

Société Alzheimer Society

N O V A S C O T I A



Growing Help for Today. *Hope for Tomorrow...*®

2016-17



— “UP FOR THE CHALLENGE”

“We are in our second year of funding through the Department of Health and Wellness Dementia Strategy and are on track for meeting our goals,” says Lloyd Brown, Executive Director of ASNS. “The government support has boosted our capacity to expand programming and services to reach more Nova Scotians across the province.”

This past year two additional Community Coordinators of Education and Outreach were added to serve the Annapolis Valley and Pictou – Antigonish areas, previously underserved regions. A Speakers Bureau was developed and launched, as was an effective media campaign that increased awareness about dementia across the province. “The proof,” says Brown, “is in the increased number of calls to InfoLine and the growing demand for our presentations and educational programs.”

More expansions are underway. Examples include: developing web-based delivery of our educational programs to increase access across the province; developing new workshops for caregivers that focus on key issues; providing resources that fit the needs of the First Nations and francophone populations; and developing training manuals to ensure facilitators of our education programs have the knowledge and skills to deliver them across the province.

“We are pleased to have met our goals to date and are looking forward to continuing with the work identified in the strategy for year three,” says Lloyd.



— “IT’S GREAT TO BE ABLE TO TALK ABOUT IT”

If you’ve never met Faye Forbes you probably still feel like you know her or her motto, “*Life doesn’t end when dementia begins.*” That’s because over the last five years Faye has been one of the Society’s main ambassadors.

As someone who was diagnosed with early onset dementia six years ago, Faye knows first hand the importance of being informed and supported. Fortunately for Nova Scotians living with dementia, she’s not shy about sharing it!

This last year Faye was featured in the Society’s first-ever commercial on CTV, that was then posted on YouTube and Facebook, and she did a 10-part video series to share her strategies for living with the disease. She co-authored an article with Dr. Chris Frank for a Canadian medical journal, spoke throughout the province to service groups and students about dementia, and was interviewed for media stories.

With all of this visibility Faye now gets recognized when she is out. It has spurred great conversations. “It’s great to be able to talk about it,” Faye says. “I want to help lift the stigma attached to dementia and Alzheimer’s disease. I want people to know there’s still lots of life and joy after a diagnosis and to know about the Society and what supports are available.”

This past year traffic to the Society’s website and social media pages has increased, calls to InfoLine are on the rise, and dementia is being talked about in the media. Thanks Faye!

BROADEN OUR REACH



We've had a successful and exciting year.

We had many awareness and media campaigns to increase our public profile. These efforts resulted in increased traffic to the Society's website and social media pages, increased calls to InfoLine, and increased donations and participation in events.

Currently the Society is in the third year of funding through the Department of Health and Wellness under its provincial Dementia Strategy. Feedback indicates that we are on the right track but need to expand our services.

Donations, gifts, and government funding are essential in maintaining our financial sustainability. As a needs-driven Society, our challenge remains in adapting to the increasing needs for programs and services throughout our province.

We also grew our commitment to research this year as researchers work towards finding treatments, causes and a cure.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to all our Board members for their dedication and commitment. We acknowledge with deep appreciation the staff and volunteers of the Society for their continuing dedication and commitment to improving the quality of life of fellow Nova Scotians.

To all our donors, corporate and business sponsors, and the Province of Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, we could not exist without your support and trust. Every dollar given is an expression of your support and encouragement to continue to work towards a cause and a cure.

Dean Gale
President, Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia Board of Directors

— “LEARNING AND CONNECTING WITH OTHERS”

Our volunteers and community partners dramatically broaden the reach of our work. We couldn't do it without them.

One important expansion this year was the launch of our Speakers Bureau in January. With support and orientation from staff, volunteer presenters are delivering our awareness presentations to service organizations and other community-based groups throughout the province.

This year the Society continued to partner with many very skilled professionals and organizations such as nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and researchers. “They are key resources for us,” says Linda Bird, Director of Programs and Services.

“We work closely with them to collaborate and develop new programs that address gaps in programming, avoid duplicating efforts, and produce high-quality, evidence-based services.”



— PASSIONATE ABOUT RESEARCH

Abraham Leventhal was a quiet philanthropist all his life. He passed away in 2016 at the age of 90, leaving a legacy to fund dementia research.

Throughout his life he helped in many ways both small and large. From supporting bursaries for students at university, to paying for world-renowned figure skaters to come to Halifax to teach underprivileged kids to skate, Abe was among the most generous.

He was also passionate about research. From diabetes, to cancer, to Alzheimer's disease, Abe gave. Therefore, it was no surprise that his final wish was to support eight charities, including the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia.

With his bequest to the Alzheimer Society for dementia research, this year we established our first-ever research fund, the Abe Leventhal Research Fund. The fund will support research by:

- Funding a bursary for a graduate student with research in the field of Alzheimer's disease or other dementias as a major component
- Increasing our commitment to the Maritime Brain Tissue Bank, housed at Dalhousie University
- Continuing to support research in Canada through the Alzheimer Society Research Program.

We hope Abe would be proud.

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—“DONORS MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE”

Through a variety of events, campaigns, and gifts, the Society this year increased its reach and services. “Our donors, make it all possible,” says Sarah Lyon, Director of Philanthropy.

One of those key services is InfoLine. Often it’s the important first point of contact with families and those with dementia as they navigate a new diagnosis. It provides trusted information, support, and access to education and resources. It also remains an ongoing resource and connection for them as their needs change.

Last year the InfoLine received 33% more calls than the previous year, and an 11% increase in new InfoLine clients. “When you combine the number of new clients that reach out to us every year with the ones we remain in contact with, you can see the importance the service has to thousands of people,” says Linda Bird, Director of Programs and Services.

One such client recently shared her gratitude in a written card:

One of the most welcomed phone calls I’ve ever received was your follow-up “How was I doing” call! This came at a time when I was feeling defeated and smothered with everything as a caregiver. Your soft caring voice and genuine concern and input brightened my day and turned it around. You reassured me that you were just a phone call away. Your continued followup calls of support and direction over the years are most welcomed. You have become someone I consider a very valuable person in my life - Thank you!



—“REACHING RURAL AREAS”

This past year, as part of the Nova Scotia Dementia Strategy funding, we hired a Community Coordinator of Education and Outreach for the counties of Pictou, Antigonish, Guysborough, and part of the Strait area.

Beth’s main focus is to educate people about Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias and the supports the Society offers. She has already delivered 23 presentations and health fair displays in the area, reaching more than 600 people. She’s particularly proud to have delivered the Family Caregiver Education Series in Pictou County for the first time.

“It is such a great feeling knowing I’m making a difference,” she says. “Now more people know the warning signs of dementia, can be proactive and go visit their health practitioner, and know how the Society can support them.”

Linda Bird, Director of Programs and Services agrees. “Having Beth physically in the community is invaluable,” she says. “She’s created new partnerships in the area, helped broaden the range of services we offer, and has deepened the impact of our work there. This is the model we hope to carry out across all regions of the province.”

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