



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mar. 21, 2013

B.C. Interior Catches Wind of Jim's Push for Dementia Action Plan

Penticton, B.C. – Jim Mann, a British Columbian and Alzheimer Society Board Member who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in 2007, will hold a town hall on Mar. 21 at the Shatford Centre at 760 Main Street in Penticton. The town hall, to begin at 1 p.m., is part of a province-wide push for a comprehensive, funded dementia action plan in B.C. Mann envisions a plan that will help avert a crisis and prepare B.C. for the rising tide of dementia.

In the lead-up to the B.C. election in May, Mann is touring the province to get a dementia action plan on the next government's agenda. "In 2010, when the Alzheimer Society released its ground breaking report, *Rising Tide*, I said: 'Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are a tragic reality for a rapidly growing number of families. The time to act is now. We need a plan in B.C.' It's been over two years and I still don't see such a plan," says Mann.

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. and Mann seek action from the next B.C. government to develop and implement a comprehensive, funded dementia action plan that includes:

- **Support for family caregivers**, including financial incentives, expanded and improved home support programs, and access to appropriate care when and where it is needed for the person with dementia.
- **Policies and programs that support early diagnosis and intervention** to help reduce overall health-care costs and improve patient and family outcomes.
- **Tools for health-care providers** so they can give the best care possible, such as continuing on-the-job training.
- **Access to the Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s First Link[®] program** for all British Columbians who need it (the program is currently unavailable in most B.C. communities).
- **Ongoing evaluation to track progress.**

By 2038, there will be more than 177,000 people living with dementia in B.C. with family caregivers providing an estimated 118.7 million hours of unpaid care per year. Within 30 years, the associated economic burden of dementia in our province is projected to reach a cumulative total of \$130.2 billion if we do not take a long view on the disease.

“We know we need to take a long-term view on dementia to avoid the devastating impacts that loom on the horizon for B.C.’s families and finances,” says Alzheimer Society of B.C. Advocacy and Public Policy Director Barbara Lindsay. “A shared vision for care and a comprehensive, funded dementia action plan are needed to make a system that supports people living with dementia and their families possible.”

-30-

About Jim Mann

Jim Mann was diagnosed with dementia in 2007 at age 58. A former communications consultant, Jim has become an Alzheimer Advocate as a member of the Board of Directors for the Alzheimer Society of B.C. and the Alzheimer Society of Canada. Jim is pushing for a plan to improve the lives of over 70,000 British Columbians with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias, their families and caregivers. Learn more about *Jim’s Push for a Plan* at www.alzheimerbc.org/We-Can-Help/Advocacy.aspx.

About Dementia

Dementia is a term that describes a general group of brain disorders. Symptoms include the loss of memory, impaired judgment, and changes in behaviour and personality. Dementia is progressive, degenerative and eventually terminal. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia accounting for almost two-thirds of dementias in Canada today.

About the Alzheimer Society of B.C.

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. provides a province-wide network of support and education and information resources for families impacted by dementia. The Society is a non-profit organization that also advocates for better dementia health care and raises money to fund research. Learn more at www.alzheimerbc.org.

Media contact:

Ruby Ng
Director, Marketing & Communications
Alzheimer Society of B.C.
Phone: 604-742-4919

Cell: 604-828-9516

E-mail: rng@alzheimerbc.org



ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF B.C.
#300 – 828 West 8th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 1E2
PHONE: 604-681-6530 FAX: 604-669-6907 TOLL FREE: 1-800-667-3742
WEBSITE: www.alzheimerbc.org E-MAIL: info@alzheimerbc.org
CHARITABLE REGISTRATION BN #11878 4891 RR0001