

H.M. Drottningens tal vid utdelningen av *Drottning Silvias Pris till en ung Alzheimerforskare*

Japanska ambassaden, Stockholm

(Det talade ordet gäller)

Your Excellency

Ladies and gentlemen

It is an honour to be here today, surrounded by so many people who share the same goal: to create a better future for everyone affected by Alzheimer's disease. Behind every research project, every discovery, there are people – patients, families and loved ones – who give this work its true meaning.

It is very encouraging to see the tremendous progress made in Alzheimer's research in recent years. The possibility of diagnosing the disease early with something as simple as a blood test has the potential to change lives. It will change how primary care can identify patients with early signs of cognitive decline, offering help and hope much sooner than before.

Early diagnosis, combined with disease-modifying treatments, represents a significant achievement and a long-awaited breakthrough for all those who have watched someone they love slowly fade away because of this disease

It is especially uplifting that Swedish research has been at the forefront of those advances. Researchers in Gothenburg and Lund have played a decisive role in developing blood tests that can detect Alzheimer's with remarkable accuracy. Professor Lars Lannfelt's groundbreaking discovery paved the way for Legembi, a treatment that we now eagerly await approval for in Sweden.

Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia remain some of our greatest public health challenges. They cause profound suffering for patients, and for the families who stand by their side through every stage of the disease. The emotional, practical and societal impact is enormous. That is why these scientific breakthroughs are so important. Because they bring us closer to easing that burden, to giving people more time, and to preserving the moments that really matter.

As we look ahead, we can do so with a renewed optimism. Step by step, discovery by discovery, we are moving closer to a world where Alzheimer's no longer steals memories, relationships and lives.

Let me give you two examples from Japan that show how trust and inclusion can create meaning for those affected by Alzheimer's.

The first comes from Kamakura, a city I visited together with His Majesty the King in 2018, where a dementia care centre invited its residents to take responsibility for a public garden in the village. They spoke with pride about their work, people came to thank them, showing appreciation! The garden was truly beautiful!

The second example is the Restaurant of Mistaken Orders in Tokyo. All the staff who serve the guests live with dementia. The order might not be exactly what you asked for, and that is part of the experience. Many things can get terribly wrong! Everybody knows and everybody meets the "staff" with respect and patience, helping them to feel important. The idea carries a deeply

human message: even if mistakes happen, it is okay, and sometimes those mistakes can lead to unexpected joy.

Initiatives like these open our eyes to new ways of responding to people living with Alzheimer's disease - not only with science, but with compassion.

Swedish research is leading the way, and it is inspiring to see how this award has encouraged a new generation of brilliant young researchers to dedicate their careers to this field. This year's award winner is yet another shining example of that spirit.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to Alzheimerfonden for your tireless and vital work. And to this year's award winner –my warmest congratulations! Your contribution is not only a scientific success, but a source of hope for many people.

Thank you.

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