

2024-2025

ANNUAL REPORT



Alzheimer Society
BRITISH COLUMBIA

2024-25 HIGHLIGHTS



This year, **13,512** people were actively connected to First Link® dementia support.



Attendance in our programs continues to increase year over year. We welcomed **4,487** in-person and online participants to our programs, a **4.6%** increase from the previous year.



More than **2,500** people from **19** communities raised awareness and vital funds for programs and services for people affected by the disease at the *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's*, presented by Go Auto.



More than **220** volunteers supported our programs and services – a more than **42%** increase. Over **569** volunteers supported our fundraising and community events – an increase of more than **94%**.



More than **200** people joined our second annual South Asian Dementia Forum for sessions in Punjabi and English, a more than **150%** increase over last year.



We received more than **18 million** impressions on our digital advertising channels, an increase of **158%** over last year. Our content received **442,982** engagements, a **275%** increase.

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 xʷməθkʷəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Skwx̌ wú7mesh (Squamish) and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, 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.

A message from our CEO and Board Chair

The past year has been filled with challenges and has called on us to find new sources of resilience. We remain committed to ensuring that people affected by dementia have access to culturally relevant, culturally safe support reflecting their needs.

In 2024-25, we've connected people in 421 urban, rural and remote communities – to our staff and volunteers, but also to each other – through First Link® dementia support. Volunteers hosted the *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's*, presented by Go Auto, in 19 communities, helping raise awareness and funds.

Community presence allowed us to build relationships necessary for our Lived Experience Partner Program to blossom, giving people affected by the disease opportunities to collaborate with us to refine our services, advocate for dementia-friendly policies and challenge stigma. We've continued to build a foundation for working with Indigenous communities. We fostered partnerships with researchers and advocated for inclusive practices. The goal is always to ensure that people affected by the disease are treated as people – not merely statistics – and can live well.

Weathering the journey during an unpredictable time is possible through an engaged community. As we look ahead to the work that still needs to be done, knowing that the number of people living with the disease will likely triple by 2050, we want to thank all of you – people affected by the disease, volunteers, donors, sponsors, partners and other supporters – for being part of our community.



Jennifer Lyle,
Chief Executive Officer



Jennifer Hystad,
Volunteer Board Chair



Erin Bird, who is living with dementia, and her care partner Geoffrey.

CHANGING THE CONVERSATION: CHALLENGING STIGMA AND STAYING ENGAGED

Our Lived Experience Partner Program engages people living with dementia and their care partners to shape services, influence awareness and inform policy.

The Lived Experience Partner Program enables people affected by dementia to actively shape our work. Participants advise on content, share their experiences with policy makers and the public. The program extends beyond consultation, fully embracing the philosophy of “Nothing about us without us.”

An example of this engagement is our Alzheimer’s Awareness Month campaign in January 2025, co-created with a group of Lived Experience Partners. While awareness of dementia is high in B.C., misconceptions persist. Developing the campaign in partnership with

people directly affected by dementia allowed us to reflect diverse lived experiences of dementia and address some common myths.

The campaign, themed “There is no road map for living with dementia, but we can be your guide,” highlighted the supports we provide while also identifying the barriers that still exist within the health-care system. This included perspectives from people like the Morins, an Indigenous family whose mother lived with dementia, ensuring that their experiences could be shared honestly and directly.

By the numbers

66% of British Columbians have someone in their life who is living with dementia.

84% of British Columbians believe a diagnosis of dementia means the end of a meaningful life.

52 people living with dementia and care partners joined the first cohort of the Lived Experience Partner Program, participating in **165** opportunities.



“We’re a part of something that’s allowing for voices to be heard.”

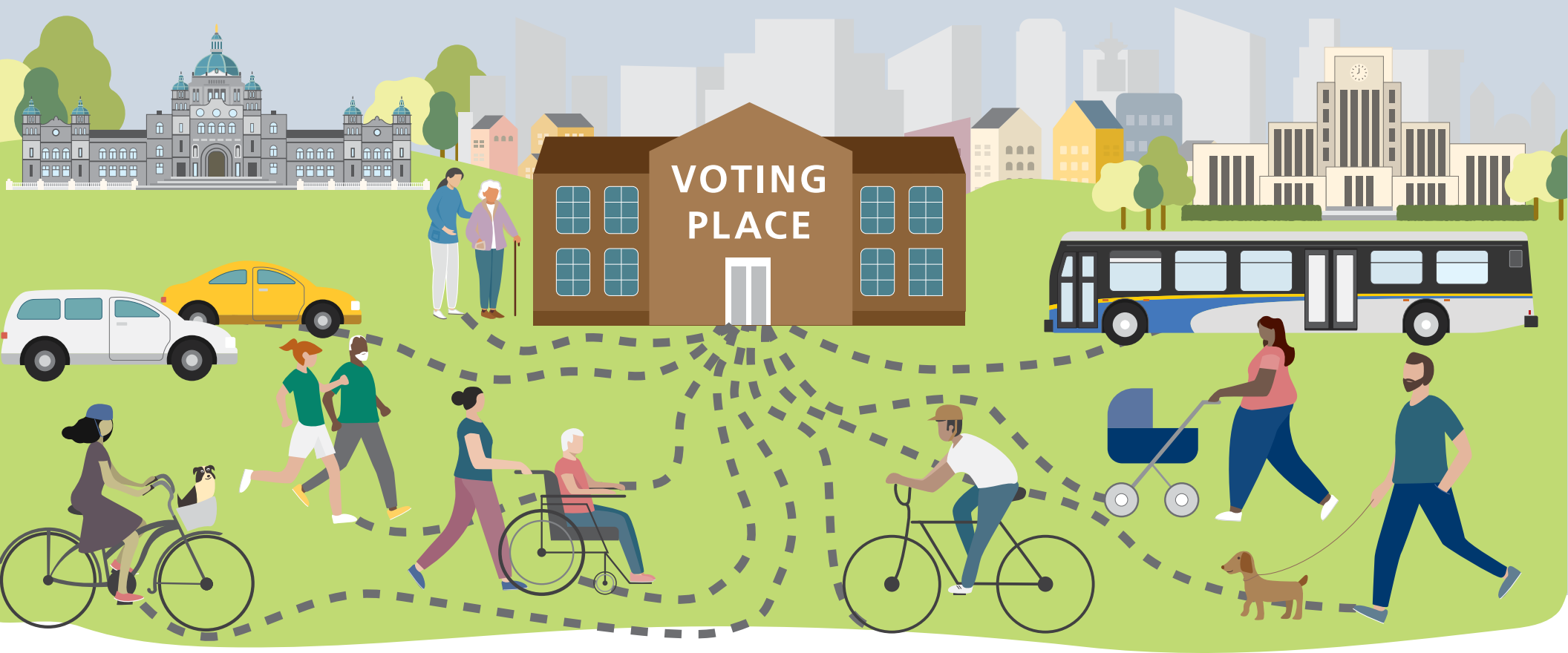
– Geoffrey Bird, care partner.

“Look, this is the generation of Indian Residential School Survivors who are now needing this type of support and we need better solutions to support them properly. They hadn’t considered who this generation is and they needed more awareness of what they were doing in their care work. This is also Reconciliation and it needs to be addressed now.”

– Peter Morin, pictured above with mother Janell, who lived with dementia, and sister Nalaine.

CHANGING THE CONVERSATION: ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

With the number of people affected by dementia steadily growing, B.C. urgently needs a dementia strategy to ensure the health-care system can address existing and anticipated challenges.



The provincial election in Fall 2024 was an opportunity to bring dementia issues to the forefront. Through a community-driven campaign, people living with dementia and care partners engaged directly with candidates, highlighting the real-life impacts of the disease and advocate for concrete policy changes. As a result, all major parties acknowledged priorities identified as part of the campaign in their platforms.

Following the election, our focus shifted to translating awareness into action. By strengthening our relationships with government and amplifying the voices of Lived Experience Partners at events such as our Legislature Luncheon in March, we continue to put a human face on dementia, connecting policy discussions to lived realities.

Policy pillars

- 1. Help break down stigma and social isolation.** Reducing stigma is essential to ensure people feel supported, seek help earlier, and remain engaged in their communities. **Progress 2024-25:** Dementia was a visible issue in the provincial election, with all major parties acknowledging the need to address stigma and strengthen community supports.
- 2. Improve the diagnosis experience.** Clearer pathways and more specialists are needed so people receive a timely diagnosis and know what supports are available to them. **Progress 2024-25:** Working alongside Lived Experience Partners, we elevated the voices of people with dementia and care partners to highlight challenges with diagnosis and access to care.
- 3. Ensure the right support at the right time.** Families need access to high-quality services when and where they need them, reducing strain on caregivers and the health-care system. **Progress 2024-25:** Our advocacy contributed to renewed government attention on service gaps, and we continue to build relationships with decision-makers to drive improvements.



Lynn Jackson, who is living with dementia.



Amy Cameron, who is living with dementia.

CHANGING THE EXPERIENCE: BUILDING COMMUNITIES

Staying active and engaged is essential to maintaining the best quality of life possible for people living with dementia. Our programs bring people together to share experiences, socialize and create community.

Social connection is one of the most powerful ways to reduce the isolation that often accompanies a dementia diagnosis. In response, we expanded our peer support programs to reach more people living with dementia and their care partners, helping them connect with others and feel less alone on their journey.

In addition, we introduced specialized groups — for example, people living with Frontotemporal dementia, 2SLGBTQIA+ and topic-specific sessions — and launched new culturally relevant programs such as *Chai and Chat* for the South Asian community.

By the numbers

1,354 people participated in our in-person and online support groups, an **11%** increase over last year.

959 people participated in Minds in Motion® across **54** communities, an **18%** increase over last year.

After an initial pilot, our Coffee and Chat program continues to grow, with a **108%** increase over last year.

82% of program participants reported feeling more connected and less isolated.



“ I saw that some people in these groups were still really sharp and active. So, I realized I can be that too. That took a while to sink in, but I soon realized the diagnosis was not as debilitating as I first thought. You realize you’re not on your own and that you’re not the only one. ”

– Amy Cameron, person living with dementia.

“ Meeting other people and getting the opportunity to talk about what you’re going through helps you realize you’re not alone. We have this big thing in common and it starts to feel like a family. The groups give me a lot of strength. ”

– Pierrette Edgar, who cares for her husband John, above.



CHANGING THE EXPERIENCE: BUILDING CONFIDENCE

No one starts the dementia journey knowing exactly what to do. The Alzheimer Society of B.C. equips people with the knowledge and skills they need to navigate the challenges of the disease with confidence.

Education is key to helping people affected by dementia build knowledge and skills and feel prepared to address daily challenges. The impact is clear: 92 per cent of our participants reported increased understanding of dementia and 87 per cent reported greater confidence in applying that knowledge in their day-to-day lives.

We also broadened our reach, delivering 471 education sessions across B.C. – a five per cent increase. To meet people where they're at, sessions were in person and online – including outreach to the Yukon to expand awareness of our services.

To make learning even more accessible, we continued to strengthen our digital education options. In addition to our existing online workshops and webinars, we launched new self-paced courses through our online campus, ensuring, people can access information at their own pace.

Each session helps people living with dementia and their care partners feel more capable, confident and supported – creating a more informed and resilient community across B.C.

By the numbers

4,487 people participated in our programs – a **5%** increase over last year.

16,067 proactive outreach calls made through First Link® dementia support – up **8%** from last year.

3,249 people reached our First Link® Dementia Helpline, receiving vital support in six languages.

Education is available throughout the journey.



“ How we deal with it now is the big thing and I thank God for the Alzheimer Society of B.C. Because of what I learned through the Society, I respond to challenging behaviours differently and by saying, ‘Oh, that’s Alzheimer’s disease; it’s not you.’ ”

– Camela Tang, whose husband Lawrence is living with dementia, above.



Specialized training helps care providers communicate more effectively with residents living with dementia.

CHANGING THE FUTURE: CLOSING GAPS IN DEMENTIA CARE

We're equipping health-care workers, municipalities and other organizations with tools to make spaces more welcoming, supportive and inclusive for people living with dementia.

With the number of people living with dementia in B.C. expected to triple by 2050 – and nearly two-thirds of long-term care residents already affected – our health-care and community systems face growing pressure. Preparing for it means ensuring care providers and communities are ready to respond.

This year, we launched a three-year initiative with the B.C. Ministry of Health to deliver U-First!® education to health-care workers in publicly-funded long-term care homes across the province. This specialized training equips staff with the skills and knowledge they need to provide

compassionate, person-centered care. In the first year, nearly 100 per cent of participants reported increased confidence in their ability to support people living with dementia.

Our efforts extend beyond health care. We also provided municipalities and organizations with tools and resources to make their spaces more accessible to people living with dementia. This work continues alongside the second phase of the Dementia-Friendly Canada initiative, a national collaboration of Alzheimer Societies focused on building awareness of dementia-friendly practices.

By the numbers

62% of people living in long-term care are living with dementia.

162 health-care workers and staff received dementia education through U-First!®, with **97%** reporting greater knowledge and confidence in applying it to their work.



Dementia-friendly care starts with understanding who the person is and what they enjoy.

“ [It] takes me back to the basics – gets you invested in the right things to provide amazing care and show you how you can make a positive difference. ”

– Long-term care worker from Island Health Authority.

“ I work with dementia clients on a daily basis. These techniques and resources are amazing and will be helpful in my career. ”

– Long-term care worker from Vancouver Coastal Health Authority.



Arabella Bengson, person living with dementia.

CHANGING THE FUTURE: BOLSTERING INNOVATION TODAY, CREATING A BETTER TOMORROW

We invest in innovative studies, facilitate meaningful inclusion and act as a trusted knowledge source in an age of misinformation.

In 2024-25, our research luncheons in Vancouver, Victoria and Prince George brought together local researchers, lived experience partners and community members. Researchers shared insights into their work while learning how research can remain relevant and responsive.

Our partnerships with Michael Smith Health Research BC and the Alzheimer Society Research Program (ASRP), a collaboration of Alzheimer Societies across Canada in support of research, allow us to strategically invest in both

biomedical research and quality-of-life studies. Beyond funding, we help bridge researchers and community members: people with lived experience are engaged not only as research participants, but also as advisors, consultants and partners, helping shape the research process.

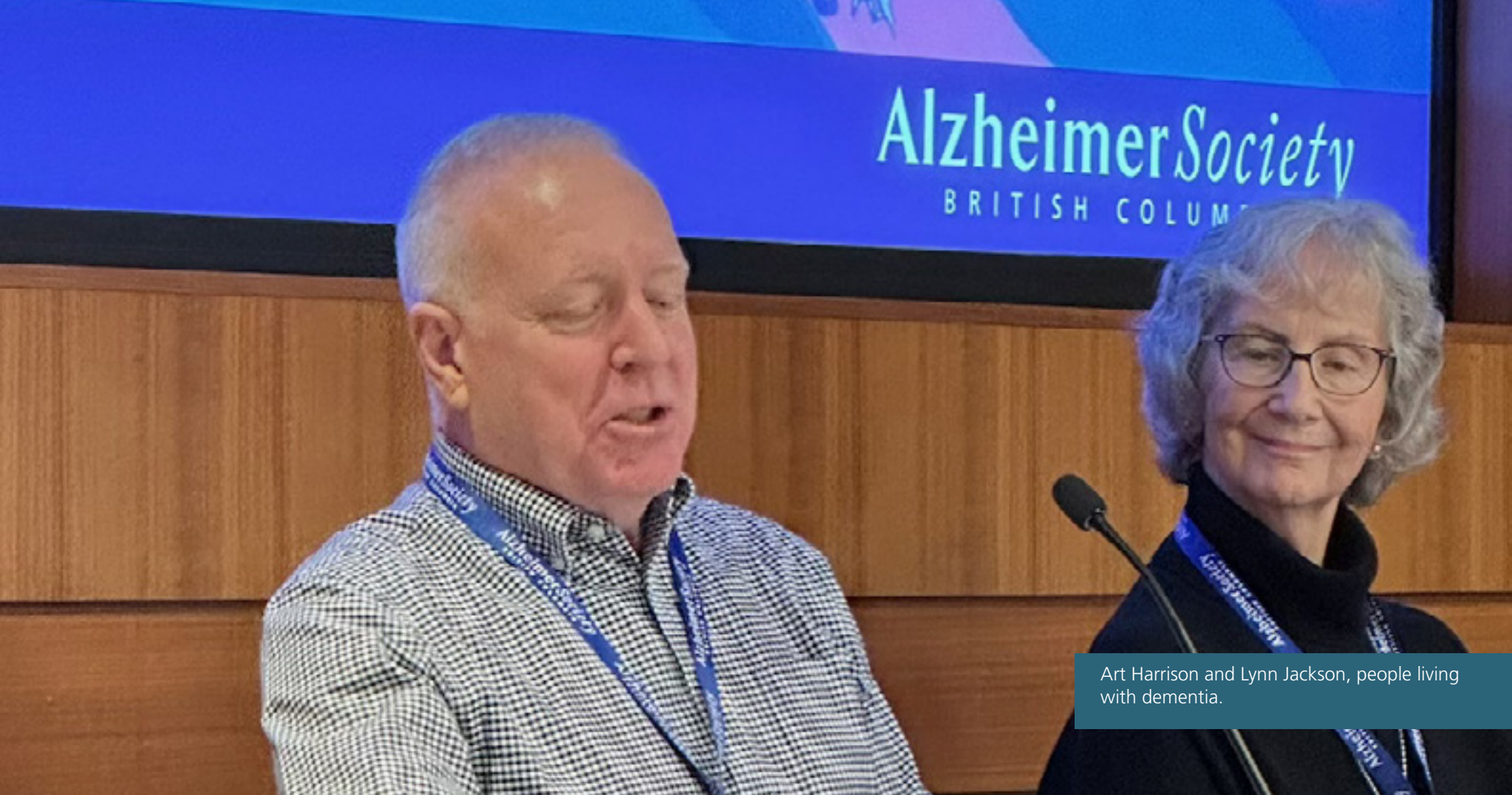
Strategic investment in B.C. dementia research helps inform the services we offer today, while creating a better future for anyone yet to be affected by the disease.

By the numbers

Over **\$1,000,000** invested in furthering dementia research.

Over **\$350,000** invested in initiatives like the Alzheimer Society Research Program (ASRP).

110 researchers and community members participated in our research luncheons.



Art Harrison and Lynn Jackson, people living with dementia.

“ It was a great opportunity to get informed and interact with some of the profs/researchers as well as other staff/lab members in the room. Each time we attend a function like this put on by the Society it gives [my wife] and I a bit more confidence that we are in good hands as client and caregiver and always leaves us eager for more information and participation. So, thanks very much for making that possible. ”

– Person living with dementia on the research luncheons.

STRENGTH IN COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Our community of dedicated supporters drive everything we do to change the conversation, the experience and the future of dementia.



Participants of this year's *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's*, presented by Go Auto.



People came together in Vancouver, Victoria and Kelowna for *Breakfast to Remember*.

Community support is foundational to achieving the Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s strategic priorities. This year, more than 65 per cent of our funding came from individuals, organizations, and corporate partners who share our commitment to improving the lives of people affected by dementia. Their contributions enable us to expand programs, deliver education, and advance research – directly supporting our objectives to change the conversation, the experience, and the future of dementia care.

Volunteers are integral to our community of care, providing essential support at every level of the organization – from facilitating programs and support groups to supporting the planning and execution of fundraising events. As members of our Board of Directors, volunteers guide us with strategic oversight.

Fundraising initiatives, including community-driven campaigns and signature events, help sustain our

programs and raise awareness of dementia across the province. These initiatives engage supporters in meaningful ways – from large-scale community gatherings to smaller, local events – amplifying the reach of our mission and strengthening connections within our community of care. Signature events, such as the *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's*, presented by Go Auto, illustrate the impact of these efforts in mobilizing resources and building community.

Ongoing investment from donors, volunteers, and partners ensures that the Alzheimer Society of B.C. can continue to deliver on its strategic goals, strengthen our community of care, and drive meaningful impact for people living with dementia.

PLANNED GIVING AND LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

An increasing amount of donors are including dementia support in their estate plans by leaving a gift to the Alzheimer Society of B.C. in their will. This ensures that Society can continue to provide programs, services, and research into the future. As the number of people affected by dementia continues to rise, these gifts contribute to the long-term sustainability of our Society and ensure that no one faces dementia alone. Planned giving represents a critical component of our philanthropic strategy, supporting both immediate and future priorities in care, education, and research. To learn more, call **604-742-4906**.



CEO Jennifer Lyle with *Charity Dinner for Alzheimer's* co-organizer Tony Yue.



Participants came together for the Forget Me Not Golf Tournament.

“ One of the things that I like most about my role is getting the chance to introduce people to the organization. People want to give. They want to help people affected by dementia. ”

– Marisa Gagne, *Walk* Volunteer Committee Chair.

“ My wife had Alzheimer's disease and I was the caregiver. I would have burned out had it not been for everything I learned while attending the webinars, lectures, and classes and reading the provided literature. ”

– Circle of Hope legacy donor.

Board of directors

Jennifer Hystad (Chair)

Partner, The Howe Group

Raman Johal (Vice-chair)

Partner, Gowling WLG (Canada) LLP

Erin Beaudoin

Chief Operations Officer for the Vancouver Island Real Estate Board

Paul Blanchet (Treasurer/Secretary)

Care partner, lived experience partner, Vice-President, Compass Technologies (retired)

Wyman Chin

SVP and Chief Information Officer, Pacific Blue Cross

Sheri Hundseth

Director of Indigenous Relations & Community Engagement, St. Paul's Hospital

Baljit Kang

Information Technology executive

Kahir Lalji

CEO, HelpAge Canada

Jim Mann

Dementia advocate, Lived experience partner, person living with dementia

Valerie Mann

Partner, Lawson Lundell LLP

Shauna Olney

Member, UN International Civil Service Commission 2022-2025

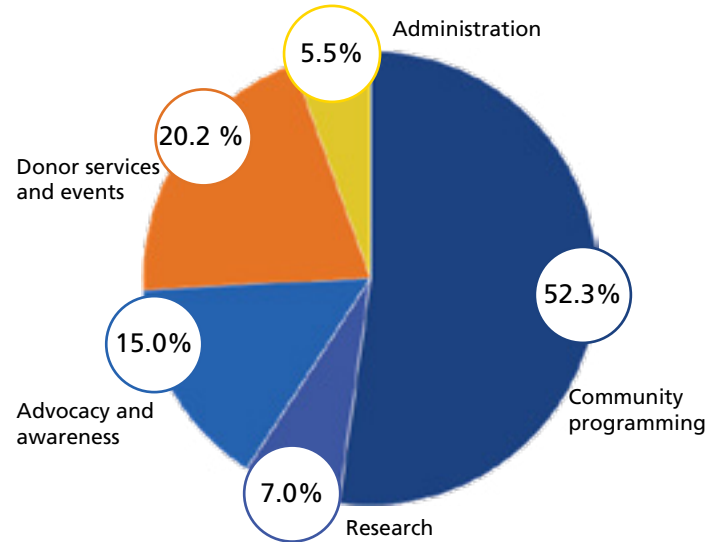
Sandra Kolarcik

BBA CPA CA

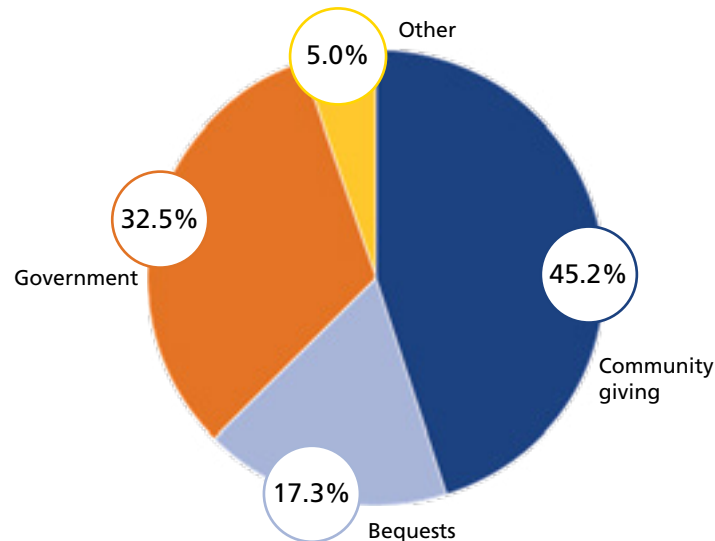
FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP: SUPPORTING FAMILIES NOW, SHAPING THE FUTURE

We are the only provincial charity dedicated to dementia, using every donation to expand support to everyone across B.C.

How we invested funds in our mission



How we received our funds



Our work is made possible thanks to the generosity of British Columbians who give their time, resources, and trust. More than 60 per cent of our funding comes from community and legacy giving — a powerful reflection of confidence in our mission and in how we steward every gift.

This generosity has enabled us to expand our community of care, offering support in new and innovative ways. Every contribution moves us closer to our vision: that no one in B.C. will face the disease alone.

Together with volunteers, donors, and partners, we are reaching people in communities across the province. At the same time, we recognize there are still people who need support. That is why we continue to invite British Columbians to give, volunteer, and share our message — helping us build a truly dementia-friendly B.C.

Yukon

- Total unique Helpline callers: 57
- Program participants: 152
- Education sessions: 6

North

- Helpline callers: 90
- Program participants: 236
- Education sessions: 37
- Support group sessions: 30

Vancouver Island

- Helpline callers: 746
- Program participants: 615
- Education sessions: 94
- Support group sessions: 124
- Social program sessions: 416

Online

- Education sessions: 94
- Support group sessions: 366
- Minds in Motion® sessions: 134

Interior

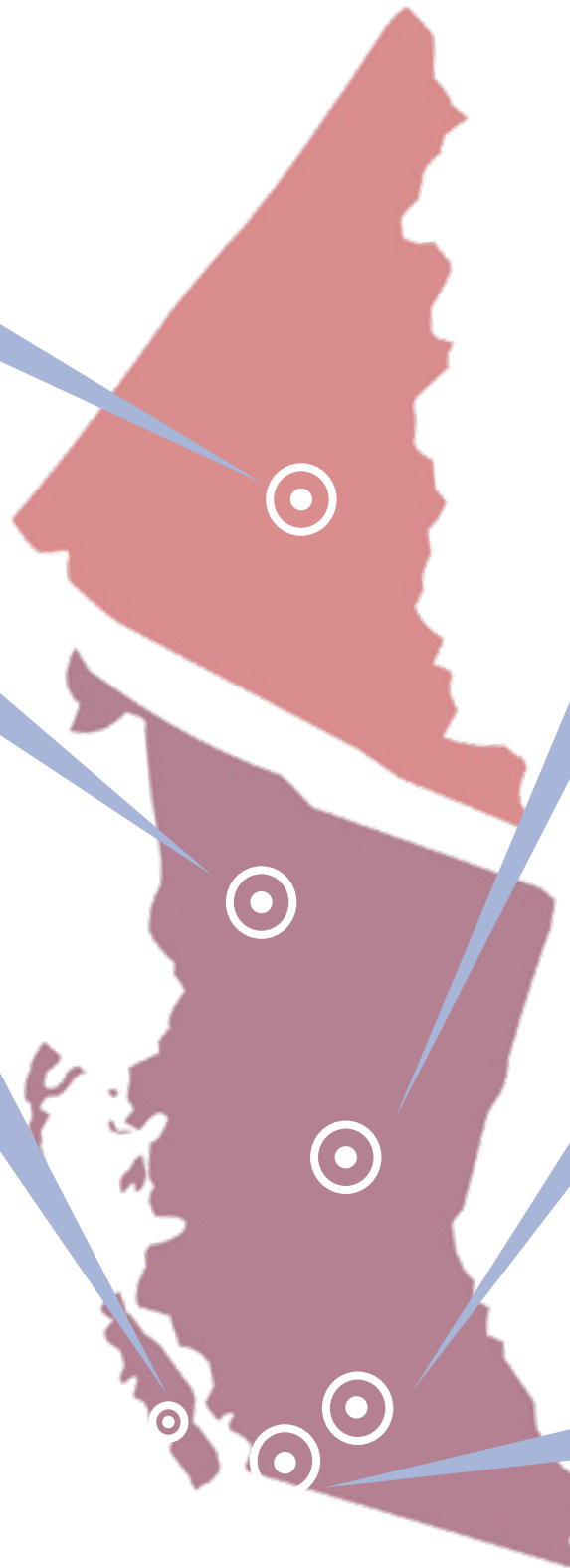
- Helpline callers: 462
- Program participants: 837
- Education sessions: 130
- Support group sessions: 267
- Social program sessions: 190

Fraser

- Helpline callers: 1030
- Program participants: 638
- Education sessions: 111
- Support group sessions: 195
- Social program sessions: 419

Vancouver-Coastal

- Helpline callers: 816
- Program participants: 680
- Education sessions: 100
- Support group sessions: 128
- Social program sessions: 332



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 or Urdu.

Alzheimer Society BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Front cover: Pat Hanrath, care partner

Above: Fred Keating, person living with dementia and Kari Barrett, Alzheimer Society of B.C. staff member