

Kingston, ON – January 17, 2017

Alzheimer Society of KFL&A Provides Training to Kingston Police

An estimated 182 officers and staff of the Kingston Police will be trained, over the next month, by staff of the Alzheimer Society of KFL&A, in how to support and assist a person with dementia who may be travelling or lost.

Alzheimer's and dementia are no longer diseases just for the elderly. As of 2016 there are close to 564,000 people in Canada with dementia, 16,000 Canadians under the age of 65 living with dementia and an estimated 4000+ living in the KFL&A region.

Statistics say that seventy people with some form of dementia go missing every day in Canada. That's 3 people per hour - every day.

Six out of ten people with dementia go missing without warning and half of those not found within 24 hrs, will be found gravely injured or dead.

The Finding Your Way program, was developed by The Alzheimer Society of Ontario (ASO) in partnership with the Ontario Seniors Secretariat (OSS), to meet the increasing needs for information, support and concerns over deaths and injuries that have occurred because of missing persons with Alzheimer Disease or another related form of dementia. The program was designed to reduce adverse safety events and improve communication and responsiveness through the education and training of staff working within the fields of:

- EMS- Emergency Services
- Community Workers in the supportive housing complex
- Retirement Home staff

The Alzheimer Society of KFL&A encourages care partners and those diagnosed, to meet with their Education and Support Coordinator to complete a wandering package which includes all the important personal information for the diagnosed, along with a recent photo of themselves.

The service also includes education around wandering and how to reduce its occurrence as well as information about the Medic Alert Safely Home Program which is a nationwide program designed to help identify the person who is lost and assist in their safe return home. For more information on MedicAlert call 1-855-581-3794

"It's important for all Kingstonian's, not just EMS personnel, to be aware and know what to look for and how to best support someone, who is not dressed for weather or who looks confused/dazed or even somewhat panicked" says Sharon Lewis, Education & Support Coordinator with KFL&A Alzheimer Society.

Lewis reports that persons with dementia can go missing because they are experiencing:

- Loss of memory
- Changed environment
- Searching for their past
- Excess Energy
- Confusing Day/Night
- They feel they have a job to perform

- Discomfort/Pain/Dreams

Kingston Police is the first group of emergency responders in Kingston to receive this training from the local Alzheimer Society, and the hope is that other EMS providers will follow over the next few months. Similar programs are operating in other communities with great success.

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Alzheimer's Month- It's not just their disease. It's ours too.

January is Alzheimer's month across the country and the Alzheimer Society of KFL&A will have a new story each week during the month of January, detailing upcoming programs and services. Next week, watch for details on the new details on the launch of the Dementia Friendly Training program available to businesses and emergency service personnel in the Kingston area.

For more information, please contact:

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