



Innovation: Driving Innovation in Dementia Science and Public Policy

About the project

Innovation is reshaping the dementia landscape. Advances in biomarkers, artificial intelligence, precision medicine, and novel therapeutic approaches are accelerating the development of new diagnostics and treatments — and innovation is also transforming brain health approaches and the technologies that support living and care. Progress now depends not only on scientific discovery, but on the systems that enable these advances to move into routine practice: collaboration across research, regulation, and commercial development; incentives that support risk-taking and translation; and public policy that allows adoption at scale. At the same time, innovation must be designed and deployed in ways that improve equity, addressing disparities in access both within and between countries. Innovation can widen gaps — but, if shaped intentionally, it can also reduce them, expanding benefit and opportunity across diverse populations.

Over the year ahead, the World Dementia Council will convene leaders from science, industry, policy, and advocacy to examine how innovation can drive progress in dementia research and care. Through a series of dialogues and expert workshops, the Council will explore what enables innovation to move from discovery to implementation, how policy environments can support responsible adoption, and what approaches can ensure benefit is delivered equitably. Outputs from these meetings will inform a series of papers and a final synthesis published in *Alzheimer's & Dementia*, setting out strategic priorities for accelerating innovation and translating progress into meaningful outcomes for people and societies.

WDC Innovation work

The World Dementia Council has begun this work by examining innovation in diagnostics and treatments. A virtual dialogue considered the introduction of disease-modifying therapies and the early lessons emerging from health systems now preparing for, or beginning, access. The 2025 WDC Summit centred on accelerating innovation, challenging assumptions, and identifying what is needed to move progress into practice. Geographically focused dialogues have explored how innovation is unfolding in different contexts — including a discussion in India, where around nine million people live with dementia, on the implications of emerging diagnostic and treatment pathways for a large and diverse health system, and a dialogue in Latin America on the evolving research and treatment landscape. An expert session on biomarkers brought together scientific and policy leaders to consider advances in detection and the conditions required for responsible adoption. At CTAD 2025, the Council will host an invitation-only exchange lunch bringing together leaders from across research, industry, clinical practice, and policy. The discussion will focus on next-generation therapeutics, biomarkers and diagnostics, and the role of digital health and AI.

What's planned

Over the year ahead, the Council's innovation programme will bring together leaders across science, industry, policy, and care through a series of six virtual dialogues examining diagnostics and treatments, care and technology innovation, and innovation and equity, as well as two Insight Dialogues exploring early lessons from treatment introduction and new technologies for living and care. Alongside these discussions, the Council will host invitation-only exchanges at AD/PD in March 2026 and ahead of the Alzheimer's

Association Research Roundtable in May 2026, providing space for candid strategic conversation. Insights from this programme will feed into the Council's in-person summits in Istanbul, London, and Guangzhou, where global leaders will debate how innovation can be translated into practice, shape system change, and support progress for people living with dementia.

What's planned next

Virtual Dialogues

The Council's innovation programme will focus on three themes, explored across a series of six dialogues. Work on diagnostics and treatments will examine advances in biomarkers, artificial intelligence, and disease-modifying therapies, and what is required to validate, regulate, reimburse, and adopt these tools responsibly. A second theme, care and technology innovation, will consider how new care models, digital platforms, and assistive technologies can be integrated into health and social care systems and scaled in ways that reflect different cultural and system contexts. The third theme, innovation and equity, will look at how innovation can reduce rather than widen disparities, exploring the policy, financing, and delivery pathways needed to ensure progress benefits people across diverse settings. Together, these dialogues will identify the conditions required to accelerate innovation and translate it into real-world impact.

The Council will host two Insight Dialogues. Insight Dialogues are open discussions that introduce emerging developments and examine their implications for practice and progress across regions and health systems. The first dialogue will consider early lessons from the introduction of disease-modifying treatments and evolving diagnostic pathways — including what is working, where challenges are emerging, and how systems can prepare for responsible and equitable adoption. The second will focus on new technologies for living and care, exploring how digital tools, assistive technologies, and new care models may improve support for people living with dementia and their caregivers. Speakers will include experts from both within and beyond the dementia field, drawing on experience from other areas of health innovation and service change to inform how progress can be translated into routine practice.

Convenings and exchanges

The Council will hold a series of invitation-only exchanges alongside major scientific meetings, enabling candid discussion among senior leaders on how to accelerate innovation and translate progress into practice. The Council will hold a lunch at AD/PD (March 2026) and a dinner ahead of the Alzheimer's Association Research Roundtable (May 2026), each focused on specific aspects of driving innovation forward.

Summits

Across the year, the themes explored through dialogues, exchanges, and convenings across all the World Dementia Council projects build a shared understanding that is brought together and debated at in person international summits that bring together global leaders. In 2026, the Satellite Summit in Istanbul will focus on how scientific progress moves into public health delivery. The WDC Summit will focus on the strategic direction of the field: as early detection, prevention, and treatments become possible, the community must rethink how dementia is defined, communicated, and supported, and consider how the field must adapt to drive progress and deliver for patients. The China Summit will focus on clinical implementation. [Read more about what's on the agenda for our summits.](#)

About the World Dementia Council

The World Dementia Council brings together leaders from science, medicine, public policy, industry, and advocacy to drive global progress on dementia. We work as both a convening platform and a strategic think tank, connecting an international community and supporting collaboration across borders and sectors. Our purpose is to help shape the direction of the field and ensure that scientific and clinical progress translates into meaningful change for people and societies.

Our History

The World Dementia Council (WDC) was established by the UK Government following the G8 Dementia Summit held in London in 2013. The Summit set out a shared ambition to accelerate progress through international cooperation, information exchange, and coordinated action. The Council's mission is to support and challenge the global community to deliver on that ambition: to ensure dementia remains a priority for governments, health systems, and research funders; to provide thought leadership on emerging opportunities; and to build the networks required to move from commitments to real-world impact.

Where We Are Today

Today, we are at a pivotal moment in the trajectory of our field. Scientific progress has brought us to an inflection point. In prevention, we now understand that the risk of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias can be meaningfully reduced through public health interventions. In diagnosis and treatment, a revolution in diagnostics is underway that promises to transform how and when people are diagnosed.

With these breakthroughs comes a clear and urgent challenge: ensuring that the benefits of scientific research are translated into real-world impact for people everywhere, regardless of geography. Scientific progress must translate into real-world outcomes. This new phase demands a new approach for our global community. We must think longitudinally, about how to sustain innovation and strengthen global advocacy over time. But we must also consider how global advances are implemented through national and regional policies that deliver measurable outcomes.

The World Dementia Council is working in both domains. Our task now is to convene, to connect, and to help lead a global effort that turns scientific possibility into meaningful change for individuals, families, and societies.

Leadership

The Council is chaired by Dr Joanne Pike, with vice chair Professor Paulo Caramelli, and executive director Shallcross. Together, they guide the strategic direction and day-to-day work of the organisation. The Council itself is made up of a board of global experts drawn from across the dementia field, including leaders from industry, life sciences, venture capital, academia, care, and advocacy, as well as representatives from national governments and international public bodies. The organisation also has a Board of Trustees, who provide oversight and stewardship in support of the Council's mission.

