

No one deserves to be lonely at Christmas
ALONE highlight isolation and loneliness this Christmastime

Dublin, 27th November ALONE, the charity that supports older people in need, has today launched a Christmas campaign highlighting the isolation and loneliness of older people around Christmastime. At the launch of the campaign ALONE called on members of the public to reach out to older members of their community who may be isolated or lonely this holiday season.

Sean Moynihan, Chief Executive Officer of ALONE commented, “170,000 older Irish people live alone, which makes them vulnerable to isolation. This risk increases at Christmas when the nights are darker and the days are colder, making older people less inclined to leave their houses. This winter we are reminding the notoriously generous Irish public, to check in on their older neighbours, for a cup of tea, a quick word of kindness or just to see if they need a lift to the shops. People are often surprised to learn that loneliness is actually a greater health risk than smoking or obesity”.

Moynihan continued, “Christmas is busy for everyone and we often feel like there’s not enough time, but for some isolated older people Christmas can bring too much time. Last year hundreds of Irish people wrote Christmas cards to 85 year old James May, an Irish emigrant living in the UK who placed an advert looking for someone to spend Christmas with. The reality is that we all have someone like James living in our local communities and we should all make an effort to show them that someone cares this Christmas, small gestures can really make all the difference to an older person who is isolated and living alone. If you are concerned for anyone in particular you can contact ALONE for advice and support.”

ALONE say that there are a number of ways that the public can help an older person this Christmas some of these are; calling by an older persons house to say hello, ensuring they have enough food, medication and heat, bringing them out for a drive or to a social event and giving them a hand with their shopping.

Sean concluded, “Thankfully most older people will enjoy a happy Christmas surrounded by loved ones, but ALONE is urging the general public to be vigilant for those who are vulnerable. We really hope that the public will support our campaign and our work over Christmas and take it onto themselves to ensure that older people in their community feel cared for. George Hook has very generously lent his support to help us get the message out there that no one deserves to be lonely at Christmas.”

George Hook commented, “I am delighted to help ALONE launch their Christmas campaign this year. ALONE do a great job of looking out for us older folk and I hope that people will take heed and check in on their older neighbours for a natter over a cup of tea.”

At Christmas, ALONE’s activities include; the organisation of 180 volunteers who visit older people each week, a Christmas dinner dance for older people and volunteers, the delivery of hundreds of Christmas hampers to older people in need and a special Christmas Day dinner delivery for a number of older people.

For those who have concerns about their own wellbeing, or the wellbeing of a vulnerable older person in the community, ALONE can be contacted on (01) 679 1032. To make a donation and help aid ALONE's work this Christmastime visit www.alone.ie

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Established in 1977, ALONE is an independent charity that works with the 1 in 5 older people who are homeless, socially isolated, living in deprivation or in crisis. We provide Supportive Housing, Befriending, Community Response and Campaigning services to hundreds of older people every week. We receive no Government funding for our day-to-day activities so we rely solely on the generosity of the public to continue our work. ALONE's services are quality approved and are delivered 365 days a year.

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