

ALZHEIMER SOCIETY LAUNCHES WEBSITE TO GROW SUPPORT FOR WORKING ALBERTANS IMPACTED BY DEMENTIA

DementiaAlberta.ca provides information and guidance to Alberta employers and employees faced with a dementia diagnosis or navigating dementia in the workplace

EDMONTON, AB March 23, 2022 – The Alzheimer Society of Alberta and Northwest Territories (Alzheimer Society) announced today a new website to support the growing number of Albertans diagnosed with dementia or caring for someone with dementia while in the workforce.

DementiaAlberta.ca offers information and guidance to:

- Alberta employers seeking to understand the benefits of and invest in a dementia-inclusive workforce, as well as
- Alberta employees living with dementia or supporting someone living with dementia.

It is the result of a collaborative effort between the Alzheimer Society, Alberta employers, Albertans living with dementia, and care partners, with funding from the Government of Alberta in support of the Alberta Dementia Strategy and Action Plan.

“Dementia is a progressive illness and many people – employers and employees - assume a diagnosis is the signal for working Albertans to exit the workforce,” explains George Andrews, Chief Executive Officer of the Alzheimer Society. “In reality, every Albertans’ situation is unique and DementiaAlberta.ca will help Alberta employers and employees navigate this important decision more confidently together.”

As conversations related to mental health and diversity and inclusion come to the forefront of society, so do conversations about the impacts of dementia. In 2021, 1 in 3 Albertans – or 30 per cent – were either living with dementia or have experience caring for someone with dementia. Among the 50,000 Albertans diagnosed with dementia last year, nearly 10 per cent were between the ages of 40 and 65 and likely to be in the workforce.

“Alberta Health is proud to have provided funding for this valuable online resource. It will help employers and employees in the province be more aware of how to create a dementia-inclusive workforce and assist Alberta on how to support someone living with dementia,” said Jason Copping, Alberta’s Minister of Health. “These easy to find resources will benefit Albertans so they can have better-informed and compassionate conversations in the workplace.”

“With up to 13,000 employees and a diverse workplace, partners like the Alzheimer Society and credible resources like DementiaAlberta.ca are invaluable to supporting our employees and fulfilling our commitment to an inclusive, respectful, and equitable workplace,” explains Tyson Joyce, Director of Disability Management, Wellness, and Mental Health at the City of Edmonton. “It is good to know there is expertise and guidance readily accessible on the website, and a dedicated, knowledgeable team at the Society when we have questions and require support.”

DementiaAlberta.ca is live and accessible to visitors. It will be hosted and maintained by the Alzheimer Society and is a companion site to Alzheimer.ab.ca.

About Alzheimer Society of Alberta and Northwest Territories

The Alzheimer Society of Alberta and Northwest Territories is a dementia care and research charity active in communities throughout Alberta and the NWT. Our programs and services offer *Help for Today* for people living with dementia, their families and care partners and *Hope for Tomorrow* by investing in research.

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Backgrounder

- DementiaAlberta.ca was developed as part of the Alzheimer Society's Alberta Employers Dementia Awareness Project.
- The Alberta Employers Dementia Awareness Project aims to help Alberta employers become aware of the impact of dementia in the workplace, support employees impacted by dementia, and promote dementia-inclusive workplaces.
- The project supports and received funding through the Government of Alberta's Alberta Dementia Strategy and Action Plan, a five-year plan to improve the lives of Albertans living with dementia, as well as the families, friends and communities who support them.
- As part of the project, the Alzheimer Society formed an advisory committee made up of Alberta employers with visible commitments to inclusive workplaces. The advisory committee included representatives from Alberta Health Services, ATB Financial, Covenant Health, Covenant Care, the University of Alberta, the City of Edmonton, Strathcona County, and the Town of Stony Plain.
- The advisory committee was asked to help identify the types of dementia-related information, tools, and information-sharing channels that would add the greatest value for them and their employees. It recommended a publicly available information-focused website that employers can reference within their organizations and share with staff and employees, as helpful. It also recommended the website provide information directly applicable to them, as employers, and information for employees living with dementia and care partners.
- In addition to speaking directly to dementia in the workplace, DementiaAlberta.ca also includes resources for anyone seeking to maintain brain health and understand the relationship between brain health and dementia.