

# ALONE CELEBRATES WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

ALONE is celebrating the contribution of women to the charity to coincide with International Women's Day. The charity has over 130 volunteers working with older people in the community, 70% of whom are women. These women come from a variety of backgrounds, nationalities and creeds and vary in age from early twenties to over seventy. The charity has a very active Facebook presence to promote awareness of issues affecting older people in need, and women are the main supporters of ALONE on Facebook with 64% of followers female. Women volunteers are being celebrated by ALONE; their contribution to the charity is huge as a result of their commitment and determination which they provide despite often hectic work lives and care roles in the home.

Held annually on 8<sup>th</sup> March, International Women's Day sees thousands of events held throughout the world to inspire women and celebrate achievements. A global web of rich and diverse local activity connects women from all around the world ranging from political rallies, business conferences, government activities and networking events through to local women's craft markets, theatric performances, fashion parades and more. ALONE joins with organisations in Ireland and around the world to celebrate the work of women in the community.

The professions of women volunteers working with ALONE are hugely varied across a wide range of sectors. Their nationalities are not just limited to Irish, and also include Dutch, Spanish, Japanese, English and South Africans, all working to support older people in need of assistance. All ALONE volunteers are fully trained and Garda vetted and they provided an estimated 10,000 hours of time during 2012. ALONE welcomes volunteers from all backgrounds as they are non-denominational, with a central policy to treat everyone in a non-judgemental, transparent and professional manner. The charity recently announced a volunteer recruitment drive as a result of a huge surge in demand for services.

Seán Moynihan, CEO of ALONE commented, "The vital role that women play working and volunteering with ALONE, and other worthy charities, cannot be underestimated. We are hugely grateful for their unique contribution and commitment to ALONE and the older people we work with – we simply couldn't operate without the support of our female volunteers and staff. We encourage all who are interested in volunteering with us to contact us for what we know is a hugely rewarding experience for both older person and volunteer."

ALONE recently announced a huge 25% surge in demand for its services during 2012 following an increase of 50% in demand in 2011. We receive no state funding for day-to-day services. The most frequent request for assistance from callers was in relation to housing issues, with these calls representing double the number of any other issue. The ALONE Befriending Service ensures weekly visits for over 300 older people who would otherwise be

isolated and lonely. ALONE Housing provides maintained homes for life, with dedicated staff support, for 100 older people who would otherwise face homelessness. Our Community Response Service carries out over 30 emergency interventions every month for older people in crisis.