

Budget 2021 a missed opportunity to keep more Ontarians living with dementia where they want to be: at home

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TORONTO, ON—The Alzheimer Society of Ontario is expressing disappointment at the lack of recognition for home and community care providers in the 2021 provincial budget, released this week. The budget contains no new investments for home and community care, an oversight that will lead to thousands of vulnerable Ontarians continuing to access care in expensive and inappropriate settings.

“Community support providers, including the Alzheimer Society, are lean, efficient, and ready to do more,” said Cathy Barrick, CEO of the Alzheimer Society of Ontario. “Our staff and volunteers have the knowledge and experience to provide tailored, patient-centred care to both people living with dementia and their care partners. We know that the services we and our partners provide help keep people living with dementia where they want to be: at home, not in the hospital”.

Seniors living with dementia account for half of all alternate level of care (ALC) beds nationwide. Far too often a person living with dementia is in hospital not because they need to be there, but because they have nowhere else to go. With access to a fulsome suite of community support services, more hospital beds could be allocated to those who truly need them.

“In Ontario, dementia is long-term care. Dementia is hallway medicine. Treating hospitals and long-term care homes as the natural care setting for people living with dementia hasn’t worked before, and it won’t work now,” said Ms. Barrick. “The 2021 provincial budget is a missed opportunity to move away from institution-based care and provide more compassionate, efficient, and effective care to the 250,000 Ontarians living with dementia and their care partners”.

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About the Alzheimer Society

The Alzheimer Society is a Federation of 29 community support providers, operating in every corner of Ontario. We supported 165,000 clients last year, including both care partners and people living with dementia. We provide education and training to physicians and other health-care professionals, as well as the general public. With hundreds of staff and thousands of volunteers, we seek to alleviate the personal and social consequences of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias, and promote research into a cure and disease-altering treatment.

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