

16 September 2019

Samuel L. Jackson stars in powerful dementia campaign to challenge misunderstanding of condition

One in five UK adults still incorrectly believe that dementia is an inevitable part of old age¹

- Alzheimer's Research UK's #ShareTheOrange campaign uses an orange to highlight the physical impact on the brain during dementia, helping to address common misconception
- Samuel L. Jackson shares family experience of dementia and calls on the public to support dementia research to slow and stop the condition
- Public urged to watch and share short film, produced by Aardman Animations, to combat fatalism and increase support for life-changing research.
- WATCH HERE: <https://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org/orange/>

Alzheimer's Research UK has joined forces with Samuel L. Jackson to battle the serious misconception that dementia is an inevitability of old age. The '#ShareTheOrange' campaign highlights that *physical* diseases cause dementia, most commonly Alzheimer's using an orange to symbolise the weight of matter lost in the brain as the condition develops.

In the film, Samuel explains: "The damage to a brain with Alzheimer's can leave it weighing 140g less than a healthy one. That's about the weight of an orange...this shows us it is a physical disease..."

Samuel goes on to describe how: "dementia strikes at humanity's most valuable resource, the cells of a human brain...it destroys these precious cells and the links between them."

The #ShareTheOrange film ends with hope as Samuel L. Jackson states: "...with research we know diseases can be slowed, they can be stopped." He calls on the public to share the film to "change the conversation and help Alzheimer's Research UK make these breakthroughs possible for dementia".

Samuel's family has been impacted by Alzheimer's more than most, having had six relatives diagnosed with the disease. He said: "I've been surrounded by Alzheimer's most of my life. My grandfather was my best friend growing up, so it was heart breaking for me to see him not know who

¹ Alzheimer's Research UK Dementia Attitudes Monitor, 2018 - All interviews were carried out as part of Ipsos MORI's regular face-to-face omnibus survey by Ipsos MORI interviewers in participants' homes, using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). A total of 2,361 interviews were conducted with adults aged 15 and over in the UK between 15th June and 5th July 2018. The face-to-face omnibus uses a rigorous sampling method to ensure a good geographical spread, using quotas for gender, age, working status and tenure to ensure that the sample is nationally representative.

I was. The same happened with my mother soon after she was diagnosed. Her mother had it, her brother had it, her sister had it, and so did my aunty on my father's side. It is so cruel having someone who has nurtured you and taken care of you reach a point where they can't even recall your name.

"It's been proven from other diseases throughout history that where there is research, there can be a cure. Where there is research, there is hope. By sharing the knowledge that diseases like Alzheimer's are not simply part and parcel of old age, we have the power to push research forward and put an end to this devastation. We must act now to speed up research towards breakthroughs.

Despite dementia now being the UK's leading cause of death, a recent poll has shown that 22% still incorrectly believe that dementia is an inevitable part of old age²

Hilary Evans, Chief Executive of Alzheimer's Research UK, said:

"Samuel L. Jackson's role in our #ShareTheOrange campaign will put a global spotlight on the seriousness of dementia and the huge impact it has on society. Dementia is caused by physical brain diseases, most commonly Alzheimer's disease, and is not an inevitable part of ageing.

"Research has made major breakthroughs in other disease areas in recent years and we can do the same for the diseases, like Alzheimer's, that cause dementia. Our scientists are already making vital discoveries and with more support for their work, we can turn discoveries into life-changing breakthroughs more quickly."

She added: "Alzheimer's Research UK relies almost entirely on public donations to support its work, and the enduring misconception that dementia is an inevitability hinders our ability to recruit volunteers for research, secure funding and press for further government support for research.

"We're calling on the public to #ShareTheOrange, turn fatalism into hope and make dementia the next big medical success story by backing Alzheimer's Research UK's world-leading research."

Douglas Banks, who is living with a rare variant of Alzheimer's called Posterior Cortical Atrophy (PCA) at the age of 59, said:

² Alzheimer's Research UK Dementia Attitudes Monitor, 2018 - All interviews were carried out as part of Ipsos MORI's regular face-to-face omnibus survey by Ipsos MORI interviewers in participants' homes, using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). A total of 2,361 interviews were conducted with adults aged 15 and over in the UK between 15th June and 5th July 2018. The face-to-face omnibus uses a rigorous sampling method to ensure a good geographical spread, using quotas for gender, age, working status and tenure to ensure that the sample is nationally representative.

“Many people don’t realise that dementia isn’t just an inevitable part of ageing. At the age of 56 I was diagnosed with an early-onset form of dementia, called PCA, I’m now three years into my diagnosis.”

“I believe that Share the Orange has the power to change people’s perceptions of dementia. If people learn just one thing from the film, I hope it is that dementia is caused by brain diseases, which can be tackled with research. I also want people to talk about dementia and not to shy away from it, so it’s great that Share the Orange is all about encouraging understanding.”

Financial services firm Legal & General is supporting the campaign. L&G’s CEO of Later Living Phil Bayliss said:

“Dementia is one of greatest societal and medical challenges facing global health today. Despite affecting 850,000 UK residents, it is a condition which is often seen as taboo and which remains complicated by stigma and public misunderstanding.

“Legal & General is fundamentally committed to tackling all the issues facing those in later life. We are supporting dedicated academic and medical research, innovative campaigns which can change perceptions, and revolutionising the way we age through our unique retirement communities. This is why we are delighted to be sponsoring #ShareTheOrange for a second time.

“Our brain is one of the greatest gifts we are given, and we need to use our brain to save our brain; raising awareness for Alzheimer’s, in the same way as has been done so admirably for Cancer. We hope this creative and thought-provoking movement will continue to spread Alzheimer’s Research UK’s important message and shine a spotlight on a disease which can no longer be ignored.”

The award-winning #ShareTheOrange campaign is in its third chapter for 2019; *Breaking Bad* star Bryan Cranston supported the 2018 campaign, and the campaign debuted in 2016 with backing from former *Doctor Who* star Christopher Eccleston.

Alzheimer’s Research UK is the UK’s leading dementia research charity and last year pledged to commit a landmark £250m of funding towards pioneering medical research into the condition by 2025.

Dementia is the world’s greatest medical challenge, not only for the individuals affected and their families, but for society as a whole. Over 850,000 people in the UK have dementia, and the condition has an economic impact in the UK of over £26bn a year – more than cancer and heart disease combined.

[@alzheimersresearchuk](https://twitter.com/alzheimersresearchuk)
[#ShareTheOrange](https://twitter.com/ShareTheOrange)

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Notes to Editors

For more information about Alzheimer's Research UK, call 0300 111 5555 or visit www.alzheimersresearchuk.org.

For press requests or further information please contact:

- The freuds ARUK team / sharetheorange@freuds.com / 020 3003 6352
 - Alzheimer's Research UK is the UK's leading charity specialising in finding preventions, treatments and a cure for dementia.
 - Our animation "What is dementia?" explains the essentials of dementia and the diseases that cause it www.youtube.com/watch?v=HobxLbPhrMc
 - We rely on donations to fund our vital dementia research. To help make breakthroughs possible, donate today by visiting www.alzheimersresearchuk.org or calling 0300 111 5555.
 - We are currently supporting pioneering dementia research projects worth over £31 million in leading Universities across the UK.
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