

Alzheimer Society applauds increased funding for Ontario Dementia Strategy

Investments contained in Budget 2022 will help build a dementia care system that supports those who work in it, and those who rely on it.

TORONTO, ON - April 28, 2022—The Alzheimer Society of Ontario welcomes a three-year commitment of \$15 million towards a renewed Dementia Strategy contained in the 2022 provincial budget released today. This compassionate, cost-effective investment will make a real difference in the lives of the over 260,000 Ontarians living with dementia—a number that is expected to double over the next 20 years.

“Dementia will be among the defining societal challenges of the coming decades,” said Cathy Barrick, CEO of the Alzheimer Society of Ontario. “Nearly a third of all Ontarians have a close family member living with dementia, and nearly three-quarters are concerned about developing dementia themselves. This is a disease that affects all of us: as our population ages and lives longer, the number of Ontarians living with dementia is only going to increase. The commitment to a renewed Ontario Dementia Strategy contained in Budget 2022 shows the Government of Ontario is serious about improving dementia care today, and preparing to compassionately care for those who develop dementia in the years to come.”

In Ontario today, dementia is hallway health care. Dementia is long-term care. On any given day, half—50%—of all alternate level of care (ALC) beds in Ontario’s hospitals are occupied by an older adult living with dementia. Two-thirds of all long-term care residents in Ontario have a diagnosis of dementia—and 8% do not need to be there. That amounts to 7,600 beds mostly occupied by someone living with dementia who could be supported where they want to be: in their own home.

“Improving dementia care is the key to solving hallway health care, the key to addressing long-term care wait lists,” continued Ms. Barrick. “A renewed Ontario Dementia Strategy will help focus the resources of the province on providing more efficient, compassionate care, helping to break down siloes and cut through red tape. We look forward to partnering with the Government of Ontario to build a dementia care system that works—for everyone.”

In April 2022 the Alzheimer Society of Ontario released its fully costed *Roadmap Towards a Renewed Ontario Dementia Strategy*. Informed by feedback from 21 dementia care experts—physicians, researchers, sector advocates, and people with lived experience—the report contains 77 recommendations on how to create a transformational Ontario Dementia Strategy. The full report can be accessed at: www.votedementia.ca.

About the Alzheimer Society

The Alzheimer Society is a Federation of 26 community support providers operating in every corner of Ontario. We supported over 100,000 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.

For more information, visit www.alzheimerontario.org.

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Alzheimer Society staff are available for public comment on Budget 2022 in English and French.