an issue compounded by COVID-19. This makes it challenging for them to access medical and social interventions that could ease their symptoms, and ultimately, delay the progression of the disease. It also means that their carers are denied access to support and benefits. This is despite the key role that unpaid carers play in providing care – a role which the health and social care system heavily relies on – and the considerable physical and emotional strain that caring can cause.

In [insert area name], I have personally experienced these challenges in my own caring journey. [Insert short personal case study].

The ‘Front of Mind’ campaign aims to highlight the challenges people with dementia face and calls for carers to be part of the national and local policy conversations that will overcome those challenges. While we recognise that local councils across the UK face a range of competing priorities, we believe that more can be done to review and enhance local pathways and policies – in partnership with service users – to ensure that dementia and unpaid care receives appropriate prioritisation.

I would be delighted to have a short meeting with you or your team to talk through our campaign, discuss challenges in the current dementia pathway in our area, and consider what we can do to improve the lives of local people living with dementia and their unpaid carers. Please let me know if this would be of interest.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or would like us to provide a written briefing.

Kind regards,

[insert name]

*Roche Products Ltd has funded Incisive Health Ltd to support together in dementia everyday – tide – in the development of its carers network through training and content creation. Roche has not had direct involvement or editorial control in the development of this content.*

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