



**PUBLIC PETITION NO.**

**PE01480**

### **Name of petitioner**

Amanda Kopel on behalf of The Frank Kopel Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign

### **Petition title**

Alzheimer's and dementia awareness

### **Petition summary**

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to raise awareness of the daily issues suffered by people with Alzheimer's and dementia and to ensure that free personal care is made available for all sufferers of this illness regardless of age.

### **Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition**

We sent a letter to the First Minister highlighting our case and received a reply. The response received stated that they cannot comment or intervene in individual cases.

We have written to the DWP requesting DLA. Eventually Mr Kopel won his appeal and was granted full DLA.

We have actively contacted and spoken to experts from the NHS and they have actively encouraged this campaign.

We have spoken to MSP Graham Dey. Mr Dey has been in contact and has said he would take up any complaint about the NHS the campaign had. He also sent out a complaint form. However, we feel that this can take place after we submit this appeal.

We have recently set up "The Frank Kopel Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign" on Facebook. This gives people the opportunity to show their support for the campaign and leave and highlight their own personal stories:

<https://www.facebook.com/frankkopelalzheimers?filter=2>

Supporters of our campaign include ITV's Lorraine Kelly and Deacon Blue's Ricky Ross, Dundee United Football Club and other clubs, personalities, players and members of the public throughout the UK have shown their support.

Media coverage including The Sun and The Courier & Advertiser.

### **Petition background information**

As he is not yet 65, Frank Kopel is not offered free personal care, so his family are forced to pay the council more than £300 a month for a carer who helps wash and dress him. At the moment many people are being discriminated against because of their age. If Frank was 65 years of age his care would be free, but because he is only 64 we have to pay care costs and for other items such as personal bodily items etc. What does it matter what the number is on the birth certificate? No matter the age, Alzheimer's and dementia is the same illness. We want the Scottish Government to end this age discrimination and make care available for all ages.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, affecting around 496,000 people in the UK. The term 'dementia' describes a set of symptoms which can include loss of memory, mood changes, and problems with communication and reasoning. These symptoms occur when the brain is damaged by certain diseases and conditions, including Alzheimer's disease. It is estimated that, out of the approximately 62,000 people in Scotland who have dementia, 55% have Alzheimer's disease, which means that there are approximately 33,550 people with Alzheimer's disease in Scotland.

Alzheimer's is a progressive disease, which means that gradually, over time, more parts of the brain are damaged. As this happens, the symptoms become more severe.

### Symptoms

People in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease may experience lapses of memory and have problems finding the right words. As the disease progresses, they may:

- become confused and frequently forget the names of people, places, appointments and recent events
- experience mood swings, feel sad or angry, or scared and frustrated by their increasing memory loss
- become more withdrawn, due either to a loss of confidence or to communication problems
- have difficulty carrying out everyday activities

Frank Kopel's wife Amanda wants people to understand the daily issues suffered by sufferers of Alzheimer's and dementia. She wants to make changes in the way people with Alzheimer's and dementia are dealt with. There are other uphill battles faced by families. Sometimes these battles are with the DWP, Health Authorities and other medical professionals. This is what the Awareness Campaign was set up to highlight.

We need to take this action to take place to stop other people suffering in Scotland. We need to highlight the difficulties faced each day – these include: financial, support and awareness of the disease etc.

We request that the Scottish Government looks at the wider national issue and what they can do to end age discrimination in health care in Alzheimer's.

### Unique web address

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/alzheimers>

### Related information for petition

FACEBOOK PAGE: Frank Kopel Alzheimer's Awareness Campaign

<https://www.facebook.com/frankkopelalzheimers?filter=2>

<http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/scottishnews/4860218/Sometimes-I-have-to-pretend-Im-one-of-Franks-old-Man-Utd-or-Tannadice-teammates-but-really-hes-my-soulmate.html>

<http://www.thecourier.co.uk/news/local/dundee/dundee-united-legend-frank-kopel-s-family-call-for-better-dementia-care-1.85234>

<http://www.thecourier.co.uk/news/local/dundee/ricky-ross-backing-kopel-family-s->

[dementia-campaign-1.88397](#)

<http://www.thecourier.co.uk/sport/football/dundee-united/gallery-footballer-frank-kopel-s-dundee-united-days-1.85792>

**Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?**

YES

**How many signatures have you collected so far?**

0

**Closing date for collecting signatures online**

21 / 06 / 2013

**Comments to stimulate online discussion**

Let's get Amanda Kopel to the Scottish Parliament to tell her heart breaking story of how her husband Frank the ex-Dundee United player have been treated by the DWP and health authorities in Scotland. Have you or your family been treated unfairly due to Alzheimer's? Let's hear your stories and sign the petition.