



## Alzheimer Society Launches Campaign with a Call for Support for People Diagnosed with Dementia

**Edmonton, AB Wednesday, January 5** – January is National Alzheimer’s Awareness Month, and the Alzheimer Society of Alberta and Northwest Territories is pleased to announce it is participating in a nation-wide campaign reminding people that the organization is the **First Link**® to Support, Knowledge and Community.

A diagnosis of dementia is not easy. Making a quick connection to a community of support can make a big difference by eliminating uncertainty and unknowns. The Alzheimer Society is the first place to turn – and First Link® is the connection to support, care, knowledge, expertise, and referrals.

**First Link**® is the Alzheimer Society program offering approved services and information to those living with Alzheimer’s disease or other dementias, and care partners. It encompasses the areas of Risk Reduction, Education, Living Well with the Disease, Community, Research, and Advocacy; an umbrella that brings together all aspects of the care and management of dementia in Canada.

With more than half a million Canadians living with dementia today, a number expected to reach almost one million in 10 years, the Alzheimer Society is continuing to enhance its support amongst people living with dementia to meet their needs early in, and throughout, their journey.

The goal of First Link® is to ensure a user of the services has the right support and information, from the time of an initial diagnosis and throughout the progression of the disease. By connecting with First Link, a user will have access to all the services available in their local area. There are a variety of programs and services administered at the local level of societies across the country. Such services include tailored education programs and support groups, one-on-one assistance, and a better understanding of the healthcare options available in a specific community. Staff will provide the appropriate access to the right services during any stage of the disease.

To receive access to education programs and support services, users are encouraged to call their local society directly or ask their family doctor about being referred to the Alzheimer Society.

Throughout January, and the remainder of the year, Canadians are invited to visit the URL:  
[alzheimer.ca/FirstLink](http://alzheimer.ca/FirstLink)



## Alzheimer Society of Alberta and Northwest Territories Overview

### What We Do

The Alzheimer Society of Alberta and Northwest Territories is here to help you navigate a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or other dementia.

Over 50,000 Albertans are living with dementia; almost 1% of the total population. By 2043, if nothing changes, it is expected this will increase to 225,000 Albertans, almost 3.5% of the population. There is currently no known cause or cure for Alzheimer's disease or other dementias, but there is hope for creating a better tomorrow.

The Alzheimer Society of Alberta and Northwest Territories is working to change the face of dementia and improve the quality of life for those with the disease. Serving Alberta and the Northwest Territories, the Society offers a network of educational and support services for people diagnosed with dementia and their care partners, builds partnerships with health professionals and the community, and advances research into effective treatments and finding a cure for this devastating disease.

### How We Help

The Society's Programs and Services include:

- First Link<sup>®</sup>,
- Individual care planning consultations,
- Individual and group support,
- Seeds of Hope learning series,
- Community referrals,
- Public education and information,
- ASANT Café – online community for individuals affected by dementia, and
- Safely Home TM (Wandering registry).

### Media contact

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## Quick facts

- Today, more than half a million Canadians are living with dementia, including Alzheimer's disease.
- In almost 10 years, that number is expected to double to almost 1 million.
- Alzheimer Societies across Canada provide programs and support services for people with all forms of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, and their caregivers.
- The Societies also provide caregivers and families with information, education and resources to help them support the person in their care who is living with dementia,
- The Alzheimer Society is a leading Canadian funder of dementia research. Since 1989, we have invested over \$67 million in grants and awards toward innovative dementia research through the Alzheimer Society Research Program, improving the quality of life for people with lived experience and bringing us closer to a future without Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.
- The Alzheimer Society is a key partner in the development of Canada's first national dementia strategy, which will enhance research efforts and ensure access to quality care and support for all Canadians affected by dementia,
- The Alzheimer Society is the organization behind First Link® and all the important services and supports it provides to those diagnosed with dementia across Canada.