

This World Alzheimer's Month, Georgina resident asks people to remember those caring for people living with this fatal disease

75 per cent more care hours are spent looking after those living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias than other chronic diseases

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AURORA, ON (Sept. 9, 2019) – This Alzheimer's Awareness Month, Georgina's Cynthia Wallbank wants people to remember the family and friends of those caring for someone living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias (ADOD).

"There are so many people affected by this disease, not just the person with the condition, but their entire family and support system," said Wallbank, whose mother Shirley is living with mixed dementia.

In York Region, 15,000 people have been diagnosed with ADOD with another 180,000 people directly are impacted.

"Please understand that sometimes we may not be as available as we once were. We may need to unload at times. Support us by continuing to provide friendship and a shoulder, but also remind us to laugh...Sometimes we forget."

It takes 75 per cent more care hours looking after those living with dementia, a fatal disease, than other chronic illnesses. As the illness progresses, those living with the disease often require around-the-clock care and help doing things the average person takes for granted – bathing, getting dressed and even eating.

Caregiving is exhausting and Wallbank reminds fellow caregivers of the importance of looking after themselves.

"Take time out for yourself often and use the supports available. The road ahead will likely be a long one and not an easy one. Try to recognize the person behind the disease. Your loved one is still there, you may just need to learn how to communicate with them differently. Most importantly, even if they don't understand your words, they always understand the way you make them feel. Continue to love them and support them."

AS York offers programs, services and resources to help people throughout the dementia journey. September is World Alzheimer's Month with the goal to raise awareness of ADOD and funds to support people impacted by the disease.

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About the Alzheimer Society York Region (AS York)

The Alzheimer Society of York Region is a leader in actively supporting individuals and families living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Our quality, dementia-specific DAY program services, enriched social work program and education opportunities are well respected.

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