

Lifelong Learning Benefits Everyone **By: Diana Primavesi, Public Education Coordinator**

People of all ages are taking time out to learn new things, whether taking up a new hobby, attending community presentations, or volunteering in a role that lets them develop new skills. The good news is that “lifelong learning” stimulates the brain and is part of the recommended Healthy Brain strategies to help reduce your risk of dementia.

This fall, the Alzheimer Society will be offering a number of education opportunities. Whatever your situation, there may be something that is right for you.

MacQuarrie Series: Our 6th annual MacQuarrie education series will focus on U-First! – a leading dementia education and training program. We are offering two types of training sessions designed to meet different needs.

- “U-First!” is a full day certificate program for professionals, students and volunteers working in the field of dementia care
- “Coping with Behaviour Changes in Dementia: Introducing the U-FIRST Approach” is a shorter session introducing U-First! concepts for family and friend care partners, volunteers, and the general public.

A total of 11 training sessions will be offered in five communities, making this important education accessible to individuals across the Society’s four county service area. Sessions will run in September and October and registration is now open.

Community Presentations: Misinformation and a lack of understanding fuels fear and stigma. The more we all learn about dementia, the better we can support our friends, family members, or neighbours who experience the illness. Our Public Education Coordinators and Ambassadors are available to provide presentations to community groups, service clubs, volunteers, and students. Our most popular presentations focus on Healthy Brain Strategies and Understanding Dementia.

Coffee Break Presentations: Are you hosting a Coffee Break? Why not include a short presentation and provide your guests with a learning opportunity? Our Public Education Ambassadors would be happy to attend your event.

Education for Persons with Dementia: People with dementia benefit from education opportunities also. Individuals who are living with dementia are becoming more vocal about their wish to be informed about their disease and how to cope with the changes they experience. Fortunately, many education sessions and resources have been developed to meet this need. This fall, we will be offering *First Steps* education sessions in several communities. This 4-week course was designed to provide a foundation of information about dementia, early symptoms, balancing risk and independence, managing stress, and planning for the future. Individuals are encouraged to attend this course soon after diagnosis as a way of empowering them to cope with their illness and continue to lead active and enjoyable lives. Family members are also welcome to attend.

Alzheimer Society

PETERBOROUGH, KAWARTHA LAKES, NORTHUMBERLAND & HALIBURTON

Education for Family Members and Friends: After a diagnosis of dementia, people need the support of their family members and friends more than ever. The *First Link* learning series includes several courses designed to help these care partners understand the illness and learn skills and coping strategies. This fall, we are offering all four modules (*Next Steps, Care Essentials, Options for Care, and Care in the Later Stages*) in five communities across our service area.

For more information about the MacQuarrie Series, go to the Events listing on our website:

<http://www.alzheimer.ca/pklnh>

For more information about the First Link learning series, community presentations, and other education services, contact our Public Education Coordinators: Diana Primavesi (diana@alzheimerjourney.ca) or Lisa Morasse (lisa@alzheimerjourney.ca).

If independent learning is more your style, there are lots of resources available online on our website: www.alzheimer.ca/pklnh