

Referring Partner Newsletter



A Response to Alzheimer Disease and Related Dementia's

It is no secret that dementia is on the rise. According to a study commissioned by the Alzheimer Society of Canada in 2012, as our population ages the number of Canadians living with a form of dementia, which is currently 747,000, is expected to double to 1.4 million by 2031. Our health care system is not equipped for the influx of individuals in this country who are going to need care and services caused by this disease. The direct and indirect cost of dementia annually is currently \$33 billion and if nothing changes, this number will increase to \$293 billion by 2040¹. It is noted that some forms of dementias are declining, which is primarily caused by lifestyle and environmental factors. This is a result of people living healthier lives and reducing the occurrences of other health risks such as heart attack and stroke. However, with the baby boomers entering the senior population, dementia is becoming a health crisis.

Dementia is the term used to classify a set of symptoms that are caused by disorders affecting the brain. These symptoms may include: memory loss, difficulties with thinking, problem solving, trouble with language, reduced ability to perform day to day tasks, changes in mood and in behaviour³. The different causes of dementia include Alzheimer disease, Vascular Dementia, Lewy Body Dementia, Fronto-temporal Dementia, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, Parkinson's disease and Huntington's disease. These conditions have similar and overlapping symptoms³. Getting a timely diagnosis can help families gain access to information, resources and support which can help them in planning for the future.

Individuals and families living with dementia often find it difficult to reach out for support due to the stigma surrounding the disease. People fear they will be excluded or treated differently. This can cause caregivers to journey alone with this demanding disease and, as a result, experience burnout and health issues themselves. It is important to be aware that negative reactions from family, friends and professionals can impact a person's well-being and ability to manage the changes brought about by the disease. Do you want to help reduce stigma? Here's six easy ways you can make a difference:



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A RESPONSE TO ALZHEIMER DISEASE AND RELATED DEMENTIA'S CONTINUED

Together

 make

 difference



First Link Client Statistics:

45%- Alzheimer's disease
 25%- Related Dementias
 30%- Unknown/not specified

59%- Female
 41%- Male

65%- Direct Referral
 35%- Self-Referral

Age Range: 42 years-94 Years

Learn the facts- Share your knowledge of dementia with others. Talking about dementia lessens our fear and increases our understanding.

Don't make assumptions- Dementia doesn't mean the person will have to stop their daily routine or give up working right away.

Watch your language- Don't make light of dementia by using jokes or slang.

Treat people with dementia with dignity and respect- Appreciate them for who they are.

Be a friend- Be supportive.

Speak up! - Change starts with you.

The Alzheimer Society of Newfoundland and Labrador offers a program called First Link®. This program is designed for individuals living with Alzheimer disease or other related forms of dementia, as well as their caregivers. First Link® connects those on the journey of dementia to information, support and services throughout the progression of the disease. Those diagnosed with dementia primarily gain access to this program through direct referrals from physicians, health care professionals and community service providers. Becoming a referring partner with First Link® is simple and has a wide range of benefits for the individual and their family. The First Link Coordinator will ensure that families receive the support that will best suit their needs. This can be in the form of a one-on-one meetings, group support, referral to local healthcare providers and community services, meet other people in similar circumstances and exchange experiences and help with planning for the future. An extension of the First Link program is a 16 week Learning Series that is designed to help individuals newly diagnosed with dementia and their caregivers understand their diagnosis and the changes they experience. Each week, the courses build upon each other to provide participants with a comprehensive overview of dementia, coping strategies, available resources and support. Participants have the opportunity to learn and share with others who are affected by dementia.

If you would like more information or to become a Referring Partner with the First Link® Program, please contact First Link Coordinator, Danielle Moore at (709) 576-0608 or firstlink@alzheimernl.ca.

1 A new way of looking at the impact of dementia in Canada. Alzheimer Society, 2012

2 Rising Tide: The Impact of Dementia on Canadian Society, Alzheimer Society, 2010

3 What is dementia, www.alzheimer.ca

4 Stigma, www.alzheimer.ca

FALL/WINTER 2015-16 LEARNING SERIES SCHEDULE

First Steps

October 14—Memory Loss & the Brain
 October 21—Communication & Coping Strategies
 October 28—Navigating the System
 November 4—Legal & Financial Matters
 November 10—Resources and Support

Caregiver Essentials

November 18—What to Expect
 November 25—Community Resources
 December 2—Understanding Behaviours
 December 9—Day to Day Care
 January 13—The Caregiver Journey

Options for Care

January 20—When Care Needs are Increasing
 January 27—How the System Works
 February 3—The Day of Placement

Care in the Later Stages

February 10—Advanced Dementia
 February 17—Pain & Distress
 February 2-4—Understanding Grief

Our Next Learning Series Starts
 March 9, 2016!

Learning Series

Our Summer 2015 Learning Series is currently running! Our free four part information sessions start on October 14, 2015. Inform your patients and their families today so they can take advantage of this invaluable resource to help them along the journey with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias.



How to participate:

These sessions can be taken advantage of at our office on 835 Topsail Road, or if your unable to attend in person, ask us how you can participate by Skype or conference call, ANYWHERE across the province!

CONTACT US FOR DETAILS!

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What's Happening

- ◆ Physician recruitment now complete for all regions of the province. Second round for Western and Central regions completed as well.
- ◆ Will be completing second round of Eastern and Labrador regions in the fall

Other opportunities to get involved!

Interested in becoming more involved with the Society? We have some opportunities that might interest you!

- ◆ Be come a volunteer speaker for our Learning Series! We are so fortunate to have health professionals who volunteer time out of their day to come in and help deliver information to the participants. Their contribution is invaluable. If this sounds like something you might wish to do, please contact us for more information.
- ◆ Have any of your patients or clients given feedback on the First Link program or the services they've received from the society? Maybe you have something you would like to contribute in writing on how it has benefited you. We would love to receive stories to share with others and hopefully encourage more people to reach out for services.
- ◆ We want to grow our number of Referring Partners as much as possible! The more referring partners we have, the more individuals and families we can help! If any of your colleagues have not yet joined, please feel free to inform them of the program and to contact us if they are interested!
- ◆ Not on the e-mail list and you would prefer to receive this newsletter electronically? Contact us today with your e-mail address to receive future newsletters straight to your inbox!
- ◆ Do you have facebook or twitter? Look us up and like our page or follow us to stay up to date on what's going on in the society!
- ◆ Last, but not least! Have you heard of Dementia Friends? It's a national campaign that is aimed to help raise awareness on Alzheimer disease and related dementia's and help end the stigma! If you have become a Dementia Friend already, it's very quick and simple. Go to www.dementiafriends.ca and follow the 3-step process. It's a great way to show you care!



**Dementia
Friends
Canada**

An Alzheimer Society and
Government of Canada Initiative

COFFEE BREAK
SEPTEMBER 17, 2015
REGISTER TODAY

Register at www.alzheimer.ca/nl

Join us at our office on September 17, 2015 for our 20th Anniversary of Coffee Break! Take a break and meet our staff! Or hold your own when it's convenient for you! Just follow the link to register!

Alzheimer Society

Programs and Services

Information Kits

Newsletter

Resource Centre

Brochures

Website

Care at Home Course

*MedicAlert® Safely
Home® Program*

*Family Support
Groups*

First Link® Program

Learning Series

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