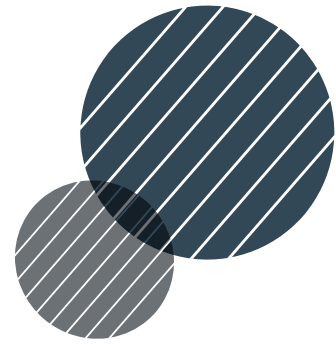


ALONE Research, Evaluation and Policy Strategy

2025-2027



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Foreword



It is with great pride that I introduce ALONE's new Research, Evaluation, and Policy Strategy 2025–2027. Over the past few years, we have made significant investments in research, evaluation, and policy, strengthening our ability to make data-driven decisions that improve the lives of older people. With this new strategy, we are committed to further expanding our efforts, ensuring that our work continues to drive meaningful change in health and social for older people.

This ambitious strategy sets the foundation for ALONE to continue leading the sector in research, evaluation, and policy development. By prioritising the generation and application of knowledge, we aim to not only improve our own services but also to contribute to the broader national and international discourse on ageing. Through our Knowledge Hub, we will share our insights and findings, ensuring that best practices and innovative solutions are accessible to all.

A core principle of this strategy is to implement improvements that directly impact older people. We believe that this will be achieved through stronger partnerships, rigorous evaluation, and a deepened understanding of the challenges facing our ageing population.

The development of this strategy has been a collaborative effort, and I extend my sincere gratitude to our dedicated team, stakeholders, and the older people who have shared their experiences and insights. Their contributions ensure that ALONE remains a driving force for positive change.

SEÁN MOYNIHAN
Chief Executive Officer

Introduction

ALONE has long been dedicated to transforming the aged care sector by providing valuable evidence and consistently assessing the services and support it offers to older people.

In September 2022, ALONE formally established a Research and Evaluation department and published its first Research and Evaluation strategy. The goal of this strategy was to develop richer insights from the data gathered in ALONE, allowing ALONE and others to deliver more effective and efficient services for older people. The strategy focused on three key pillars: demonstrating impact through robust monitoring and evaluation, conducting research to reshape the narrative of ageing, and sharing evidence to guide national policy, decision-making, and service provision.

In December 2024, ALONE's Research/Evaluation and Policy departments were merged to strategically align efforts toward delivering evidence-based policy recommendations. This initiative also aims to harness ALONE's extensive data and expertise to strengthen collaboration with government, political parties, and service providers, positioning ALONE as a best-in-class organisation in research-driven advocacy and service development. The Head of Department reports directly to the CEO and Board, ensuring a strong leadership connection to organisational strategy and decision-making.

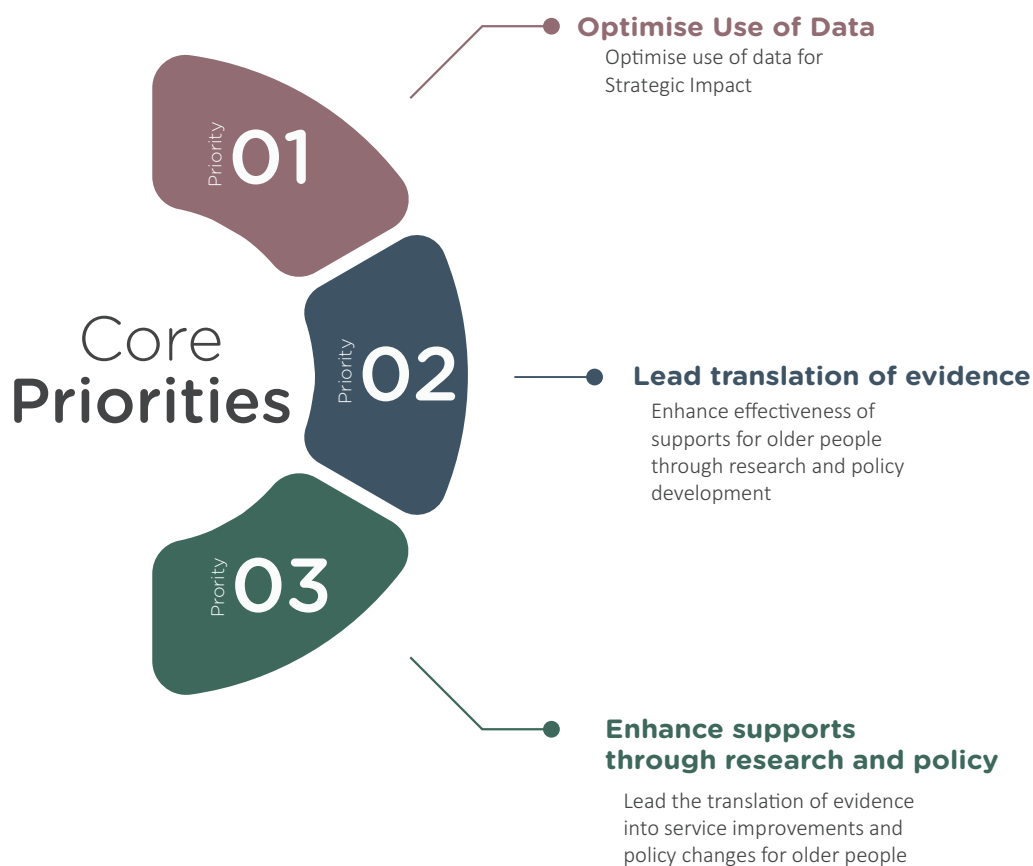


**DEDICATED TO
TRANSFORMING
THE AGED CARE
SECTOR**

Strategy Overview

ALONE's new Research, Evaluation and Policy strategy builds upon ALONE's previous achievements and sets a clear course for the next two years. Its vision is to ensure that **every decision impacting older people is driven by data, fostering equity, well-being, and a higher quality of life.**

Aligned to this, the overall aim of the strategy is to use evidence to drive meaningful change for older people and report on the impact of these efforts. The strategy is built around three core priorities:



This strategy outlines specific objectives and actions within each priority area, which will be overseen by ALONE’s Head of Research, Evaluation, and Policy. Supported by ALONE’s leadership team and staff within the department and across the organisation this implementation will guide ALONE toward making a lasting, positive impact on the lives of older people. ALONE will also establish a strategic advisory panel of experts to inform decisions and review progress made in implementing this strategy. Ultimately, implementation will assist ALONE to achieve its mission and have a direct positive impact on the lives of older people in Ireland.

Please note: In this strategy, the term evidence is used to refer to the findings from research and evaluation activities. Although closely related and often overlapping, research and evaluation serve different purposes.

The key goal of **research** is to produce new knowledge or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

The purpose of **evaluation** is to establish the progress or success of a specific initiative or service model.



#1

Priority

Optimise Use of Data for Strategic Impact

ALONE's commitment to improving the lives of older people is underpinned by a data-driven approach that informs its services, programmes, and strategic direction. To enhance its impact, the organisation is committed to further enhancing its approach to data management, analytics, and monitoring and evaluation processes.

This priority is designed to ensure that ALONE captures high-quality data and leverages it effectively to identify gaps and blocks, enhance its services, develop and deliver new services, and ultimately drive change across the sector. By improving data management, fostering data literacy, and advancing data analytics, ALONE can empower its staff to make more informed decisions and drive collaboration. At the same time, robust monitoring and impact evaluation processes will ensure accountability and continuous improvement, enabling ALONE to demonstrate the value and effectiveness of its services to funders, stakeholders, and the older people it supports.

The objectives here reflect ALONE's vision to be a leader in evidence-based service delivery, fostering a culture where data informs decision-making at every level, and drives meaningful, measurable change for older people.

Objectives



1. Enhance data management and analytics to drive informed decision-making from local operations to national policy

- Develop and implement a comprehensive data strategy focusing on increasing data accuracy and reliability, streamlining data processes and advancing data analytics
- Foster data literacy among ALONE staff to enable informed decision-making, enhance collaboration, and empower employees to use data effectively
- Enhance reporting and analytics to provide actionable insights, track key performance indicators (KPIs), identify trends, and support proactive business strategies by ensuring alignment across teams



2. Embed robust monitoring processes and impact evaluation within key programmes to drive ongoing improvements and demonstrate accountability

- Develop and implement comprehensive monitoring frameworks for ALONE services and programmes through a coordinated, organisation-wide approach, to enhance the ability to make data-driven decisions and optimise service delivery
- Assist services in delivering regular, timely reports in line with funding requirements to ensure compliance and transparency while fostering collaboration between departments
- Conduct thorough impact assessments to evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of ALONE services, providing actionable insights to inform service improvements and strategic planning



#2

Priority

Enhance effectiveness of supports for older people through research and policy development

As an organisation, ALONE is committed to championing the voices of older people through innovative research and evidence-based policy development. By doing this work in collaboration with others, integrating the perspectives of older people, and championing inclusivity, ALONE hopes to drive transformative change in policies and services that impact on older people. An example of this is ALONE's groundbreaking review with the London School of Economics, benchmarking services for older people globally to inform both its own services and those across the sector.

The objectives in this priority area are focused on establishing partnerships with leading national and international stakeholders, and commissioning research that ensures that the voices of older people are prioritised and can deliver impactful policy and service improvements. They also emphasise ALONE's continued commitment to robust policy development processes and proactive engagement in policy opportunities. Together, these efforts will position ALONE as a leader in driving positive meaningful change for older people.

Objectives



1. Conduct innovative, collaborative research that prioritises the voice of older people, driving policy and service improvements

- Establish and strengthen partnerships with national and international researchers, networks and organisations to enhance research efforts
- Commission research which prioritises the voice of older people and can be used to deliver policy improvements and service change
- Fully integrate the participation of older people in ALONE's research activities, ensuring their perspectives directly influence policy change and service development



2. Develop and deliver evidence-based, costed, impactful policy asks that prioritise the needs of older people supported by ALONE

- Create and implement a policy development model that prioritises evidence, effective implementation, and legitimacy
- Develop and strengthen policy positions across ALONE's key focus areas to ensure improved outcomes for older people, with a focus on inclusivity
- Proactively identify and pursue opportunities for costed policy development and submissions



#3

Priority

Lead the translation of evidence into service improvements and policy changes for older people

ALONE is committed to utilising its expertise and evidence to create meaningful change for older adults. This priority underscores ALONE's dedication to translating knowledge into action, fostering positive changes in the lives of older adults.

By sharing insights in accessible formats, ALONE will ensure its evidence is actionable and drives measurable impact. To amplify its advocacy efforts, ALONE will collaborate with policymakers, academics, and service providers to promote change across the aged care sector. Moreover, through a unified political engagement strategy, developed in partnership with ALONE's Communications team, evidence will be used to inform policy improvements that enhance the lives of older people.

Objectives




1. Position ALONE as expert on ageing by publishing policy, promoting its model and best practice, and disseminating evidence to drive impact

- Publish policy positions and proposals on ALONE's knowledge hub, establishing a centralised resource for the sector
- Promote the ALONE model of support as an international model of best practice through the timely dissemination of evidence
- Share evidence with broader audiences using clear, engaging formats like infographics, dashboards, and reports to ensure accessibility and actionable insights



2. Advocate for change in policy and practice to improve the lives of older people

- Collaborate with ALONE's Communications team to co-develop and implement a cohesive political engagement strategy ensuring measurable impact on policy and public awareness
- Build partnerships with key academic, service, and policy stakeholders through coalition efforts to advance policy reforms in areas aligned with ALONE's mission with a focus on tracking and demonstrating the impact of these collaborations



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