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Iceland Foods' fundraising for Alzheimer's Research UK passes £1million

Staff and customers of Iceland Foods have passed the milestone £1 million mark in their fundraising efforts for Alzheimer's Research UK, the company's charity of the year. All the funds raised during the relationship are committed to help research into early-onset Alzheimer's, which affects thousands of younger people across the UK.

Launched in February 2011, the relationship between Iceland and the UK's leading dementia research charity got off to the most auspicious of starts when Iceland's Chief Executive Malcolm Walker climbed 23,000ft to the North Col of Mount Everest in May. This herculean effort inspired Iceland's staff to take on their own fundraising challenges, culminating in a national charity week across 750 UK stores during August.

The charity week saw 22,000 staff take on anything from darts and football tournaments to music nights, pirate-themed parties and a mass climb of Mount Snowdon. Iceland customers donated generously to push to the total over the million pound mark last month.

Malcolm Walker, founder and CEO of Iceland Foods, said:

"I am immensely proud of the inventiveness and commitment that Iceland's people have shown in raising the amazing total of more than a million pounds for Alzheimer's Research UK. This terrible disease has directly affected the families of so many of our staff and customers throughout the country, and they have responded magnificently to the challenge of raising funds to assist the search for a cure. I am delighted that we have been able to donate the money directly to research that should help to make a real difference to those affected by Alzheimer's disease."

Rebecca Wood, Chief Executive of Alzheimer’s Research UK, said:

“Our relationship with Iceland so far has been a whirlwind in which we’ve seen Everest conquered, 22,000 motivated staff fundraising for our research and over a million pounds donated. The money raised makes a major contribution to UK dementia research, supporting studies into early-onset Alzheimer’s which strikes people at such tragically young ages. Research is the only answer to dementia, which affects over 820,000 people in the UK. Iceland’s incredible efforts will take us a long way towards defeating dementia.”

Prof Nick Fox is scientific adviser to Alzheimer’s Research UK, and leader of the UCL Institute of Neurology research team investigating early-onset dementia. Prof Fox’s research will benefit hugely from Iceland’s fundraising efforts. He said:

“Early-onset Alzheimer’s is particularly cruel, affecting people in the 50s, 40s or even 30s at a time when they may still have young families and careers. This incredibly generous support from Iceland is a tremendous boost to our research. It gives us a real opportunity to understand why and how the disease strikes some people decades earlier than others and could provide clues to finding much needed treatments. The findings could ultimately help us tackle Alzheimer’s whenever it develops in life, offering hope to the millions who live with the disease worldwide.”

More information on the Everest team is available from the expedition site www.icelandeverest.org.uk

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For further information, or to speak with Rebecca Wood, Prof Nick Fox, or a person affected by dementia, please contact Tim Parry, Media Officer at Alzheimer’s Research UK on 01223 843304, 07795 823308 or email press@alzheimers-research.org.uk

To speak to Malcolm Walker, please contact Keith Hann, Iceland’s PR adviser, on 01244 842228 / 07831 521870 or email kh@keithhann.com