

# First Link® Bulletin

Your link to dementia support

January – March 2023



Updates on programs and services

See inside for dementia programs in South Okanagan and Similkameen

## January is Alzheimer's Awareness Month



We all strive to live each day to the fullest, but receiving a diagnosis of dementia can feel like it brings everything to a standstill, and many people still believe that it means the end of a meaningful life. But, while living with dementia can be difficult, we've learned from our community that it can also be the catalyst to celebrate our present like never before.

Join us this January, as we recognize Alzheimer Awareness Month. Throughout the month we'll be sharing tips and tools to support living well with the disease. We'll also be sharing stories of those people living with dementia and caregivers across British Columbia who have discovered moments of joy during this often hard and challenging journey.

With an estimated more than 85,000 people living with dementia in B.C. it is important the people of B.C. are educated and have tools when they need them. Let's start the year by shifting our perspectives and learning how people affected by the disease can celebrate life like never before!

Visit [alzbc.org/FullOfLife](https://alzbc.org/FullOfLife) to stay connected throughout Awareness Month.

## Webinar spotlight: The lived experience series

In our **lived experience webinars**, you will hear from people living with dementia and caregivers as they share their firsthand knowledge and unique experiences facing the disease. These webinars are a doorway to a better understanding dementia and an opportunity to challenge the stigma.

Recorded webinars from our YouTube playlist are available to watch at [alzbc.org/lived-experience](https://alzbc.org/lived-experience).

Also, our **webinars are held every Wednesday** with topics from understanding dementia to practical caregiving strategies to the latest research study. Visit [alzbc.org/webinars](https://alzbc.org/webinars) and register for any upcoming sessions!

### In-person and virtual programs available

While we continue to offer our programs virtually, we are also continuing to expand our in-person sessions.

#### Dementia education

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## Learn about dementia and connect with others through dementia education

**Our dementia workshops educate and empower people living with dementia and their families and friends.**

Education workshops are interactive sessions for people looking to learn about dementia and connect with others. These workshops provide opportunities for small group discussions and are available in-person and online.

### Registration:

**In-person workshops:** Call our First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-800-936-6033.

**Online workshops:** Register online by visiting [alzbc.org/edu-workshops](http://alzbc.org/edu-workshops) or call the First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-800-936-6033. You will receive an email with a link to join the event prior to the event date.

## In-person dementia education in South Okanagan and Similkameen

With increased knowledge surrounding safety measures and high level of vaccinations across B.C., we have updated our safety protocols based on the current recommendations from the B.C. government.

Masks and proof of full vaccination are now optional for attending all in-person programs. To learn more about safety protocols, visit: [alzbc.org/COVID-safety](http://alzbc.org/COVID-safety)

In-person workshop	Date	Location
<p><b>Shaping the journey: Living with dementia (four-part series)  </b> Explore the dementia journey in a supportive environment with others going through similar experiences. Learn about the brain and dementia, strategies for coping with changes, maximizing quality of life and planning for the future.</p> <p>For caregivers and people living in the early stages of dementia.</p>	<p>Four Wednesdays, January 11 – February 1 10 a.m. – noon</p>	<p><b>Penticton</b> Specific location TBD. For more information, call the First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-800-936-6033.</p>
<p><b>Getting to know dementia  </b> Learn how dementia affects someone's brain and behaviour, as well as the disease's impact on family.</p> <p>For caregivers.</p>	<p>Wednesday, February 15 10 a.m. – noon</p>	<p><b>Penticton</b> Penticton Seniors' Drop-in Centre Society 2965 South Main Street</p>
<p><b>Family caregiver series  </b> An education session about dementia for people caring for someone living with dementia. Topics include: understanding dementia, communication and behaviour, planning for the future and building caregiver resilience.</p>	<p>Saturday, February 25 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Penticton</b> Penticton Seniors' Drop-in Centre Society 2965 South Main Street</p>

**Register by calling the First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-800-936-6033**

## In-person dementia education in South Okanagan and Similkameen

In-person workshop	Date	Location
<p><b>Accessing services</b>   Learn about community supports like home care and adult day programs, as well as how to address challenges and work with health-care providers.</p> <p>For caregivers and people living with dementia.</p>	<p>Wednesday, March 1 10 – 11:30 a.m.</p>	<p><b>Penticton</b> Penticton Seniors' Drop-in Centre Society 2965 South Main Street</p>
<p><b>Focus on behaviour: Sundowning (late-day confusion)</b>   Learn the signs of "sundowning," also known as late-day confusion and explore strategies for responding.</p> <p>For caregivers.</p>	<p>Wednesday, March 8 10 – 11:30 a.m.</p>	<p><b>Penticton</b> Penticton Seniors' Drop-in Centre Society 2965 South Main Street</p>
<p><b>Recognizing your journey as a caregiver</b>   Discuss the personal challenges, guilt, and grief of being a dementia caregiver. Learn how to recognize signs of burnout, the importance of self-care, and how you can build your resilience as a caregiver. There will be opportunities for discussion throughout the presentation.</p> <p>For caregivers.</p>	<p>Monday, March 13 10 – 11:30 a.m.</p>	<p><b>Oliver</b> Oliver Senior Centre 5876 Airport Street</p>
<p><b>Preparing for end-of-life on the dementia journey</b>   Learn what to expect the dementia journey reaches end-of-life. We will explore the physiological signs of dying, key decisions to be made, ways to discuss end-of-life wishes in advance, and strategies to maintain connection throughout the end of the dementia journey.</p> <p>For caregivers and people living with dementia.</p>	<p>Wednesday, March 15 10 – 11:30 a.m.</p>	<p><b>Penticton</b> Penticton Seniors' Drop-in Centre Society 2965 South Main Street</p>
<p><b>Driving and dementia</b>   Learn how dementia may affect a person's driving abilities and strategies to ease the transition when it's time to stop driving.</p> <p>For caregivers and people living with dementia.</p>	<p>Wednesday, March 29 10 – 11:30 a.m.</p>	<p><b>Penticton</b> Penticton Seniors' Drop-in Centre Society 2965 South Main Street</p>

**Register by calling the First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-800-936-6033**

## Online dementia education

All sessions are hosted in Microsoft Teams. If you are new to using Teams and would like a chance to practice connecting to a meeting before the session, please call our First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-800-936-6033 or email [info.helpline@alzheimerbc.org](mailto:info.helpline@alzheimerbc.org).

**Please note these sessions are not recorded – only register if you plan to attend live.** Register at [alzbc.org/edu-workshops](http://alzbc.org/edu-workshops) or call 1-800-936-6033.

Online workshop	Date
<b>An introduction to brain health</b>   It's never too soon or too late to make changes and to learn strategies to maintain or improve your brain health. For caregivers.	Tuesday, January 17 2 – 3:30 p.m.
<b>Living safely with dementia</b>   Explore how people living with dementia and their families can live safely in the community. For caregivers and people living with dementia.	Thursday, January 26 2 – 3:30 p.m.
<b>Understanding communication changes</b>   Explore how communication is affected by dementia and learn effective communication strategies. For caregivers.	Tuesday, February 7 10 – 11:30 a.m.
<b>Focus on behaviour: Delusions, hallucinations and visual mistakes</b>   Explore strategies for responding to delusions, hallucinations and visual mistakes caused by dementia. For caregivers.	Tuesday, February 21 10 – 11:30 a.m.
<b>Coping with change, grief and loss</b>   The dementia experience involves change and loss and uncertainty. Join us to explore strategies to help you and those around you cope in the face of these changes. For caregivers and people living with dementia.	Tuesday, March 7 2 – 3:30 p.m.
<b>Focus on behaviour: Understanding behaviour changes</b>   Learn practical strategies to better understand changes in behaviour and respond in supportive ways. For caregivers.	Thursday, March 23 6 – 7:30 p.m.

**Register at [alzbc.org/edu-workshops](http://alzbc.org/edu-workshops) or call 1-800-936-6033**

## Learn about dementia from anywhere in our live weekly webinars

Learn strategies for living well with dementia at our free webinars offered each Wednesday, typically at 2 p.m. Our trained presenters share tips and strategies in a lecture-style format. All you need is a computer, tablet or phone to participate and connect with others on the dementia journey.

All sessions are hosted in Microsoft Teams. To register for our upcoming webinars, visit our website at [alzbc.org/webinars](https://alzbc.org/webinars). You can watch the education content on-demand at [alzbc.org/ondemand](https://alzbc.org/ondemand).

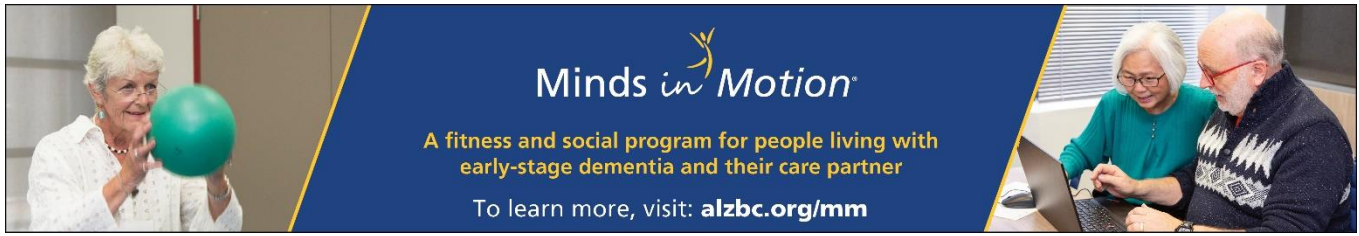


Webinar	Date
<p><b>Staying healthy and building resilience in a time of change and uncertainty</b>   Learn self-care tips and strategies to positively manage stress for both caregivers and people living with dementia.</p>	<p>Wednesday, January 11 2 – 3 p.m.</p>
<p><b>Considering the transition to long-term care</b>   Learn about how to access long-term care and factors to consider when planning a move. For caregivers.</p>	<p>Wednesday, January 18 2 – 3 p.m.</p>
<p><b>The who, what, where and when of Alzheimer’s disease biomarker testing with Dr. Mari DeMarco</b>   Alzheimer’s disease biomarker testing is now available in Canada and in this webinar, we will review key elements of this diagnostic testing. Dr. Mari DeMarco, who leads the national Alzheimer’s disease testing program, will address questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is this test meant for?</li> <li>• What biomarkers are measured in this test?</li> <li>• Where is testing performed?</li> <li>• When is it appropriate to have this testing?</li> </ul>	<p>Wednesday, January 25 2 – 3 p.m.</p>
<p><b>How to support a friend who has dementia or is a caregiver</b>   Learn practical tips on how to offer support to a person living with dementia, their caregiver or family. For the general public.</p>	<p>Wednesday, February 1 2 – 3 p.m.</p>
<p><b>Adjusting to long-term care</b>   Discuss the experience of transitioning into long term care and explore strategies for adjusting. For caregivers.</p>	<p>Wednesday, February 8 2 – 3 p.m.</p>

Register online at [alzbc.org/webinars](https://alzbc.org/webinars)

Webinar	Date
<p><b>Disorientation among people living with dementia</b>   As the population ages, the number of people living with dementia is expected to rise. Common symptoms like disorientation have become a growing concern. Noelannah Neubauer, Research Assistant in the Faculty of Health at the University of Waterloo and System Case Manager at Home Living Program in Edmonton, shares her latest research on policies and strategies to assist people living with dementia who experience disorientation and lower the risk of them going missing.</p>	<p>Wednesday, February 15 2 – 3 p.m.</p>
<p><b>Life in long-term care</b>   Learn how to adjust your role as a caregiver after a person living with dementia has moved into long-term care. Tips for enhancing your visits, working with a care team, and acting as an advocate. For caregivers.</p>	<p>Wednesday, February 22 2 – 3 p.m.</p>
<p><b>Making activities dementia inclusive</b>   Discuss the benefits of meaningful activities and explore how different types of activities can be dementia inclusive. Be inspired to create your own dementia-inclusive activities to help improve quality of life and maintain well-being and maximize your enjoyment together. For caregivers and people living with dementia.</p>	<p>Wednesday, March 1 2 – 3 p.m.</p>
<p><b>Focus on behaviour: Targeted strategies for denial, paranoia, shadowing and anxiety</b>   Learn specific strategies for responding to four commonly experienced behaviours that people ask us about. For caregivers.</p>	<p>Wednesday, March 8 2 – 3 p.m.</p>
<p><b>Focus on behaviour: Responsive behaviours</b>   Explore possible reasons for our own reactivity and learn some coping strategies. For caregivers.</p>	<p>Wednesday, March 15 2 – 3 p.m.</p>
<p><b>Getting to know dementia: What is dementia?</b>   Explore how communication is affected by dementia and learn effective communication strategies. For caregivers.</p>	<p>Wednesday, March 22 2 – 3 p.m.</p>
<p><b>Lived experience: Sensory experience of dementia</b>   As dementia progresses, not only do people living with dementia may go through communication and behaviour changes, but their senses may also experience changes. In this lived experience webinar, we will discuss the impact of dementia on sensory experiences and provide some tips and strategies to cope with these changes. We will also hear from people with lived experiences share their challenges and how to live a positive life with the changes. For caregivers and people living with dementia.</p>	<p>Wednesday, March 29 2 – 3 p.m.</p>

[Register online at alzbc.org/webinars](https://alzbc.org/webinars)



# Minds in Motion®

A fitness and social program for people living with early-stage dementia and their care partner

To learn more, visit: [alzbc.org/mm](http://alzbc.org/mm)

Minds in Motion®	Date	Registration
<b>Penticton (in-person)</b> Penticton Community Centre 325 Power Street	Six Tuesdays, January 3 – February 7 1:30 – 3 p.m.	Register in person at the Penticton Community Centre or at <a href="http://www.penticton.ca">www.penticton.ca</a> <b>Cost:</b> \$36 per pair for six sessions Start at any time, series are pro-rated
<b>Online</b> Hosted online via Microsoft Teams	<b>Groups meet weekly:</b> <b>Tuesdays:</b> 10 – 11:30 a.m. <i>or</i> 1 – 2:30 p.m. <b>Wednesdays:</b> 10 – 11:30 a.m. <b>Thursdays:</b> 1 – 2:30 p.m. <b>Fridays:</b> 1 – 2:30 p.m.	Sessions are free to attend. For more information and to register, please call the First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-800-936-6033 or visit <a href="http://alzbc.org/mm">alzbc.org/mm</a>
<b>Online (Cantonese)</b> Hosted online via Microsoft Teams	<b>Groups meet weekly:</b> <b>Tuesdays:</b> 1 – 2:15 p.m.	Sessions are free to attend. For more information and to register, please call the Chinese First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-833-674-5007 or email <a href="mailto:info.chinese@alzheimerbc.org">info.chinese@alzheimerbc.org</a>

## Alzheimer Society

BRITISH COLUMBIA

For questions on memory loss or living with dementia, call the free confidential **First Link® Dementia Helpline** (Monday to Friday):

<b>English</b>	1-800-936-6033 (9 a.m. to 8 p.m.)
<b>Cantonese or Mandarin</b>	1-833-674-5007 (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.)
<b>Punjabi</b>	1-833-674-5003 (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.)

## Connect with others on the dementia journey through our support groups



If you are affected by dementia, you are not alone. There are others to share the journey with you. We currently offer regional support groups in-person and provincial support groups virtually for caregivers and people living in the early stages of dementia. Please see information below regarding the groups available to you.

### To register:

- For groups in **Cantonese** and **Mandarin**, call the Chinese First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-833-674-5007
- For groups in **Punjabi** and **Hindi**, call the South Asian First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-833-674-5003
- For all other groups, call the First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-800-936-6033

*Schedule may subject to change due to holidays or other conflicts. You will be notified by your facilitator.*

### In-person caregiver support groups

Support group	Date
<b>South Okanagan and Similkameen support group</b> Open to anyone in South Okanagan and Similkameen who is currently caring for a person living with dementia.  Our family caregiver support groups offer a safe place to learn about dementia and community resources. Connect with other family members on the dementia journey.	<b>Penticton</b> 1st Monday of the month, 7 to 8:30 p.m.
	<b>Princeton</b> 1st Thursday of the month, 10 – 11:30 a.m.
	<b>Summerland</b> 3rd Tuesday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m.
	<b>Oliver</b> 4th Thursday of the month, 1 – 2:30 p.m.

### Virtual general caregiver support groups

<b>General support group</b> Open to caregivers anywhere in B.C. who are currently caring for a person living with dementia.	1st Tuesday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m. 2nd Monday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m. 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m. 2nd Friday of the month, 10 -11:30 a.m. 3rd Monday of the month, 2 – 3:30 p.m. 3rd Tuesday of the month, 2 – 3:30 p.m. 3rd Thursday of the month, 10 – 11:30 a.m. 3rd Thursday of the month, 2 – 3:30 p.m. 3rd Thursday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m. 4th Tuesday of the month, 2 – 3:30 p.m. 4th Thursday of the month, 10 – 11:30 a.m.
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Register by calling the First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-800-936-6033



## Virtual general caregiver support groups

Support group	Date
<p><b>General support group (Punjabi/Hindi)</b> Open to anyone in B.C. who speaks Punjabi or Hindi and is currently caring for a person living with dementia.</p>	For more information, call the South Asian First Link Dementia® Helpline at 1-833-674-5003.
<p><b>General support group (Cantonese)</b> Open to anyone in B.C. who speaks Cantonese and is currently caring for a person living with dementia.</p>	<p><b>4th Tuesday of the month, 10 – 11:30 a.m.</b> <b>4th Tuesday of the month, 2 – 3:30 p.m.</b></p>
<p><b>General support group (Mandarin)</b> Open to anyone in B.C. who speaks Mandarin and is currently caring for a person living with dementia.</p>	<b>2nd Thursday of the month, 2 – 3:30 p.m.</b>

## Virtual specialized support groups

<p><b>Adult children support group</b> Open to caregivers anywhere in B.C. who are caring for a parent living with dementia.</p>	<p><b>1st Thursday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m.</b> <b>2nd Wednesday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m.</b> <b>2nd Thursday of the month, 6:30 – 8 p.m.</b> <b>3rd Tuesday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m.</b> <b>3rd Thursday of the month, 6:30 – 8 p.m.</b> <b>4th Tuesday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m.</b></p>
<p><b>Young onset support group</b> Open to caregivers anywhere in B.C. who are caring for a person living with dementia who was diagnosed before the age of 65.</p>	<p><b>2nd Tuesday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m.</b> <b>4th Wednesday of the month, 6:30 – 8 p.m.</b></p>
<p><b>Long-term care support group</b> Open to caregivers anywhere in B.C. who are caring for a person living with dementia in a long-term care home.</p>	<p><b>3rd Tuesday of the month, 10 – 11:30 a.m.</b> <b>3rd Tuesday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m.</b> <b>3rd Wednesday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m.</b> <b>4th Thursday of the month, 2 – 3:30 p.m.</b></p>
<p><b>LGBTQ2S+ support group</b> Open to LGBTQ2S+ caregivers or caregivers of a person living with dementia who identifies as LGBTQ2S+ anywhere in B.C.</p>	<b>1st Wednesday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m.</b>
<p><b>Lewy body dementia support group</b> Open to caregivers anywhere in B.C. who are caring for a person living with Lewy body dementia.</p>	<b>4th Wednesday of the month, noon – 1:30 p.m.</b>
<p><b>BvFTD support group</b> Open to caregivers anywhere in B.C. who are caring for someone with behavioural variant frontotemporal dementia (bvFTD).</p>	<b>4th Monday of the month, 7 – 8:30 p.m.</b>

**Register by calling the First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-800-936-6033 (English),  
1-833-674-5007 (Cantonese or Mandarin) or 1-833-674-5003 (Punjabi or Hindi)**

## In-person early-stage support groups for people living with dementia

Support group	Date
<p><b>Early-stage support group</b> Open to people living with early symptoms of dementia to discuss the impact of the disease, share stories, experiences and learn from one another about how to live well with dementia.</p>	<p><b>Penticton</b> <b>2nd Wednesday of the month, 2 – 3:30 p.m.</b></p>

## Virtual early-stage groups for people living with dementia

<p><b>Early-stage support group</b> Open to people living with early symptoms of dementia to discuss the impact of the disease, share stories, experiences and learn from one another about how to live well with dementia.</p> <p>Groups meet every two weeks.</p>	<p><b>Every 2nd Tuesday, 3 – 4 p.m.</b> <b>Every 2nd Wednesday, 10 – 11 a.m. (telephone only)</b> <b>Every 2nd Thursday, 11 a.m. – noon</b></p>
<p><b>Early-stage coffee and chat</b> Open to people living with early symptoms of dementia to socialize, share experiences, laugh and enjoy the company of others who are living the dementia experience.</p> <p>Groups meet every two weeks.</p>	<p><b>Every 2nd Thursday, 11 a.m. – noon</b></p>

**Register by calling the First Link® Dementia Helpline at 1-800-936-6033**