



DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES LOCAL GOVERNMENT TOOLKIT

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Alzheimer Society
BRITISH COLUMBIA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This *Toolkit* aims to support local governments in British Columbia in their efforts to make their communities more supportive of people with dementia. Dementia is an overall term for a set of symptoms that are caused by disorders affecting the brain. Dementia is not a specific disease. Many diseases can cause dementia, the most common being Alzheimer's disease and Vascular dementia (due to strokes). Symptoms may include memory loss and difficulties with thinking and problem-solving. Dementia is not a normal part of aging and is progressive, which means the symptoms will gradually get worse.

Many people with dementia live well in the community for quite a long time. However, dementia may make participating in activities and staying involved more difficult. People with dementia and caregivers tell the Society that stigma, as well as social and physical barriers, can make it more difficult to get around and to feel supported in their communities. However, with a little bit of information, a lot of compassion and your help, there is an opportunity to create positive change.

Becoming a dementia-friendly community is a journey as opposed to a destination. The Alzheimer Society of B.C. has established a process so that villages, towns, districts and cities can be officially recognized as *working towards becoming dementia friendly* over a number of years. The criteria below ensure that communities are able to work towards a common vision based on what is important and meaningful to people affected by dementia. Here are the steps to becoming dementia friendly:

1. **Partner in providing dementia-friendly education**
 - 1.1. Hold a Dementia Friends workshop for the Mayor and the local government council.
 - 1.2. Co-host a Dementia Friends workshop for the general public.
2. **Create a dementia-friendly working group (DF working group)**
 - 2.1. Identify key stakeholders and community members to join a DF working group responsible for advising on your local government's Dementia-Friendly Action Plan. People living with dementia should be included as a core part of this DF working group consulting on dementia-friendly work in the community.
3. **Develop a Dementia-Friendly Action Plan**
 - 3.1. Work with the Alzheimer Society of B.C., local government staff and the DF working group to create a Dementia-Friendly Action Plan tailored to your community. See page 30 for a worksheet.
 - 3.2. Focus your Dementia-Friendly Action Plan on key areas identified locally by people living with dementia, caregivers and the DF working group.
 - 3.3. Develop a strategy to communicate to the general public the dementia-friendly work being done in your community. This should be created in partnership with city staff and the DF working group. Examples include local radio and print media, open houses, social media updates or a dementia-friendly communities section on the municipal website.
4. **Implement your Dementia-Friendly Action Plan**
 - 4.1. Continue to regularly meet with the DF working group, including people living with dementia, to work on implementing the Dementia-Friendly Action Plan.
 - 4.2. Continue to work with the Society to review progress on your action plan and ongoing ideas for dementia-friendliness.

5. Stay accountable

- 5.1. Engage people with dementia on an ongoing basis in guiding and consulting on dementia-friendly goals and actions.
- 5.2. Provide a maximum one-page brief or organize a short update meeting every six months with the Alzheimer Society of B.C.
- 5.3. Complete an annual self-assessment (worksheet provided by the Society) on your community's progress.

The Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative assists communities in developing tailored approaches to supporting people living with dementia in their community. The initiative supports local governments through:

1. **Resources:** Education sessions, information on dementia and communicating appropriately, as well as consulting on the local Dementia-Friendly Action Plan.
2. **Networks:** Support to identify key stakeholders in the community and ideas for collaborating with them to best provide support and resources for community members living with dementia. For example, all Health Authorities in B.C. have at least one built environment specialist. They may be able to support this work, through providing health evidence and engaging with the community, other Health Authority departments and participating in the DF working group.
3. **Program integration:** Integration with an age-friendly grant or project. The Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative adds nuance and emphasizes the needs of people with dementia; it can also be integrated with a local government's Healthy Community partnership with a Health Authority. A Dementia-Friendly Action Plan could be part of a healthy community strategy and included in existing work.

This resource includes background information on dementia and dementia-friendly communities, steps and practical tools to begin a Dementia-Friendly Action Plan and a dementia-friendly

working group, as well as examples of how local governments can create communities that are inclusive, supportive and accessible for people with dementia.

This document discusses the considerations that should be made in both the social and built environments, in the areas of people, policy and practice. The practical suggestions and checklists in this document are compiled from evidence-based best practices and new approaches that show promise in communities around the world. It also includes examples from local contexts and responds to frequently-asked questions to inform dementia-friendly work in a way that acknowledges and builds upon the unique characteristics of various communities.

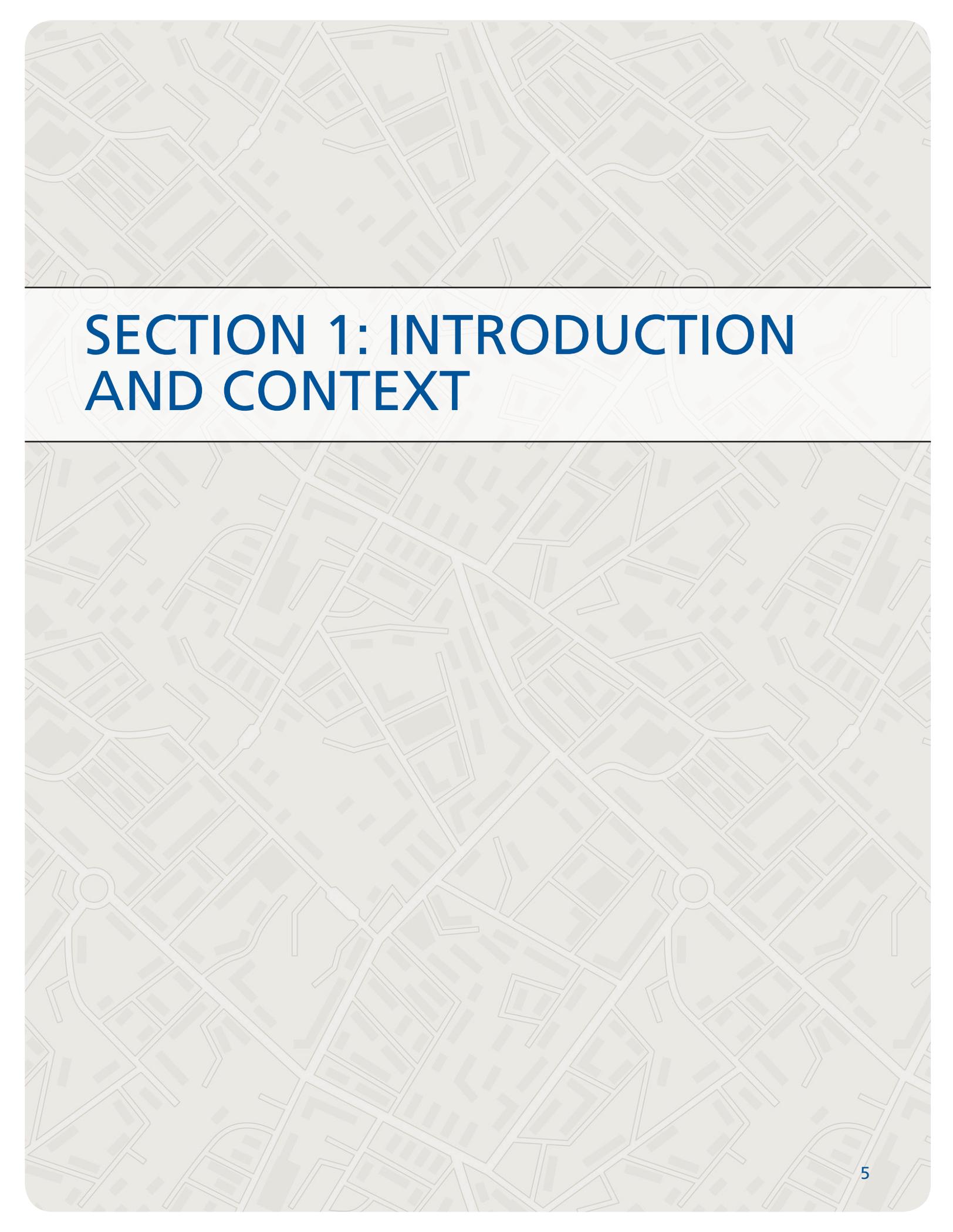
Any information, examples or resources included in this *Toolkit* are intended to complement community strengths, and adapt to local contexts and needs. They should not be confused with provincial certification or monitoring standards.

What is local government?

According to the Union of B.C. Municipalities, local government is a term for either municipalities or regional districts. Municipalities are cities, districts, towns or villages which have power to govern themselves. There are 162 municipalities in B.C. providing service to approximately 87 per cent of the provincial population.¹ A regional district provides local services to rural areas outside of municipalities. Regional districts work with municipalities to jointly fund services for an entire region and to provide sub-regional service.² In this document the term local government will be used to describe both municipalities and regional districts.

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative

Through its Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative, the Alzheimer Society of B.C. provides tools, information and education to communities across the province that plan to become more inclusive, respectful and understanding of all persons living with dementia. This initiative assists communities in increasing accessibility for people with dementia and their caregivers. As the population of our province ages, a dementia-friendly initiative will support individuals to age and maintain a better quality of life in their own homes and communities.

Vision of the Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative

Our vision is to create communities throughout B.C. that are welcoming to people with dementia. A dementia-friendly community focuses on stigma reduction and the inclusion of people with dementia. All people are educated about dementia and know that a person with dementia may sometimes experience the world differently. In a dementia-friendly community, people living with dementia feel supported by their community members.

Goals of the Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative

The Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative exists to support municipalities, the professional sector, community groups and the general public to become dementia-friendly through tools, education and partnership. This initiative aims to:

1. Support people with dementia, as well as their families and friends, to have the highest quality of life possible in their own homes through reducing the stigma associated with dementia.
2. Reduce organizational, social and physical barriers that prevent people with dementia from fully engaging in community activities.
3. Support people with dementia to live safely and comfortably in their communities for as long as possible.
4. Build understanding and knowledge about dementia among professionals.
5. Improve general health and well-being for people living with dementia and their caregivers.



Figure 1. The Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative has three key components: people, policy and practice

How does the Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative complement age-friendly community work?

What is an age-friendly community?

The age-friendly community concept was developed from the World Health Organization's [active aging framework](#). Age-friendly communities support and enable people to age actively and promote the inclusion of older adults in all areas of community life.³ They aim to optimize opportunities for health, participation and security to enhance quality of life and respect lifestyle choices. Furthermore, they aim to anticipate and respond to aging-related needs. Age-friendly communities have come to address the capacities and needs of people of all ages, not only those who are "elderly."⁴

Limitations of the age-friendly community concept

- Age-friendly community planning does not necessarily incorporate people with dementia into the process of implementing change. Actively incorporating dementia into current policy and projects will help empower people with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias and may also address the needs of others living with cognitive impairments.
- In Canada, the age-friendly community movement is growing, especially in Quebec and Manitoba; however, gaps continue to exist in addressing dementia in public spaces. Age-friendly communities make no specific reference to meeting the needs of people with dementia.

Why are dementia-friendly communities an asset to age-friendly communities?

- Dementia-friendly communities complement age-friendly initiatives by adding nuance and depth with respect to the needs of people with dementia. Working specifically with dementia in mind is more instructive and inclusive of both physical and cognitive impairments. For

example, while adding more outdoor seating is age-friendly, if the seating design is ambiguous and does not clearly indicate its function, it is not a dementia-friendly change.

- Dementia-friendly planning acknowledges caregivers and the concepts of interdependence and reliance.
- It also recognizes people with impairments who may feel excluded from the active aging framework guiding age-friendly work.
- It is important that older age not become equated with dementia, which is a reason for encouraging the use of two different initiatives. Dementia not a part of normal aging and can affect younger people in their early sixties, fifties or even forties.

Age-friendly resources

1. [Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide \(2007\)](#)
2. [Canada's Aging Population: The municipal role in Canada's demographic shift \(2013\)](#)
3. [Age-friendly Communities in Canada: Implementation Guide](#)
4. [Age-friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide](#)
5. [Age-friendly BC](#)

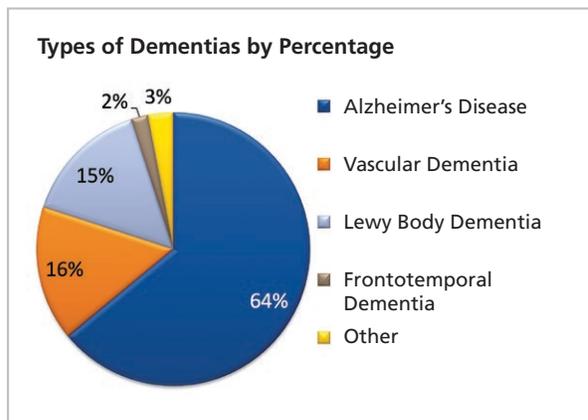
What is dementia?⁵

Dementia is a word that refers to the condition resulting from many neurological diseases. It is an “umbrella term” used to speak about these diseases, which are cause different physical changes to the brain. These diseases include:

- Alzheimer’s disease
- Vascular dementia
- Lewy body dementia
- Frontotemporal dementia, including Pick’s disease
- Other dementias, including Creutzfeld-Jakob disease

People with dementia may experience the following symptoms:

- Memory loss affecting day-to-day function
- Difficulty performing familiar tasks
- Disorientation of time and place
- Decreased judgment
- Changes in mood and behavior



- Problems with language
- Loss of initiative
- Change in personality
- Misplacing things
- Problems with abstract thinking

It is important to note that some of these symptoms can also be caused by conditions that may be treatable. These conditions may include depression, thyroid disease, drug interactions or infections. Community members should consult with their family physicians if they have any concerns.

Normal Aging

- Not being able to remember small details of a conversation or event that took place a year ago.
- Not being able to remember the name of an acquaintance.
- Forgetting things and events occasionally.
- Having occasional difficulty finding words.

Dementia

- Not being able to recall details of recent events or conversations.
- Not recognizing or knowing the names of family members.
- Forgetting things or events more frequently.
- Using frequent pauses and substitutions when finding words.

Table 1. Dementia is not part of normal aging

Note: this is not a diagnostic tool.

Signs of dementia and communication strategies

It is not always possible to tell immediately that a person has dementia. Everyone will experience dementia differently – no two people will have the same strengths and abilities at the same points along the disease trajectory, nor will they experience all of the same challenges.

However, here are some signs that a person you know in your community may be experiencing symptoms of dementia and some strategies for responding in a supportive way:



Signs	Communication strategies
<p>Problems with memory.</p> <p>As the disease progresses a person with dementia may forget things more often and not remember them later, especially more recent experiences. A person living with dementia may forget an appointment, or the sequence or details of an event. They may forget to pay for their dog license or may have lost a tax bill.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not argue. If a person with dementia does not remember a discussion you had previously, for example, it is because he or she is no longer able to properly store that memory due to changes in their brain. • When at all possible try to adjust to a person with dementia's reality because they may no longer be able to adjust to yours. You can do this by responding to feelings not necessarily the stories the person shares.
<p>Difficulty with familiar tasks.</p> <p>A person with dementia may have trouble with tasks that have been familiar to them all their lives. This is related to challenges in abstract or sequential thinking. Completing paperwork or following directions may now be challenging for them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try demonstrating rather than providing directions verbally. • Don't rush – this may mean booking a longer appointment or meeting. • Take things one step at a time.

Signs	Communication strategies
<p>Inability to follow a conversation or find the right words.</p> <p>Everyone has trouble finding the right word sometimes, but a person with dementia may frequently forget simple words or substitute a less appropriate word for the one they really want. This can make their sentences or accounts of events difficult to understand.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak slowly and provide one message at a time. This will give the person the time they need to digest the information. • When possible use close-ended or yes or no questions. When this is not possible use questions that have parameters: for example, “Tell me about going to the bank yesterday afternoon” rather than “What did you do yesterday?” • Ask the person’s permission to help them find the right word. • Repeat the question a different way or try again later. • Bring the person to a quieter place.
<p>Disorientation of time or place.</p> <p>It’s normal to briefly forget the day of the week or your destination. But a person with dementia can become lost somewhere familiar, not knowing how they got there or how to get home. New spaces like an unfamiliar newly-developed city square or building may make a person with dementia anxious.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have concerns about someone’s ability to get home safely, ask them how they are planning to travel. With a person with dementia’s permission, it might be necessary to walk him or her to the bus stop or wait with them until a taxi arrives.
<p>Poor judgment.</p> <p>A person living with dementia may experience decreased judgment. This could mean a variety of things: the person may dress inappropriately for the weather, may experience less social inhibition or their behaviour may put them at risk of becoming a victim of a crime or personal injury.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make suggestions tactfully and respectfully. For example, instead of saying, “Why are you dressed in a t-shirt in November? You must be freezing!” it may be helpful to say something like “It has gotten cool all of a sudden, would you like to borrow a sweater?”

Signs	Communication strategies
<p>Problems with abstract thinking.</p> <p>A person with dementia may have challenges with tasks that require abstract thinking. This may make answering open-ended questions difficult and it may be challenging to make sense of symbols or images. This may include being unable to make sense of bathroom signs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because dementia affects a person’s ability to use abstract thinking, try to use straightforward language. Avoid metaphors or turns-of-phrase like “a penny for your thoughts” or “wake up on the wrong side of the bed.” • Stay positive, but avoid jokes or sarcasm, as these require advanced abstract thinking skills that can be difficult for some people with dementia.
<p>Challenges in mood or behaviour.</p> <p>Everyone experiences changes in mood. But a person with dementia can sometimes become suspicious, withdrawn or even more outgoing than before. Over time a person with dementia may become more apathetic, fearful or even paranoid. For example, they may lose interest in activities they previously enjoyed: a person who loved going for walks is no longer interested in doing so.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt to the changes the person is experiencing. Like all of us, people with dementia will have “good days” and “bad days.” If a person with dementia is having a bad day it may be helpful to reschedule a meeting or appointment. • Acknowledging the feelings of a person with dementia, as expressed by their mood, can be helpful even if you feel their stories may not be accurate. Addressing their feelings may help address challenging behaviour.

Other tips for communication

- Remember to make eye contact. If you are making notes, take a break and make sure to look at the person.
- A person’s capability to understand body language is often maintained for a long time along the dementia journey. Take note of your body language — watch your gestures, facial expressions and posture and keep positive.
- It may be necessary to remind someone to put on their glasses or turn on their hearing aid, but do not assume that every person with dementia has a visual or hearing impairment.
- Avoid using baby talk, or “elder-speak” (for example, “sweetie” or “dear”). Always speak to the person with dignity and respect.
- Never speak about the person to others, as if they are not there.

Key communication strategies

1. Get the person’s attention.
2. Make eye contact.
3. Bring the person to a quieter place.
4. Speak slowly and clearly.
5. Share one message at a time.
6. Use close-ended questions – yes or no answers.
7. Allow time for response.
8. Respond to feelings, not stories.
9. Connect, don’t correct.
10. Repeat or try again later.

Figure 2. Key communication strategies

What is a dementia-friendly community?

A dementia-friendly community is a community that focuses on the inclusion of people with dementia and on stigma reduction. Its community members are educated about dementia and recognize that people with dementia may sometimes experience the world differently. Community members foster understanding about dementia and encourage people with dementia to participate in their communities to the fullest extent possible.

In a dementia-friendly community, people living with dementia feel supported by their fellow community members even when they face potential challenges at post offices, retail outlets, using transportation or enjoying hobbies out in the community.

The term “community” can mean a location like a neighborhood or city, but can also include groups of people with shared interests or features, such as professional groups, faith groups or local businesses.

Dementia-friendly communities are defined by both their social characteristics (p.13) and physical characteristics (p.15). These attributes can help support people with dementia by reducing anxiety, stigma or frustration.

“A dementia-friendly community will help create inviting and supportive places where people like me, who are living with dementia in the community, can feel comfortable and safe walking, shopping and just getting around.”

– Jim Mann, B.C. Leadership Group member

Why are dementia-friendly communities important in B.C.?

- Dementia is a challenging condition and affects more than 70,000 people in B.C.
– approximately 1.6 per cent of the total

population. This number is expected to grow as the population of the province ages. Dementia affects not only individuals, but families and communities too.⁶

- Approximately 60 per cent of people living with dementia live by themselves or with a caregiver in our communities.⁷
- Many people with dementia live well in the community for quite a long time and all people with dementia should feel valued, included and respected.
- When people must leave familiar settings or adjust their routines due to the changes brought on by the dementia, they may lose a sense of personhood, belonging and independence.
- There is potential to reduce injury and isolation. An example is wandering: everyone benefits when community members can recognize and respond appropriately when a person with dementia is wandering or experiencing disorientation.

What makes a difference to people living with dementia?

1. The built environment (streetscapes, signage)
2. Local facilities (shops, post office, library)
3. Support services (day programs, home care, community-based health care)
4. Social networks (family, community members)
5. Local groups (support groups for people with dementia)

Figure 3. What makes a difference

Dementia-friendly communities: Local government considerations

People want to age in place and stay at home for as long as possible and many experts argue this is best, especially for a person with dementia. When people must leave familiar settings due to the changes brought on by the illness, and the resulting stigma and embarrassment about behaviour changes, they experience a tremendous amount of stress. There can be a loss of independence, sense of belonging and identity associated if people with dementia have to leave their home. People want to live a good quality of life in their neighbourhoods when they age – and still be valued community members, be acknowledged and feel a sense of belonging.

Many of the noticeable difficulties people with dementia face in their social and physical environments can be decreased when barriers causing disability are reduced or removed. When communities are dementia-friendly, a person is able to navigate the familiar and legible landscape around them, or more likely to ask for assistance from a compassionate passerby.

Social environment

A dementia-friendly community member recognizes that:

- A person with dementia is more than their diagnosis.
- Dementia can affect a person's cognition, behaviour, emotions and physical capabilities.
- Everyone has a role to play in seeing people with dementia as a part of their community and supporting their safety, independence, value and inclusion.
- There are particular signs of wandering, which should be taken seriously and to which everyone should respond.

What a dementia-friendly environment may look like:

- Dementia education is available to help community members understand how to provide appropriate assistance and to feel more confident in knowing how to respond to a person with dementia.
- Community organizations include people with dementia in their regular programming and through specifically designed activities.
- City staff – whether librarians or community centre staff, or parking and bylaw officers, police or firefighters – are dementia-educated, able to recognize and communicate effectively with a person with dementia.
- Others in the community, such as shopkeepers, bank tellers and bus drivers, may receive dementia education specific to their job.

The social fabric of dementia-friendly communities: Dementia Friends

As a way to build understanding, compassion and respect, the Alzheimer Society of B.C. encourages municipalities to host Dementia Friends workshops. These “dementia 101” workshops provide an orientation to dementia, as well as communication strategies for people to learn more about the disease and the people living with it. This is a way to educate people about dementia, to reduce stigma, raise awareness and provide practical suggestions about supporting people with dementia in the community. The workshops complement the Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative. We suggest organizing workshops when a community is first exploring becoming dementia friendly, as it provides a good base from which to build dementia-friendliness.

Contact us to organize a Dementia Friends workshop in your community at dementiafriendlybc@alzheimerbc.org!

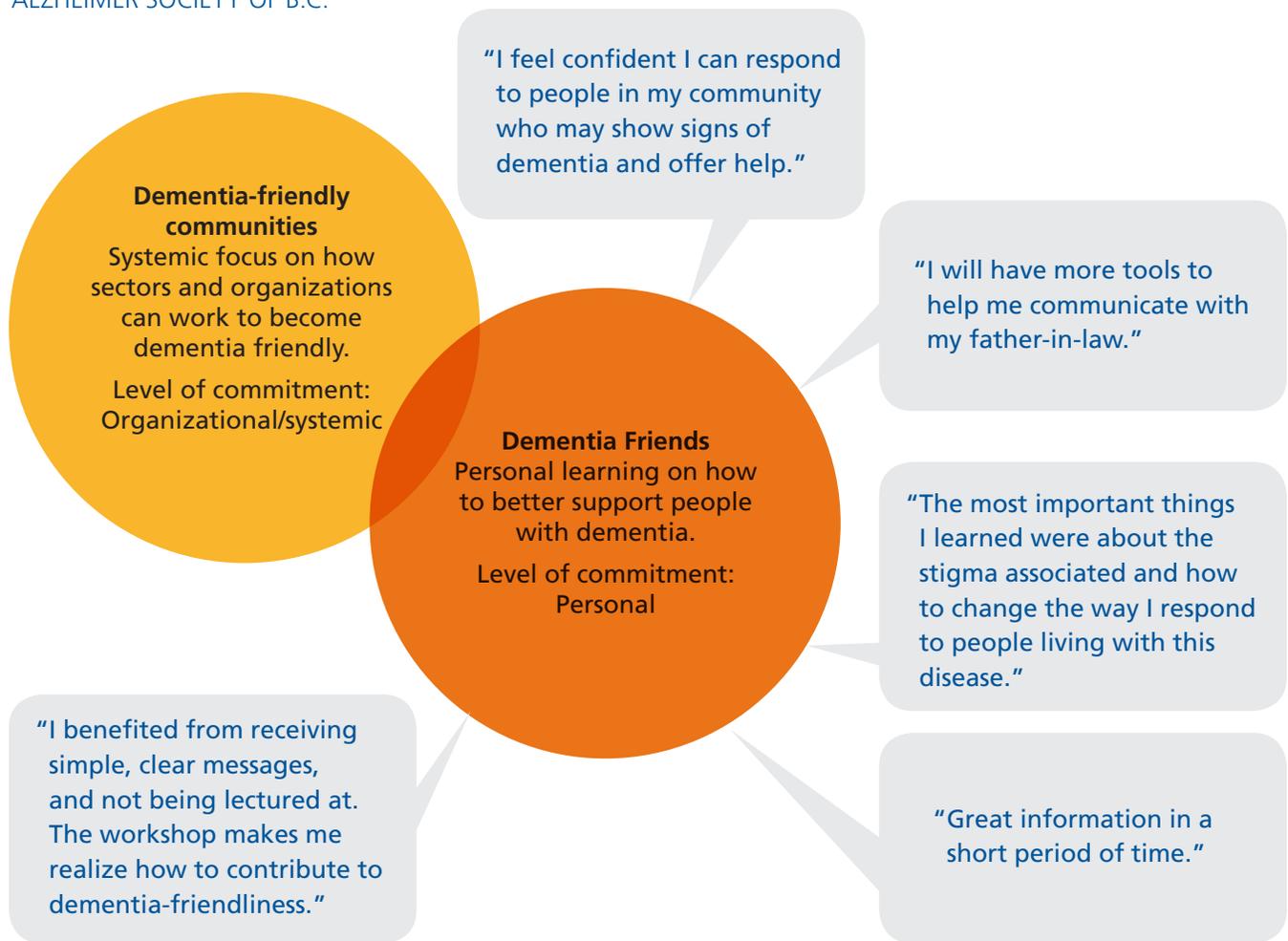


Figure 4. Quotes from Dementia Friends workshop participants (2015)

Built environment

The built environment⁸ “refers to the human-made or modified physical surroundings in which people live, work, and play”⁹ – characteristics such as buildings, parks, schools, transportation systems and other infrastructure that is used on a daily basis. A built environment that is welcoming to people with dementia includes:

- Clear and legible signage placed at eye level. Optimally, signage should be simple and explicit with large, darker, unambiguous graphics on a light background.
- Well-kept streets. Signs of street decay, such as trash and vandalism, can decrease walking, especially among older adults.
- Flat, wide and unobstructed sidewalks with smooth, plain, non-slip, non-reflective paving.
- Clearly marked accessible washrooms in public spaces.
- Landmarks, distinctive structures, open spaces and places of activity and rest.
- Easy-to-use street furniture in styles familiar to people. Preliminary studies indicate that style is less important than clarity of function and use. Ambiguity of design is challenging for persons living with dementia.
- A walkable neighbourhood, in which services are within 250-500 metres of residences.

The built environment, through its design and use, can have a positive or negative impact on independence and safety. It may affect a person with dementia’s ability to access, comprehend and utilize their surroundings. Any built form that negatively affects orientation, confuses or increases the risk of falls puts community members with dementia in challenging situations. Many people with dementia have a tendency to limit going out, but a dementia-friendly community should make it easier and more appealing to go out and socialize. Here are some reasons the built environment is so important for people with dementia and their caregivers:

- A person with dementia’s abilities change as the disease progresses. While this change will limit their interaction with the outdoor environment, this interaction, according to research, provides some sense of independence and self-respect at a time when they are experiencing the loss and new challenges due to their cognitive impairment.
- The majority of people with dementia, particularly in the mild to moderate stages, continue to go out alone daily, but may be

Example 1. Dementia friendly in practice

As part of the Society’s work with the City of Vancouver, staff in various departments participate in a Dementia Friends workshop. Staff who are educated can better provide assistance to people with cognitive impairment. City Hall can also assess the built environment, such as signage, to ensure that it is legible, visible and easily understandable for people with dementia.

City staff participating in educational workshops at the City of Vancouver:

1. Social planning
2. Police
3. Parks and recreation
4. Frontline staff (eg. reception)
5. Interdepartmental senior leadership working on collaborative health and social projects



limited in where they go or how they get around to doing things closer to home. For example, some older adults with dementia limit their outside activities to relatively undemanding situations, such as going to the corner shop, posting a letter or going for a short walk.

- People with dementia generally enjoy going out but anxiety, disorientation or confusion can occur in complex, crowded or heavily trafficked places or when startled by sudden loud noises.
- Despite cognitive changes, people with dementia may visualize planned routes. They tend to use familiar landmarks and other visual cues they regularly encounter, rather than maps and written directions as wayfinding techniques.



In considering the design and construction of streets, public spaces and buildings, municipalities could incorporate a dementia-friendly lens to address the points above, and also reduce the likelihood of injuries to both people with dementia and caregivers who may assist them in the community. A dementia-friendly lens employs the following key principles that are fundamental to dementia-friendly design:^{10,11}

1. **Inclusion** – In this instance, inclusion is characterized by interest in the lived experience of dementia, so that the feelings and experiences of people with dementia are legitimized and respected. For neighbourhoods to be considered sustainable and inclusive, they should allow for equality of access and opportunity

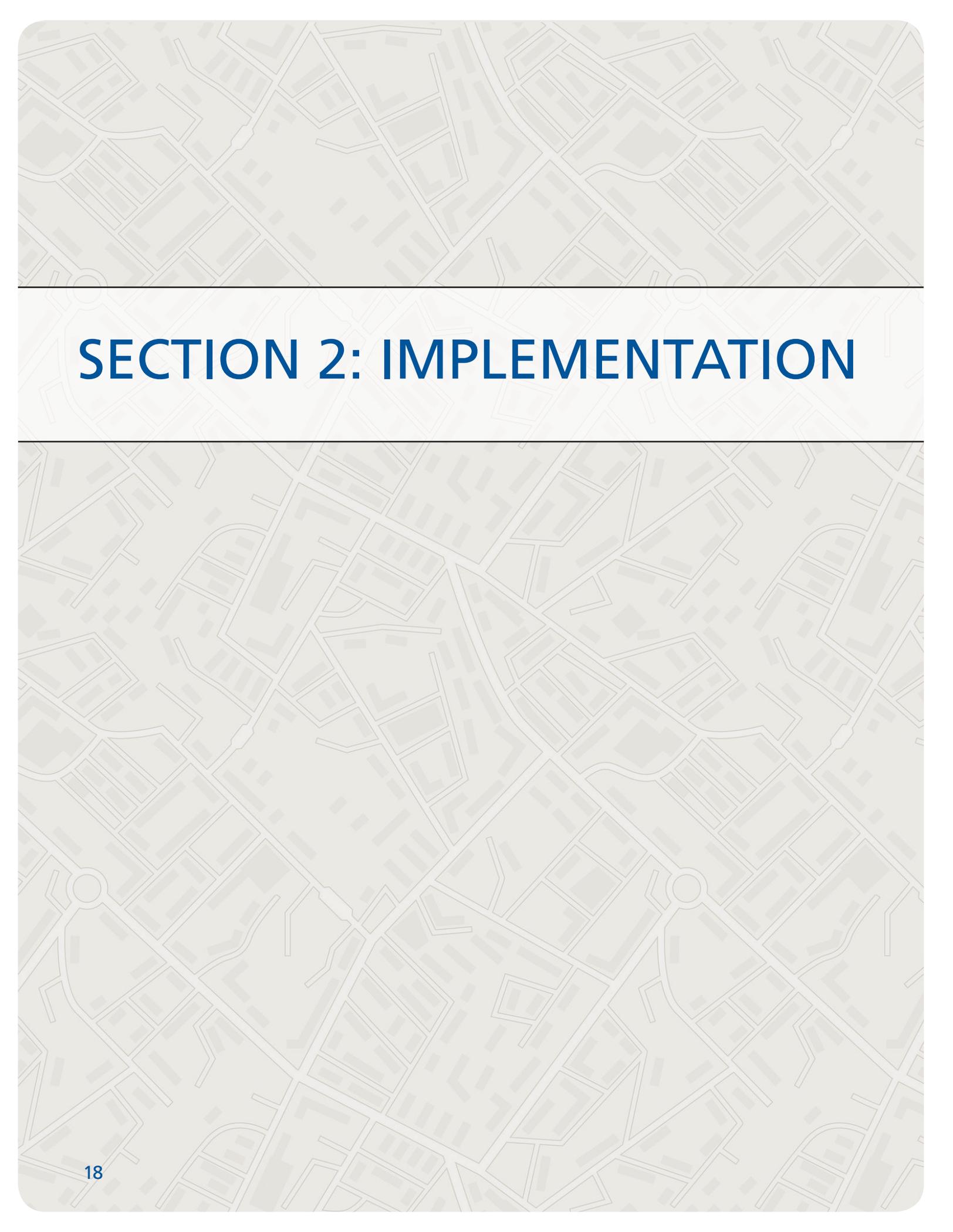
regardless of ability or age. One of the barriers to accessibility and belonging is stigma. A well-designed built environment can enhance independence, which in turn has an impact on quality of life factors such as confidence, health and self-respect.

2. **Accessibility** – The principle of accessibility addresses how urban public spaces enable people with dementia to reach, enter, use and walk around the places they visit. Due to the progression of dementia and ongoing changes to the urban landscape, accessibility is characterized as a constantly-changing experience between the person and public spaces.
3. **Distinctiveness** – Distinctiveness helps people understand where they are and helps them identify which way they should go. Connected with the principle of familiarity, distinct places have easily legible features that give clues to help people understand where they are and what is expected of them in that space. Distinctive places also retain local character through built form, design features, colours and materials that give the streets and buildings their own identity. Employing familiar designs is one example, as is maintaining long-established landmarks that are positioned at decision points for ease of navigation.
4. **Safety** – Only when people perceive the outdoors to be safe can they enjoy being out in the community. The possible benefit of having safe outdoor environments is an ameliorated quality of life for citizens, especially if the environment is inclusive of a range of physical and cognitive abilities.
5. **Familiarity** – Familiarity addresses the psychological by referring to the recognizable nature of urban public spaces and the extent to which older persons can easily understand and navigate their environments. Familiarity helps with wayfinding.



- 6. Comfort** – Comfort refers to the ability to visit places without mental or physical discomfort. Comfort is often associated with calm, welcoming, informal and pedestrian-friendly spaces.

Employing these principles in your planning can positively affect the quality of life for people with dementia. Using these principles may also improve your community's accessibility and inclusivity for other groups as well.



SECTION 2: IMPLEMENTATION

Starting the process: First steps to becoming a dementia-friendly community

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. is here to help. With expert information, resources and support, we can support a community's steps towards becoming dementia friendly. One of the first steps a community should take is to connect with the Society to receive expert consultation on your projects and to make sure you receive the appropriate recognition for your work. The Society provides materials, including toolkits, sector-specific materials and other resources to unite your community with our provincial initiative.

If you let us know what your community is doing, we will also be better able to advocate for dementia-friendly work throughout the province, as we work to increase support from various organizations and stakeholders.

People with dementia in your community are key to this initiative. We encourage you to consult with them before committing to dementia-friendly actions. By making sure that the actions outlined in your Dementia-Friendly Action Plan are informed by the lived experience of people with dementia in your community, your actions are more likely to be effective and targeted at the areas that are most meaningful. Furthermore, involve municipal staff from different departments – such as Engineering, Library, Parks, Planning and Police – in order to inform the Dementia-Friendly Action Plan and build ownership and commitment in support of implementation.

By making a formal commitment to becoming a dementia-friendly community your municipality sends a strong message: that dementia is important and that you are working toward inclusivity.



Steps to becoming a dementia-friendly community

Step 1. Partner in providing dementia-friendly education.

- Hold a Dementia Friends workshop for the Mayor and the local government council.
- Co-host a Dementia Friends workshop for the general public.
- Appoint a dementia-friendly communities point-person to be the Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s contact.

Step 2. Set up a dementia-friendly working group (DF working group).

- Identify key stakeholders and community members to join a working group responsible for advising on your local government's Dementia-Friendly Action Plan. People with dementia should be included as a core part of this working group and should consult on dementia-friendly work in the community.

Step 3. Develop a Dementia-Friendly Action Plan.

- Work with the Alzheimer Society of B.C., local government staff and the DF working group to create a Dementia-Friendly Action Plan tailored to your community. See a Dementia-Friendly Action Plan worksheet ([pg. 30](#)).
- Focus the Dementia-Friendly Action Plan on key areas identified locally by people with dementia, caregivers and the DF working group.
- Develop a strategy to communicate the dementia-friendly work being taken in the community with the general public. This should be created in partnership with city staff and the DF working group.

Step 4. Implement your Dementia-Friendly Action Plan.

- Present the Dementia-Friendly Action Plan to the Society for endorsement.
- If endorsed, share with City Council, and request an endorsement ([pg. 28](#)) or a resolution to work towards becoming dementia-friendly.
- Continue to meet with the DF working group regularly and include people with dementia to work on the Dementia-Friendly Action Plan.
- Continue to work with the Society to review Dementia-Friendly Action Plan progress and ongoing ideas for dementia-friendliness.

Step 5. Stay accountable.

- Engage people with dementia on an ongoing basis in guiding and consulting on dementia-friendly goals and actions.
- Provide a maximum one-page brief or organize a short update meeting every six months with the Alzheimer Society of B.C.
- Complete an annual self-assessment (worksheet provided by the Society) on your community's progress.

Figure 5. How to work towards becoming dementia friendly

Actions local government can take¹²

Dementia-friendly communities will look different depending on the size and resources of each municipality. The key for effective policy change is to inform the thinking underlying policy so it is inclusive of people with dementia and their caregivers.

Education examples

- Educate local government councils with Dementia Friends educational workshops.
- Host an educational public event in partnership with the Alzheimer Society of B.C.
- Host continuous Alzheimer Society of B.C. dementia education sessions in accessible community spaces such as libraries.

“Dementia affects individuals, as well as family, friends and neighbours. Consideration and respect for the person with dementia means that everyone is supported. Through dementia-friendly communities we create a ripple effect – small actions result in big changes and create better municipalities for us all.”

- Dr. Penny Ballem, Vancouver City Manager

Bylaw examples

- Create separate bike and pedestrian pathways.
- Use traffic calming methods such as narrow traffic lanes and residential traffic diversion to reduce traffic speed and volume. Encourage active transportation as well as public transit with legibly labelled and accessibly located bus stops.
- Improve signage in your area. Use large graphics and symbols with clear colour contrasts such as dark lettering on a light background. Part of improving signage is placing signs along a path with easy-to-follow instructions in visible locations that assist someone getting from one location to another.

- Encourage mixed land use through zoning, in order to promote multi-purpose spaces near residential areas, ideally within a five to ten minute walk.
- Provide support for home maintenance and update building codes to provide for accessible housing. For example, the City of New Westminster, as part of its Age- and Ability-Friendly Community Initiative, implemented an Adaptable Housing Policy and Bylaw. More specifically, the City, through its zoning bylaw, requires 40 per cent of all new single-storey, multi-family units to be adaptable.

Example 2. Dementia friendly in practice

Priority areas as expressed by people with dementia:¹³

1. Community awareness and understanding of living with dementia.
2. Inclusion in social activities and engagement opportunities, such as volunteering.
3. Support to continue living at home for as long as possible supported by access to appropriate health care services.
4. Accessible outdoor environment with clear signage, appropriate lighting and distinctive use of colours.
5. Affordable, accessible transportation and housing options in the community support to remain employed.



ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF B.C.

- Enforce the creation of social squares in new developments to facilitate social inclusion.
- Accept companion dogs in shops, grocery stores and other local places.

Example 3. Dementia friendly in practice

A dementia-friendly racquet club could be inclusive of members who have difficulty remembering the rules of the games by organizing a buddy program to support players with dementia.



Policy examples

Arrange for all frontline staff to participate in a Dementia Friends workshop.

- Educate planning, engineering and other key city staff through a Dementia Friends workshop and with access to appropriate dementia-related resources.
- Build public toilets accessible for persons with mobility impairments; for example, designate washrooms as family or mixed gender washrooms.
- Increase the duration of crossing walk lights and have visual and audio cues.
- Create parking drop-off zones in front of physician clinics and other medical facilities so caregivers are able to take a person with dementia safely inside, before parking the car.

Programs examples

- In partnership with your local business bureau, organize a Dementia Friends workshop series specifically for businesses in your community.
- Work with recreation centres to develop exercise programming that is accessible for people with dementia, both younger onset and for those age 65 and older.
- Maximize opportunities to access and engage with the natural environment through projects like edible landscapes in greenways and community gardens. Research supports a strong relationship between exposure to nature and the reduction of stress, chronic disease, depression, anxiety, improved concentration and cognitive functioning.

Example 4. Dementia friendly in practice

When planning community events, city staff and organizing committees could support a volunteer program for people with dementia to promote social engagement, while at the same time raising awareness in the community.



who display aggressive behaviour or who live alone. The connectivity of a smaller community may also be perceived as negative for those who would like to keep their diagnosis private or limited to a small circle of supporters.

Why should rural communities consider becoming dementia friendly?

1. Dementia-friendly communities can provide community-based supports where fewer formal supports exist.
2. The Society is mobile and is able to travel to rural communities to provide dementia education.
3. The Society is keen to work with communities in a way that suits their needs.
4. This is an opportunity to provide education and awareness in communities that may be historically underserved with medical services and information.
5. This is a way to support citizens to stay in their communities for longer periods of time before moving away.



“I think the support system can be much stronger in a small community. I think in a small community, we all take responsibility for our seniors, where in a city you hear stories all the time of someone wandering away and, you know, they could be wandering on the street and nobody would really approach them. I think the likelihood of that happening in a small community is very much smaller.”

“If we see a senior in this community who appears to be in difficulty at all, everybody just kind of rallies around. And even if we see a senior who’s in the grocery store carrying grocery bags, it’s totally unheard of that people would walk by and not say, ‘Can I give you a ride home?’”

“There’s just much more of an ownership of responsibility for people who have challenges, whether they are seniors or children, or people who are facing developmental challenges.”

– Community member, participant in the research “Dementia in Rural Northwestern Ontario: Understanding the Context and Issues” (2011)

► URBAN CASE STUDY: CITY OF NEW WESTMINSTER

From our conversations with representatives of the City of New Westminster, here are some of their thoughts on becoming dementia friendly.

Why does New Westminster want to be dementia friendly?

The City of New Westminster has undertaken significant work in the area of Age- and Ability-Friendly Communities, including an extensive consultation process with older adults and seniors. This work is informing the City's Official Community Plan. It has also been used to facilitate the development of a number of initiatives in support of an Age- and Ability-Friendly Community, including an Adaptable Housing Policy and Bylaw, an Age-Friendly Business Initiative, a Century House Inclusion Project, an annual Connecting Seniors to Services Fair, a Seniors Engagement Toolkit, a Seniors Services Directory and a "Wheelability Assessment Project."

New Westminster, similar to other municipalities in Metro Vancouver, is experiencing an aging population. Between 2011 and 2036, the number

of people over the age of 50 will increase by 88 per cent and the number of people over the age of 65 will increase by 130 per cent. By comparison, the population as a whole will increase by 44 per cent. As people age, they report more health and activity limitations. As evidence, 57 per cent of people over the age of 65 report such limitations. Dementia also becomes more prevalent as people age. In New Westminster, it is estimated that 940 people currently have dementia, with this number projected to almost double to 1,830 by 2034. Additionally, research shows that about half of the people with dementia live in the community.

Given that about 500 people with dementia are currently living in the community, the question of planning for their needs becomes important – ensuring that the built environment is accessible and that people with dementia have opportunities for involvement and social interaction. This is critical for their independence and quality of life. The City has a key role to play, as it informs the built environment and is responsible for civic facilities and infrastructure such as sidewalks. It also offers a range of programs and services



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including fire, library, police and recreation. On a daily basis, this is the level of government that most impacts all citizens' lives.

What are your goals?

The City of New Westminster is working towards becoming more dementia friendly. In October 2013, City Council endorsed three Senior Advisory Committee recommendations in support of becoming a dementia-friendly community. The City also successfully applied for a 2015 Age-Friendly Community Planning and Project Grant and will use this funding to develop a Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan and three Action Guides. The plan will be based on a comprehensive literature review and consultation process, including with people living with dementia, their caregivers, family members and health-care professionals. The plan will also inform the development of the City's Official Community Plan, which is a policy document which sets the vision, goals and objectives for the future of the city. It also provides an overall framework for decisions on a range of areas including planning, land use, building and development, housing, neighbourhood character, social policy and transportation.

On January 26, 2015, New Westminster became British Columbia's first dementia-friendly City

Council, with councillors participating in a Dementia Friends workshop conducted by the Alzheimer Society of B.C.

What partners are you considering working with?

The City of New Westminster will be working with the Alzheimer Society of B.C. and Fraser Health. The City and the Alzheimer Society are currently collaborating to raise public awareness about dementia. More specifically, the City and the Society recently participated in a dementia-friendly community panel at the New Westminster Seniors Festival, which attracted over 500 seniors. The City will also explore developing a more formal relationship with Fraser Health related to the development of the Action Plan and three Action Guides.

What are your next steps?

The next steps are to retain the services of a consultant and to establish a working group which will work towards the development of the Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan and three Action Guides. This work will be completed by December 2015. At this time, the working group will shift from planning to implementation.



▶ RURAL CASE STUDY: VILLAGE OF VALEMOUNT

From our conversations with representatives of the Village of Valemount, here are some of their thoughts on becoming dementia friendly.

Why does Valemount want to be dementia friendly?

Keeping people in their home where everything is familiar and comforting is important. We all live in communities, and most importantly our communities are made up of people – a village’s citizens. We all need a sense of belonging and we all need to keep engaged in life. Valemount has a large number of seniors, some living with dementia. As a community, we need to know how to communicate and how to make their lives safe, productive and comfortable.

What are your goals?

Our goals are to make our community knowledgeable about dementia. Local businesses of all kinds need to be aware of what to look for and how to react when someone living with dementia comes in. We need to be vigilant and caring about all our citizens. We also need to be aware of the stresses that caregivers are facing and know how to assist them. The bottom line is to make Valemount a warm and welcoming place where our friends living with dementia feel confident to walk out their front doors and venture into town without worry.

“We cannot let our friends stay locked in their houses feeling scared and nervous about going out into the village.”

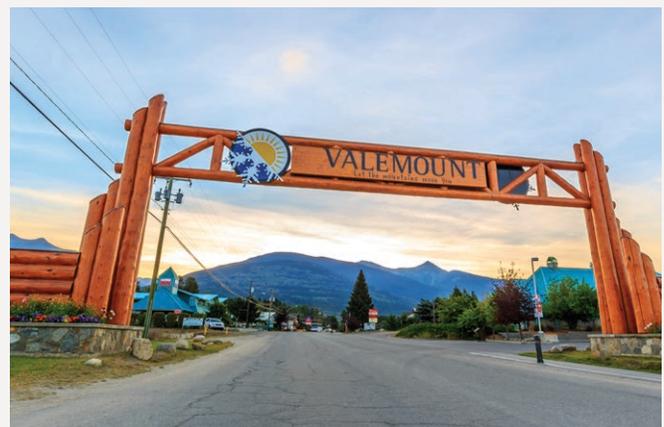
– Hollie Blanchette, Councillor,
Village of Valemount

What partners are you considering working with?

1. Chamber of Commerce
2. Local government
3. Schools
4. Bank
5. Library
6. Medical clinic
7. Seniors housing
8. Robson Valley Support Society
9. Hotels and restaurants
10. Non-profit societies
11. Home based businesses
12. First responders
13. All our citizens

What are your next steps?

Our next step is to work on our Dementia-Friendly Action Plan.



How to develop your Dementia-Friendly Action Plan



New Westminster's Mayor Cote and Maria Howard, CEO of the Alzheimer Society of B.C., at the Council's Dementia Friends workshop. New Westminster was the first Council in B.C. to receive the Dementia Friends workshop.

People with dementia deserve the same service and have the same human rights as all other community members, including engagement in their community. Becoming dementia friendly means you can communicate more respectfully with all citizens, while meeting the communication and service needs of people living with dementia. To achieve this, your Action Plan does not necessarily need to make large promises: small, meaningful changes can make a significant difference. The Action Plan can be a high-level overview document to help organize your priorities and commence the discussion about dementia-friendly communities. It should be tailored to the needs of your particular context. As your community moves forward in its work, your actions may change or develop. You are not bound by your Action Plan, only encouraged to accomplish what is determined as feasible by your community.

This initiative is not intended to burden resources, but rather to be incorporated into existing systems, policies and programs, and to nuance action within your community through consideration of the lived experience of people with dementia. During this process, it is also important to consider your community's capacity to achieve these actions and plan accordingly.

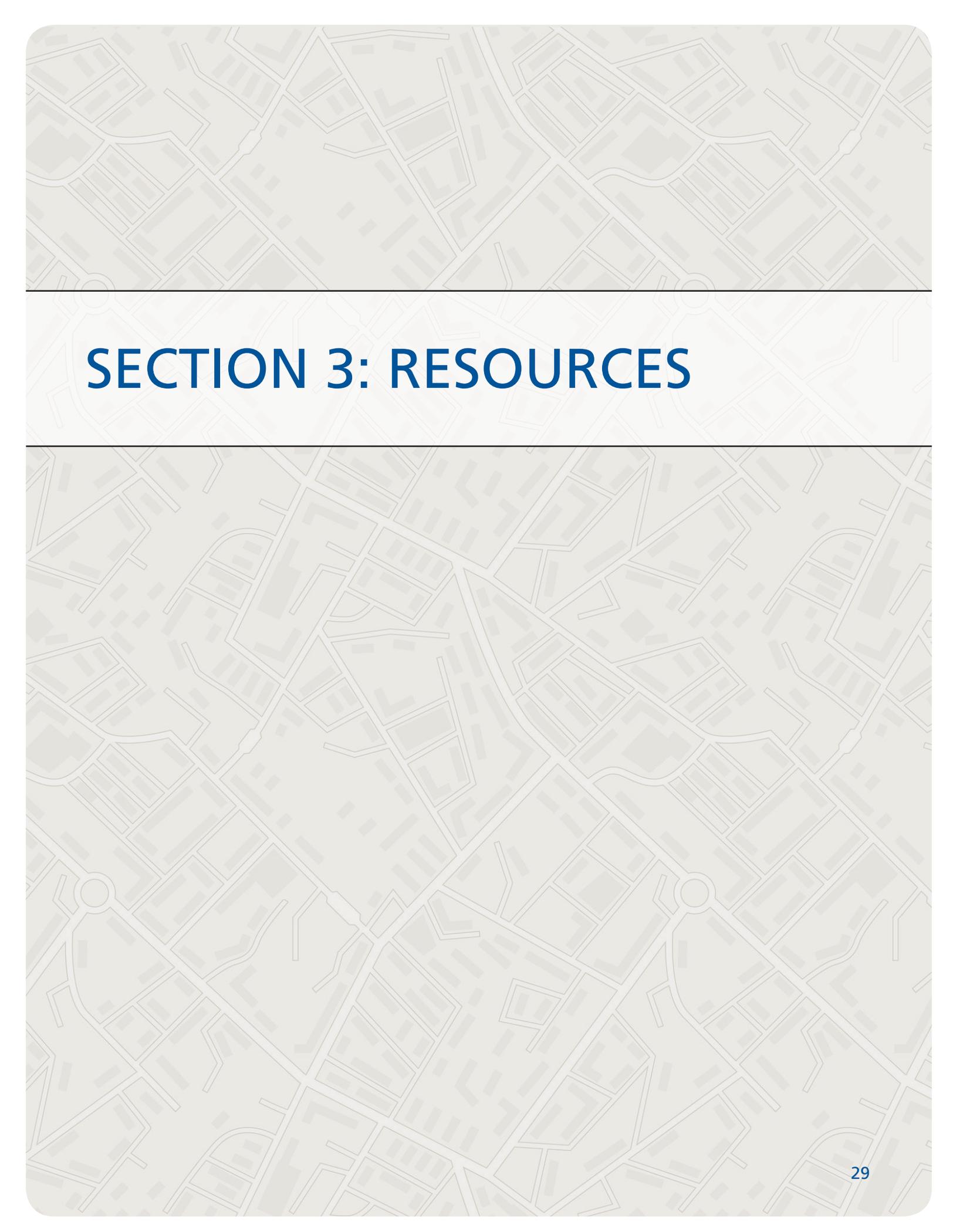
To increase your chance of success in implementing your specific actions:

- Nominate a dementia-friendly communities point-person in the community to be the Society's contact person.
- Convene a working group that includes people with dementia.
- Advertise interest in speaking to people with dementia in the community.
 - ♦ Consider word-of-mouth, hosting a community forum on dementia or connecting with seniors' groups.
- Engage people with dementia beyond the stakeholder group to test and assess the actions of the plan.

We encourage you to submit your Action Plan to the Alzheimer Society of B.C. for endorsement and feedback. Local governments are also encouraged to pass a resolution to become dementia friendly and endorse their Dementia-Friendly Action Plan with the recommendation that:

Council endorses the proposed activities and agrees to provide overall financial management related to the subject plan conducted as part of the Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative.

Refer to the upcoming Resources section for a suggested Dementia-Friendly Action Plan worksheet.

The background of the page is a light gray map pattern showing a network of streets and building footprints. The pattern is semi-transparent and covers the entire page.

SECTION 3: RESOURCES

Dementia-Friendly Action Plan worksheet

Please list at least two actions for each category. If you require suggestions or recommendations, feel free to connect with the Alzheimer Society of B.C. Upon completion, send the Action Plan to dementiafriendlybc@alzheimerbc.org.

NAME	Name of the working group, including all stakeholders, number of participants and location
DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES POINT-PERSON	Name, and contact information
WORKING GROUP MEMBERS	Name, and organization they are a part of OR if they are living with dementia OR a caregiver
VISION	<p>What is the working group’s vision for a dementia-friendly municipality/ community?</p> <p><i>For example, “Our objectives aim to engage with the local community to provide education about dementia that will enable community members to make changes and take positive steps towards becoming a dementia-friendly community” or</i></p> <p><i>“Work with local stakeholders to make the community a friendly place for people with dementia and their caregivers to live, work and play.”</i></p>
ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS	Explain who has been involved in the development of the plan if they are not on the working group.

ENGAGING PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA				
Actions (2x)	Responsibility	Timeline	Resources required	Possible outcomes
<i>Actions to take to engage people with dementia in the process of becoming dementia friendly</i>	<i>Who will be responsible for this action? E.g. organization name or individual name</i>	<i>When will this action be completed? E.g. Fall 2015</i>	<i>What will be required to achieve this action? E.g. volunteers, materials</i>	<i>Identify the level of impact. E.g. policy change, program development, increased awareness, reduced mishaps, etc.</i>
<i>For example, "Organize a group of people with dementia from the community to identify challenges and needs they experience in the community."</i>				
<i>"Identify which services are being underutilized or which require more expansion."</i>				
SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT				
Actions (2x)	Responsibility	Timeline	Resources required	Possible outcomes
<i>Possible actions to positively influence the social environment</i>	<i>Who will be responsible for this action?</i>	<i>When will this action be completed?</i>	<i>What will be required to achieve this action?</i>	<i>Identify the level of impact.</i>
<i>For example, "Challenge stigma, myths, misconceptions through education."</i>				
<i>"Work with local stakeholders to increase opportunities for people with dementia to remain engaged in their chosen activities and in community activities."</i>				

BUILT ENVIRONMENT				
Actions (2x)	Responsibility	Timeline	Resources required	Possible outcomes
<i>Possible actions to positively influence the built environment</i>	<i>Who will be responsible for this action?</i>	<i>When will this action be completed?</i>	<i>What will be required to achieve this action?</i>	<i>Identify the level of impact.</i>
<i>For example, "Design accessible ground level public toilets in popular public locations that allow caregivers to provide assistance."</i>				
<i>"Build more street furniture, whose design clearly identifies its purpose."</i>				
POLICY				
Actions (2x)	Responsibility	Timeline	Resources required	Possible outcomes
<i>Possible actions to positively influence municipal policy</i>	<i>Who will be responsible for this action?</i>	<i>When will this action be completed?</i>	<i>What will be required to achieve this action?</i>	<i>Identify the level of impact.</i>
<i>For example, "Reviewing existing policy, practice, programming."</i>				
<i>"Remove barriers to change by addressing current municipal policy and bylaws."</i>				
OPTIONAL				
Action(s)	Responsibility	Timeline	Resources required	Possible outcomes
<i>Other dementia-friendly actions that you would like to include</i>	<i>Who will be responsible for this action?</i>	<i>When will this action be completed?</i>	<i>What will be required to achieve this action?</i>	<i>Identify the level of impact.</i>
<i>For example, "Identify key partners, services, and businesses within our local context."</i>				
This plan has been submitted for endorsement from the Alzheimer Society of B.C., which has:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Endorsed the "Working to become dementia friendly" status.		<input type="checkbox"/> Provided feedback for revisions to be made to the plan.		
Signature of Alzheimer Society of B.C. representative:				
Date:				

Dementia-friendly outdoor environment checklist¹⁵



The following is a summary of key findings based on a research project of the Wellbeing in Sustainable Environment Research Unit of the Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development. Use the following checklist to assess the existing dementia-friendly features in your community and to conceptualize possible next steps for your community. Offering preliminary guidance for all levels of urban design, this checklist may be useful for planners, designers and architects.

Characteristics

Sidewalks

- Walking trails and sidewalks are wide and flat.
- Crosswalks and public toilets are at ground level.
- Unavoidable level changes such as at crosswalks, have a slope with a maximum gradient of one in 20.
- Crosswalks are placed at adequate intervals to provide safe access.
- Some sidewalks are tree-lined or pedestrianized to offer protection from heavy traffic.
- Street clutter (signs, advertising billboards and pillars) is minimized.
- Trails and sidewalks are wide, well maintained and clean.
- Bicycle lanes are separate from sidewalks.
- Crosswalks have audible cues at a pitch and timing suitable for older people.
- Paving is flat, smooth, non-slip, plain and non-reflective in clear colours and in textural contrast to building walls.
- Trees close to sidewalks have narrow leaves that do not stick to pavement when wet.
- Street lighting is adequate for people with visual impairments.

Why these are important

Since dementia affects memory and people with dementia may forget things more often, retracing one's steps may become more difficult. Dementia can also affect a person's vision and depth perception, increasing the likelihood of falls.

Signs

- Signs are minimal, giving simple, essential information at decision points, such as intersections or junctions.
- Signs are easily visible, in clear locations that are not cluttered with other signs.
- Signs locating important places and buildings are hung horizontally on the wall or are attached perpendicularly to the wall.
- Signs have large graphics with realistic symbols in clear colour contrast to the background, preferably dark lettering on a light background.
- Signs have non-glare lighting and non-reflective coverings.
- Notices such as this one may be placed at eye-level near entrances to public washrooms: "Members of another gender might be in this washroom assisting someone."

Why these are important

Dementia may cause changes in a person's abstract thinking ability, vision and memory.



Example 1. Clear signage compared to confusing signage

Design

- The architectural features used in design are familiar or easily understood.
- Obvious cues are positioned where sightlines end, especially at decision points, such as junctions and bends, to make directional decisions easier.
- Entrances to buildings or public areas are clearly visible and obvious.
- Architectural features are in a variety of styles, colours and materials.
- Gates and/or doors have no more than two kilograms of pressure to open and have lever handles.
- Acoustic barriers, such as planting and fencing, reduce background noise.

Why these are important

With dementia there are related challenges in abstract or sequential thinking. This means that people with dementia cannot always interpret the cues that signal the use of buildings.

Street furniture

- Street furniture is designed in a familiar way, obviously indicating its use as a resting place.
- Telephone booths are enclosed.
- Bus shelters are enclosed and have seating.
- Seating is sturdy with arm and back rests and made from materials that do not conduct heat or cold.

Why these are important

Ambiguity of design is challenging for people with dementia because of changes in their abstract thinking. Changes in judgment may also make determining the function of certain objects difficult.



Example 2.
Ambiguous design
compared to
familiar design

Overall

- Street types are hierarchically designed and varied in their size and use: main streets, side streets, alleyways and trails. Quiet side roads provide alternative routes away from crowds and traffic.
- Blocks are small and laid out on an irregular grid based on an adapted perimeter block pattern.
- Streets are short and fairly narrow.
- Streets are well connected and gently winding with open ended bends to enable visual continuity.
- Forked and T-junctions are more common than crossroads.
- Buildings and spaces are long established with changes being gradual and on a small scale. The function of a building or place is obvious, and building forms are varied.
- The variety of landmarks includes historic and civic buildings (such as war memorials or churches), distinctive structures (such as a water tower and public art) and welcoming open spaces and places of activity (such as urban squares, parks or playgrounds).
- Land uses are mixed.
- Services and facilities are within five to ten minutes walking distance of housing.
- The outdoor environment is welcoming and unthreatening, with quiet alternative routes away from crowds and traffic.
- Urban areas have small, well-defined open spaces with toilets, seating, shelter and lighting.
- Spaces and buildings are oriented to avoid creating areas of dark shadow or bright glare.

Why these are important

As the disease progresses, a person with dementia can become lost somewhere familiar, not knowing how they got there or how to get home. New spaces like an unfamiliar courthouse or office may make a person living with dementia anxious.

FAQ

How do we set up a dementia-friendly working group?

1. Speak with Mayor and council, encouraging them to take the Dementia Friends workshop.
2. Gauge the interest of staff at city hall and host a Dementia Friends workshop open to the public.
3. Work with people who are passionate about the cause and interested in sustaining awareness and change in the community. Aim for about five dedicated members and, most importantly, include people living with dementia and their caregivers. These people are your experts. They are living with the effects of the disease and have firsthand experience of what will benefit them in the community. Learn about their experiences of living in the community: Where they feel supported? Where can improvements be made?
4. Work with other people and organizations already working with people with dementia in the community.
5. Speak with community members in your area, people who have a good network and are part of the community's key decision-makers.
6. Organize an accessible location at which to meet regularly to keep Action Plan items on track.

What are some guiding questions our community might begin to address?

- What types of organizations should be involved in dementia-friendly community planning?
- Have you already been involved in this type of planning?

- What changes would make your community more dementia friendly?
- What would have an impact on people with dementia and their caregivers in your area?
- Does your community already have some dementia-friendly elements?

What are some key things we can do to be successful?

- Recruit, retain and include community partners and individuals who share in your dementia-friendly community vision.
- Establish a volunteer working group of people living with dementia to consult on your community projects through walking interviews, one-on-one consultations, group consultations, and engagement workshops, to include the *direct* voice of people with dementia.
- Promote dementia-friendly communities in local and provincial media.
- Work with the Society to identify tools to allow volunteers and other stakeholders to promote and sustain local momentum for dementia-friendly communities.

Tips from the UK¹⁶

- Ensure people living with dementia are consulted and involved in planning or redesign of the physical space.
- Engage with the private as well as non-profit sector: the private sector is just as important for people living with dementia as it is for the rest of the community.
- Remember that even relatively minor changes can transform a problematic activity into one which is accessible and inclusive of people with dementia.

What kind of messages will help us to engage local community members or other stakeholders?

- Present a unique selling point, for example, “You will be a trailblazer in your community.”
- This is an opportunity for stakeholders to improve the services they provide to seniors, which may as a consequence enhance their reputation for good customer care or, in the case of a municipality, as a great place to live.
- Participating can be better for business. All businesses want to keep up their customer base and be known for good customer care, especially in communities that have many seniors who would feel more confident and safer shopping and being out and about where there is an increased level of understanding.
- On a personal level, the Dementia Friends workshop and the Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative can provide people with increased sensitivity and understanding when speaking with older relatives.

How can we organize a Dementia Friends workshop in our community?

- E-mail the Alzheimer Society of B.C. at dementiafriendlybc@alzheimerbc.org to request a workshop. Please provide the following information:
 - ♦ Name of person/organization requesting the workshop
 - ♦ Location (city) and expected venue
 - ♦ Three optional dates and times for the workshop
 - ♦ Target audience
 - ♦ Size of the potential audience

We will connect you with a volunteer or staff person to organize and deliver the workshop.

How does the B.C. Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative work together with Dementia Friends Canada?



Alzheimer Societies across Canada are working with the Public Health Agency of Canada on the national Dementia Friends Canada awareness and public engagement initiative. The aim is to create a more aware and informed Canadian population to dispel myths and reduce stigma about dementia. Visit www.dementiafriends.ca to watch an informative video, register as a Dementia Friend, and then commit to an action you can take as a Dementia Friend.

The provincial Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative is paired with the national program; however, there are some differences between the national awareness campaign and the provincial social change initiative. Dementia Friends Canada focuses on individual actions, while our work focuses on community engagement and change; through our Dementia Friends educational workshops we add nuance and depth to the important information being shared in the Dementia Friends Canada campaign. We encourage people to check out the national website, but also to engage with the provincial Society to start or become a part of the meaningful dementia-friendly work happening in their community.

People can become Dementia Friends through the Society or through the Federal program. The Federal program is brief; thus, the provincial workshops offer the opportunity to further develop the awareness gained in the online program.

**Thank you for joining the Alzheimer Society of B.C.
in creating dementia-friendly communities.**

**The Society is here to help people living
with dementia, caregivers and communities.**

**We commend you on your commitment and passion
for helping people living with dementia
age safely and happily in their communities for longer.**

Alzheimer *Society*
BRITISH COLUMBIA

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND VIDEOS

Alzheimer Society of B.C.

[Jim's Story](#)

[Dementia-friendly communities webpages \(2015\)](#)

[Making your workplace dementia-friendly: Information for financial professionals](#)

[Making your workplace dementia-friendly: Information for housing professionals](#)

[Making your workplace dementia-friendly: Information for legal professionals](#)

[UBCM dementia-friendly communities presentation \(September 2014\)](#)

Provincial

Provincial Dementia Strategy for British Columbia, Ministry of Health (forthcoming 2016)

[The dementia policy lens toolkit](#), Penny MacCourt, PhD (March 2009)

National

[Building strong communities](#), University of Waterloo

[Community dementia action plan: designing a way forward](#), BrainXchange (June 2015)

[Crime prevention through environmental design](#), RCMP (1998)

[Dementia Friends Canada](#), Alzheimer Society of Canada and Government of Canada (June 2015)

[Dementia-friendly outdoor environments, age friendly communities: tools for design and dementia](#), BrainXchange

[Intersection between the built and social environments and older adults' mobility: an evidence review](#), National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health (November 2012)

International

[A tool kit for building dementia-friendly communities](#), Wisconsin Healthy Brain Initiative (USA) (May 2015)

[Aging in place bibliography](#), American Planning Association (USA)

[Comments from the Sikh community: dementia-friendly Gurudwaras](#), Alzheimer's Society UK (July 2014)

[Creating dementia-friendly communities: business toolkit](#), Alzheimer's Australia (2014)

[Dementia resource suite for schools](#), Alzheimer's Society UK (2014)

[Dementia-friendly churches](#), Livability (UK)

[Dementia-friendly communities: Derek's story](#), Alzheimer's Society UK (September 2013)

[Dementia-friendly town of Crawley](#), Alzheimer's Society UK (July 2014)

[Dementia-friendly Yorkshire: first steps on the journey](#), Joseph Rowntree Foundation (January 2014)

[Dementia-friendly, ACT on Alzheimer's](#) (USA)

[Developing dementia-friendly communities \(physical features checklist\)](#), Housing Learning & Improvement Network (UK) (June 2012)

[Developing dementia-friendly communities: learning and guidance for local authorities](#), Innovations in Dementia and The Ageing Well program (May 2012)

[Developing supportive design for people with dementia](#), The King's Fund (UK)

[Guide to practical examples of dementia-friendly initiatives](#), Alzheimer Society of Ireland (September 2013)

[Small changes help make a dementia-friendly community](#), Alzheimer's Society UK (March 2014)

[SPACE: Environments that are dementia-friendly](#), Royal College of Nursing UK (October 2012)

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