

Year One Impact Report 2018

As the population ages, more and more Canadians will be affected by dementia. It is estimated that by 2038, about one in 10 Albertans over age 65 and nearly half over 90 will be living with dementia.

A Dementia Friendly Community provides community-based support and services through local action for those living with (or affected by) dementia. By being a supportive, inclusive and responsive community, the whole community will benefit, including citizens living with dementia and their caregivers, as well local businesses and service providers in the community.

Dementia Friendly Communities proof of concept project

The Brenda Strafford Foundation (BSF) is leading the Dementia Friendly Communities demonstration project – the first in Alberta – in two pilot locations:

- Calgary Westhills neighbourhoods of Signal Hill, Strathcona, Christie Park and Aspen (supported by BSF's Wentworth Manor)
- Town of Okotoks (supported by BSF's Tudor Manor)

The proof of concept project will run for a period of two-and-a-half years, with a long range goal to become sustainable and grow province-wide.

Project goals:

1. Build community capacity to support individuals living with dementia and their caregivers to feel included and supported enabling individuals to age-in-place safely in the community for as long as possible
2. Raise awareness about dementia and reduce stigma associated with the disorder through education and understanding
3. Create a toolkit to enable the growth and sustainability of Dementia Friendly Communities throughout Alberta

"We are extending our focus beyond our walls to work with the community and other partners to ensure people with dementia can remain in their homes, safely and properly supported in the community, for as long as possible. The toolkit will ensure localized, evidence-based knowledge is shared as a blueprint for Alberta. Together, we are leading the way towards a dementia-friendly Alberta."

~ Mike Conroy,
President and CEO, The Brenda Strafford Foundation



This project is made possible thanks to additional funding support by:

Highlights and key accomplishments to date:

Community mapping – A thorough scan of existing resources and supports available in and for the community was undertaken to understand the current environment and identify any potential gaps in services in each community.

Development of partnerships – We have partnered with a diverse range of expert and community stakeholders including individuals, businesses, organizations and service providers to collaborate and provide leadership, skills and resources to drive the initiative forward.

Examples of our formal partnerships established include:

- Steering Committee of funding partners
- Strategic Advisory Group of expert stakeholders
- Community Alliance/Coalition Groups of local stakeholders
- Education, Community Resources, Business and Caregiver Working Groups of local stakeholders

Training in community sectors – Training programs and materials have been established and local businesses and organizations have received education to help them understand more about dementia, and learn how to respond to situations when they may encounter someone with dementia in the community.

Training includes:

- Overview to help improve understanding of dementia and the signs or symptoms to recognize
- Industry-specific examples of scenarios that may apply to that organization
- Aging and Cognitive Impairment Simulation activities designed to help participants understand the challenges of how a person living with dementia may sometimes experience the world differently

"We were asked to put on these gloves, and now I can't touch anything properly and they're clumsy. Then we were asked to put on some ear muffs, that took away my senses and I felt uneasy, and then I was asked to put on these goggles, which took away most of my sight. I was asked to perform tasks, at which point I was scared, I didn't remember what I was supposed to be doing and none of it was easy."

- Employee, Town of Okotoks

First responder engagement and training – First responders play an important role in keeping those living with dementia safe in the community.

- The Town of Okotoks has hosted a Dementia Awareness training workshop for municipal front-line staff and first responders
- Calgary Fire Department has implemented an online dementia training module that has been completed by all 1,400 firefighters throughout the city and piloted the Dementia Awareness workshop with experiential training for firefighters at Station 29 (Coach Hill)

"The training helps firefighters develop awareness of what life is like with dementia through experiential learning. It helps participants develop new skills to support people with dementia more effectively so that firefighters can better support our city's vulnerable populations."

- Community Safety Officer, Calgary Fire Department



Age Suit demonstration with ATB Financial staff and Alberta Seniors and Housing Minister Lori Sigurdson

"We want individuals with dementia to come into the branch knowing it's a safe place to go. Where they know our staff have been trained and can put ourselves in their shoes. We want these individuals to live and age well in the community of their choice and feel safe in doing that."

- Branch Manager, ATB Financial



Town of Okotoks staff taking part in aging and cognitive impairment simulation activities

Public awareness/community events – Community outreach events help to engage the local community, increase public awareness of both dementia and the Dementia Friendly Communities project, and provide information about resources and supports.

Intergenerational work – Partnerships with schools ensure youth are educated about dementia and equipped with knowledge and understanding at a young age, which helps to promote empathy and reduce stigma in younger generations.

Rundle College partnership highlights:

- Rundle College has incorporated dementia education throughout their curriculum from grades K-12
- Students visit and volunteer with seniors living at Wentworth Manor, forming intergenerational relationships, increasing social engagement and further reducing stigma associated with dementia

"Students are now very much aware when they see a symptom of dementia and how that person may be struggling. It's empowering for them. They have a sense of knowing how to handle the situation, why it's happening, what they can do about it and how to make the individual feel more comfortable."

- Teacher, Rundle College

Caregiver support – Building community capacity in a Dementia Friendly Community also includes increasing access to resources and services (such as respite care) that support caregivers whose lives are impacted caring for a loved one with dementia.

- Memory/Conversation Cafés have been introduced as a safe, social gathering place for anyone impacted by dementia including individuals and their caregivers
- Resources fairs and outreach events promote services that support caregivers

"We as a family thought we should be able to look after her. I know now that there are a lot of community resources such as Home Care, the Journey's Program and the family doctor that really helped us."

- Family caregiver



'Dementia Talks' speaker series launched in partnership with the Calgary Public Library and Okotoks Public Library.



Students volunteer as part of art therapy program with seniors living at Wentworth Manor



Good Earth Strathcona have completed the Dementia Friendly Business Training and are hosting weekly Memory Cafés to support a Dementia Friendly Community



Members of the Calgary Westhills Alliance group at a community outreach event with Associate Minister of Health Brandy Payne



Town of Okotoks members of the Okotoks Coalition group including Mayor Bill Robertson

Impact by the numbers:

Employees in Businesses Trained:

65

First Responders Trained:

1,482

Students Trained:

147

Public Awareness/Community Outreach Events:

30

Public Awareness/Community Outreach Event Attendees:

1,831

(* Numbers are current as at April 1, 2018 and continue to grow.)

Types of industry sectors reached:



Schools



Banks



Pharmacies



Coffee Shops



Faith Centres



Recreation Centres



Municipal Staff

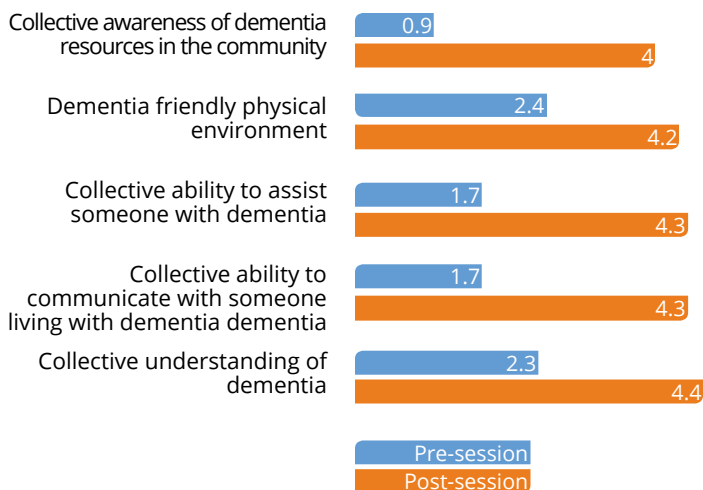
How can you get involved?

Becoming a Dementia Friendly Community requires the support of the community.

Opportunities include:

- Become a Dementia Friendly Business or a Dementia Friend
- Become a Dementia Awareness trainer or a Memory Café facilitator
- Assisted shopping and escorted transportation services
- Visiting and companion programs

Sample evaluation results:



An example of significant changes in knowledge levels demonstrated through the 'Before and After' Evaluation surveys completed at training sessions.

Contact us to find out more about Dementia Friendly Communities and how you can get involved!

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