

2022-23

ANNUAL REPORT



Alzheimer *Society*
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Expanding accessibility and broadening our outreach

Here are some of the highlights of our 22-23 year:



The First Link® Dementia Helpline offered support in English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Punjabi and Hindi.

During our 2022-23 year, we received 5,126 contacts (both phone calls and emails) to the helpline in all languages, six per cent more than last year.

- Of these contacts, there were 3,415 unique callers, a seven per cent rise from the previous year.
- Of these unique callers, 187 people requested culturally-relevant support, a number comparable to the previous year.



We continued to support research endeavours focused on enhancing quality-of-life and advancing biomedical understanding of the disease, including Alzheimer Society Research Program funding for two B.C.-based researchers.



After a hiatus in the pandemic, we relaunched several of our in-person events, including the *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's*, the *Climb for Alzheimer's* and *Breakfast to Remember*.



We continued to advocate for meaningful policy and practice changes that directly affect the experience of people living with dementia and their families.



We continued to offer hybrid options to enhance the accessibility of our support services. We welcomed 1,953 unique participants to our programs in person and 2,246 unique participants virtually.



We created more opportunities for people living with dementia and their caregivers to provide feedback on committees, with their firsthand insights helping raise awareness, foster empathy and guide our initiatives.

We respectfully acknowledge that the Alzheimer Society of B.C. operates on the unceded and traditional territories of Indigenous peoples around the province. Our provincial office is located on the territories of the xʷməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh), with regional resource centres located on traditional territories in all regions of B.C.

Our vision for a dementia-friendly province – where people living with dementia and their caregivers are welcomed, included and supported – will only be possible through ensuring that everyone living on these territories has access to support that is culturally-safe, barrier-free and free from racism.

Creating change

The idea of change grounded our 2022-23 strategic plan.

This report is organized to highlight our efforts in four key areas:

Changing the conversation about dementia



Changing the experience of people affected by dementia



Changing practice and policy



Changing the future for people affected by dementia



A message from our Board Chair and CEO

In the 2022-23 year, we reaffirmed our commitment to centring the voices of people with lived experience in our mission. We continued to build a framework for engaging people living with dementia and caregivers more meaningfully and consulted with them and other community members to validate and finalize our three-year (2023-26) strategic plan. We worked with partners to enhance dementia care and community engagement. We strengthened our physical presence in communities around the province, hosting more in-person programming as well as many of our signature fundraising events again in person for the first time since the pandemic.

We expanded our support services, offering more program options to help people connect with others who are also facing dementia, including people located within equity-deserving communities.

The need to support people facing dementia has never been clearer. According to the first report in the Landmark Study, which was released this past year, there are 85,000 British Columbians living with dementia, a number that is expected to grow to more than 133,000 by 2030. Meanwhile, our dementia research with Leger Canada indicates more than half of respondents agree that a diagnosis of dementia is the end of a meaningful life. We continued to work to change perceptions and attitudes – to change the conversation.

We extend our deep appreciation to the people affected by dementia, clients, donors, volunteers, sponsors, partners and other community supporters who have worked tirelessly alongside us in 2022-23. Your generosity and commitment are what make our work possible as we create meaningful change.



Jen Lyle
Chief Executive Officer



Amy McCallion
Volunteer Board Chair

Changing the conversation: Amplifying voices, addressing stigma

Alongside people with lived experience, we worked to address stigma and enhance public awareness of dementia’s impact and the Society’s supports and initiatives, as well as the role community members can play in building a compassionate and inclusive province for people affected by dementia.

“Hearing our voices personalizes the message and increases awareness. I hope I can inspire others living with dementia in their local community.”
– Jim, person living with dementia, and recipient of the inaugural Dementia-Friendly Canada Voice Award, Vancouver

“I hope sharing my experience can help bring broader representation into the dementia community, to highlight not only the diversity of caregiving relationships but also the differing needs of people living with dementia.”
– Ian, care partner, Surrey



I didn’t expect to feel
gratitude

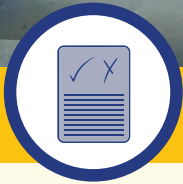
Jana from Cranbrook, B.C.



Dementia-Friendly Canada Awards

In January, the inaugural Dementia-Friendly Canada Awards recognized the incredible work being done across the country to make Canada more inclusive for people living with dementia. Congratulations to these winners from B.C.

- Jim Mann (Dementia-Friendly Voice)
- The District of West Vancouver (Dementia-Friendly Municipality)
- Vancouver International Airport (Large Dementia-Friendly Organization)



November’s Cantonese-language *Telethon for Alzheimer’s* aired nationwide on Fairchild TV, followed by a series of community fundraising events culminating with the *Miss Chinese Vancouver Pageant* charity gala where we were the charity partner. In addition to raising funds, these events raised critical dementia awareness.

In January, we launched “Full of life,” a new Alzheimer’s Awareness Month campaign aimed at addressing stigma and highlighting the experience of British Columbians affected by dementia.

We showcased diverse community voices, including Jana Schulz, a Métis Nation of B.C. elected official and one of the over 50,000 dedicated care partners supporting someone living with dementia in B.C. Jana was an Alzheimer’s Awareness Month spokesperson and also added her voice to our advocacy efforts this year.

B.C. is working on a 10-year plan to be more accessible by 2024. This year, Society staff joined a year-long committee to develop accessibility standards, removing barriers for people with disabilities, including dementia, in private and public organizations across the province.

Changing the experience: Increasing accessibility, fostering connections

We offered online and in-person program options for people across B.C. to access dementia information, education and support in the way that works best for them. First Link® dementia support provides confidence and skills to live as well as possible, plus connections to a community of people who understand the journey with dementia.

“There are many groups of people who meet and support each other and gain an understanding of the illness and its influence on our lives. There’s a lot I can learn from talking and listening to others who have gone before me.”
– Lester, person living with dementia, Burnaby

“After coming to the Alzheimer Society of B.C.’s workshops, I felt comforted by knowing more, being more prepared and knowing that it’s OK.”
– Wade, care partner, Prince George



Feeling connected, feeling equipped

When reflecting on their experiences across our combined programming, 82 per cent of respondents reported increased knowledge of dementia, while 83 per cent of respondents reported an increase in confidence to be able to apply what they learned from the service to their daily life.

Meanwhile, amongst people who took part in either a support group or Minds in Motion®, more than 89 per cent of respondents reported feeling improved peer connectedness and/or reduced isolation as a result of their participation.



Minds in Motion®, our social and fitness program, was offered both online and in-person. We provided programming to 466 unique in-person participants and 119 unique virtual participants. They connected from 67 communities across B.C.



Support groups were offered online and in-person. We welcomed 596 unique in-person participants and 500 unique virtual participants to a combined total of 790 sessions. We also offered 11 Coffee & Chat sessions to 16 unique in-person program participants and 11 unique virtual participants. Participants joined us at support groups and Coffee & Chat from 127 communities across B.C.



We hosted 216 specialized programs for the Chinese community, engaging 241 unique participants. Additionally, we extended our reach to the South Asian community by offering confidential, culturally-relevant support in Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu and English through educational programs specifically designed to address the unique needs of this community.



Our volunteers facilitated virtual support groups, online fitness and social programs, as well as educational initiatives. We’re renewing our focus on recruiting and mobilizing volunteers in the post-COVID era to meet rising demands and ensure people and families affected by dementia receive the support they need.

Changing practice and policy: Responding to the needs of people affected by dementia

We worked to inform and influence policies, programs and services for people affected by dementia. We continued our advocacy to ensure our province is responsive to their needs and that their voices are heard and respected in communities that wrap around them.

“Volunteering with the Alzheimer Society has provided me with an opportunity to advocate for people with lived experience and their caregivers and families. I believe it’s about building relationships and fostering connections that lead to greater opportunities in the organization where everyone feels a sense of belonging.”
– Geri, care partner, Victoria



The voices of people with lived experience were heard throughout the halls of the B.C. Legislature at our Dementia-Friendly Legislature Luncheon in March. The annual non-partisan event brings together MLAs and advocates from across the province to share stories, challenge stigma and explore how we can work together to support the growing number of British Columbians affected by dementia.

Increasing confidence, enhancing knowledge

Among participants in our dementia education program for health-care providers within the continuing care sector, nearly 100 per cent expressed increased confidence in supporting people living with dementia.

Additionally, after completing the program, nearly 80 per cent of participants reported that their knowledge of people living with dementia and the disease increased.



We received 3,077 new referrals from 601 health-care providers, representing a 17 per cent increase in the number of referrals and an 11 per cent increase in the number of referring health-care professionals over last year.



In collaboration with Vancouver Community College, we provided dementia education in three supportive education care programs. Among the 75 participants at these programs were students pursuing careers and dedicated staff members within the continuing care sector, which encompasses long-term care, home care and community care.



Building on our successful work on disorientation, we worked with the University of Waterloo on a project to develop dementia education resources for first responders. We also continued to work with the First Nations Health Authority, participating in their events for health-care assistants and their health-care education forum.



We held two webinars focussed on Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) in order to provide people living with dementia with support and information to make informed decisions about their care and end of life that are right for them. At these two well-attended sessions, health-care providers shared their insights and spoke to the challenges people living with dementia face in accessing MAiD and communicating their wishes.

Changing the future: Making lives better today, transforming tomorrow

We continued to advocate for dementia-friendly research, partnered with leaders in the field of dementia research and shared what we learned with British Columbians. We contributed to the Alzheimer Society Research Program (ASRP) and made additional investments to support research here in B.C.

“In collaboration with the BC Association for Living Mindfully (BCALM), the team is adapting an existing mindfulness-based group therapy for people living with mild cognitive impairment to enable accessibility of the program for a broader population of people struggling with cognitive impairment, supporting their participation in practices that can encourage self-management.”

– Dr. Émilie Langis, first recipient of our Clinical Fellowship in Cognitive Health, University of Victoria

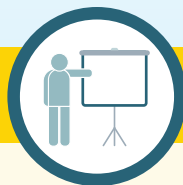
Meet the B.C. researchers of the Alzheimer Society Research Program

In 2022, two B.C. researchers received funding to improve the lives of people affected by dementia.

At the University of the Fraser Valley, Dr. Shelley Canning (pictured above right) is leading a project that addresses challenges faced by people with a cancer diagnosis who are also living with dementia by providing dementia-friendly education and recommendations at B.C. Cancer Agency.

At the University of Victoria, Dr. Mariko Sakamoto (pictured below right) is working on a project focused on understanding the needs of people living with dementia who live alone in the community and how dementia-friendly communities can support their social inclusion and well-being.

Contributions made to the ASRP in 2022-23 helped fund awards for additional B.C.-based researchers whose work we look forward to sharing in the year ahead.



We launched our “Research connects” webinar series, designed to connect researchers and other knowledge producers, with the community. The initial webinars included presentations from Dr. Robin Hsiung, Dr. Alex Henri-Bhargava and Dr. Jennifer Baumbusch.



We held inaugural research luncheons in Vancouver, Kelowna and Victoria that brought together researchers, people with lived experience and other knowledge producers to discuss research priorities and address how we can better support dementia-related research in the province.



We established the Clinical Fellowship in Cognitive Health with the University of Victoria to draw early-career researchers to pursue innovative dementia research in B.C.

Dr. Émilie Langis (pictured left) is the first recipient of the fellowship. Working under the supervision of Dr. Alex Henri-Bhargava, Dr. Langis is exploring how mindfulness meditation may help people with mild cognitive impairment.

Changing the future: Raising vital funds for people affected by dementia

Philanthropy is the cornerstone of everything we do. The support of our donors, sponsors and funders, who gave more than \$10,237,875 this past year, allowed us to engage in the important work we do to support people on the dementia journey.

“Loving someone living with dementia is probably one of the hardest things I will ever experience, but it is also one of the most rewarding. Learning how to live in the moment and see the world from my loved one’s eyes – in their reality – continues to lead me in a path of personal growth.”
– Jana, care partner, Cranbrook



After two years, the *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer’s* returned in person, bringing together over 2,300 people in more than 20 communities across the province. Thanks to our incredible walkers, donors, sponsors and volunteers, the *Walk* raised over \$1 million.



The *Forget-Me-Not Golf Tournament* returned after a two-year hiatus, raising significant funds and providing a wonderful day of world-class golf. Meanwhile, Kelowna’s *Bollywood Gala*, an event within the *Anything for Alzheimer’s* community event program, was an evening of fun, food and dancing in support of the Society.



Business and community leaders in Kelowna, Vancouver and Victoria returned to the *Breakfast to Remember*, held in person for the first time since the pandemic. In addition to raising vital funds, attendees learned about the issues and realities of people affected by dementia from local keynote speakers and received insights and updates on the latest in dementia research.



In our bold new annual “0% cure 100% courage” fundraising campaign, people affected by dementia courageously shared their stories of hope and resilience. Kicking off at the annual *Climb for Alzheimer’s* on Grouse Mountain in September and continuing all fall through Giving Tuesday and the end of December, the campaign raised over \$450,000.



Play creates crucial awareness

In January, we hosted a talkback session at the world premiere of the Mitch and Murray production *Instantaneous Blue*, Aaron Craven’s semi-autobiographical portrait of a family’s struggle with dementia. At the talkback session, hosted by our CEO Jen Lyle, the writer, actors and audience members had a rich discussion about their experience of dementia. A portion of ticket sales from the play’s run was donated to the Alzheimer Society of B.C.

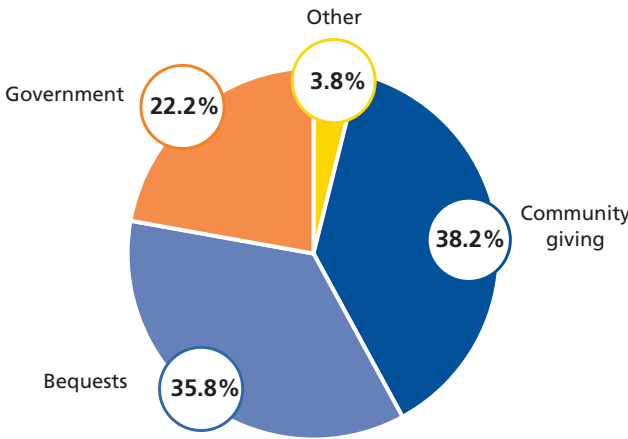


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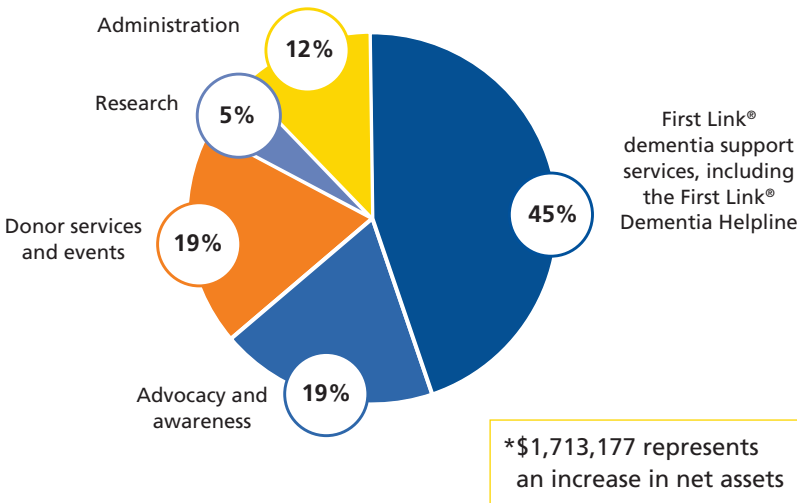
The Alzheimer Society of B.C. is the only provincial charity dedicated to supporting people affected by dementia to live their best lives. We are grateful for the support of the generous donors who have been instrumental in driving our mission forward. This year, they contributed 74 per cent of our funding, across both community and legacy giving.

We extend our gratitude to the compassionate British Columbians who chose to donate, demonstrating their belief in our mission and trust in our financial stewardship. Your contributions have allowed us to expand our community of care, providing vital support in innovative ways. With your support, no one faces the dementia journey alone and we are thankful for your support.

How we received our funds – \$13,843,263*



How we invested funds in our mission – \$12,130,086*



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Raman Johal – Partner, Gowling WLG (Canada) LLP

Karen Thompson – Director, Portfolio Manager, Odlum Brown Ltd.

“Dementia doesn’t mean the end of a meaningful life. And that had never really occurred to me. You have to continue to make your life meaningful, just as you did before the diagnosis.”
– Karen, care partner, Chilliwack

Generous donors are catalysts of change

We are grateful to our Circle of Hope members, donors who have made an extraordinary commitment to the future of dementia care by including the Alzheimer Society of B.C. in their will or through other planned gifts. As the number of people affected by dementia is expected to rise, these gifts support our ongoing sustainability and leave a lasting impact for generations to come.

With the support of our Circle of Hope donors, we can fund vital research and drive innovation in addition to ensuring we can provide comprehensive programs and services to support British Columbians who are facing dementia.

To learn more about how you can help shape a brighter future for people affected by dementia, please visit alzbc.org/lasting-legacy or call 604-742-4926 or 604-742-4906.

First Link® Dementia Helpline

English 1-800-936-6033

Cantonese or Mandarin 1-833-674-5007

Punjabi, Hindi or Urdu 1-833-674-5003

Toll-free and open Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. in English, and from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Cantonese, Mandarin, Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu.

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