

Connections

Linking a community of dementia support



Embrace community connections

With the change in season, opportunities to engage in activities set aside during the colder months begin to resurface. As daylight lingers and temperatures rise, let's embrace spring's invitation to take part in activities that foster connections within our community. Mark your calendar on Sunday, May 26 for our annual fundraiser, the *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's*, presented by Go Auto. With 20 locations across the province, it's an opportunity to support a meaningful cause, incorporate outdoor movement into your routine and build connections with others passionate about creating a better world for people affected by dementia.

As we step out from the warmth and coziness of indoor spaces, consider seeking out local gatherings,

or partaking in activities aligned with your interests. The Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s First Link® dementia support is another great way for people living with dementia and their care partners to access support and education at any stage of the journey. We can also provide information about helpful community and health-care services.

- Learn first-hand how our programs and services helped caregivers find supportive communities by visiting alzbc.org/LE-Supportive-Community.
- Learn more about First Link® support services! Visit alzbc.org/dhl or call 1-800-936-6033 (available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.). Support is also available in Cantonese, Mandarin, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Save the date! Connect with your local community on Sunday, May 26!

Find the *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's* closest to you. See [page 5](#) to learn more.

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Spring has sprung! Embracing new opportunities

Spring brings us a fresh start as we awaken to longer and brighter days, set new goals, embark on fresh projects or simply declutter our minds. With National Volunteer Week on April 21-27 and the *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's*, presented by Go Auto, on May 26, spring is an important time to talk about building a supportive community and celebrate everyone's integral roles to support our mission.

In this issue of *Connections*, we're sharing the latest report on the Alzheimer Society of Canada's Landmark Study, detailing the demographic, social and economic impact of dementia across Canada – including here in B.C. The report, which outlines dementia's current impact and models its future impact, will be an important tool for us to better understand the many faces of dementia and find equitable solutions for future dementia challenges, so that no one is left behind.

We're also offering new opportunities for people with lived experience of dementia and caregiving to partner with us! We'd love to invite you to our

upcoming webinar on advocacy action planning. Learn about the launch of our short- and long-term advocacy projects coming up this year to help address the challenges people affected by the disease face. Interested in additional resources? We're also highlighting an upcoming webinar in partnership with Chartwell Residences on how you can help people living with dementia successfully move into a retirement community.

Meet this year's *Walk* honourees in Northern B.C., Brian Stanley and Penny Jones, who talk about community support and living life to the fullest. We also share opportunities about how you can volunteer with us at the *Walk*, including roles as a committee member and event day volunteers. We hope you'll join us in a community near you!



Jennifer Lyle
Chief Executive Officer
Alzheimer Society of B.C.



alzbc.org/FLDHL

Questions or concerns about dementia or memory loss?

First Link® Dementia Helpline

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| English
(Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.) | 1-800-936-6033 |
| Cantonese and Mandarin
(Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.) | 1-833-674-5007 |
| Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu
(Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.) | 1-833-674-5003 |

Wrestling with dementia



Brian Stanley and Penny Jones are on the dementia journey with the support of their family, friends and community.

A poet, coach, wrestler, lacrosse player, teacher, father and grandfather, Brian Stanley was beginning to look forward to the next chapter of his life with his spouse Penny Jones. With four now adult children, the couple had plans to begin travelling and spending more quality time together. However, in 2021 Penny began noticing changes to the man she had spent over two decades with.

“It was becoming quite a pattern to others that I couldn’t seem to remember certain everyday things in the house,” Brian says. “What light switch hits where and which closet has what in it? And we’d been living in this house for nearly 20 years. Penny was quite vocal about her concerns, but I didn’t think it was an issue at all.”

It wasn’t until Brian went to renew his first aid certificate, something he and Penny have done regularly for the past three decades, that he started to become worried.

“We laugh because every other year we’ve said, ‘Let’s take the test before the course!’ And this year I just couldn’t do the test. I recognized the words, but the knowledge was gone.”

After booking an appointment with their family doctor, Brian says the process of tests and assessments moved quickly, with the diagnosis of young onset dementia delivered in March of 2022. Brian was in his mid-50s.

After grieving, Brian decided to continue living life to the fullest by embarking on a lifelong dream: to wrestle competitively in Las Vegas. He trained for six hours a day, coached by his daughter, whom he had coached throughout her high school wrestling career. In April of 2023, just over a year after his diagnosis, he made that bucket list item come true. When he returned home, Brian ran two five-kilometre races and now has the goal in mind of completing a triathlon in 2024.

Along their dementia journey, Penny and Brian have been surrounded by a strong network that includes family, friends, friends that feel like family, connections made at the gym and the community at large.

“I’m not alone,” Brian says. “And that’s probably the most comforting thing about this. I don’t think it’s at all an exaggeration to say I’m one of the luckiest people there’s ever been.”

That feeling of community and support is something Penny says is crucial throughout the dementia journey. Penny first connected to the Alzheimer Society of B.C. through the First Link® Dementia Helpline, a service she continues to access for the support of “someone who just gets it” on the other end of the line.

Brian and Penny are being honoured at this year’s Northern B.C. *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer’s*. To read the full version of their story, or to register for the *Walk*, visit WalkForAlzheimers.ca.

Navigating the move to assisted living in a retirement community



Jennifer Squair, Regional Business Development Manager, Chartwell Retirement Residences, Western Canada

The decision to help a person living with dementia move into assisted living in a retirement community is one many families face on the dementia journey. It can be one of the most significant and challenging transitions for the person living with dementia. And, it can be emotionally, logistically and financially

complex for care partners and other family members supporting the move. Because of this, making a well-informed choice is so important.

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. has invited trusted industry expert Chartwell Retirement Residences to present a live webinar on Wednesday, April 3 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. to help care partners feel confident that they have taken everything into consideration and made the best choice when helping a family member take this important next step on their journey.

Experts, Jennifer Squair, Regional Business Development Manager, and Marie Lashley, Director of Regional Sales, have a combined 20 years of experience helping families navigate what can seem like an overwhelming array of choices when making care decisions. In this free event, Jennifer and Marie will bring to light important considerations, helping families arrive at a decision that honours the experience of the person living with dementia and accommodates their family's unique circumstances.

This webinar will cover topics like:

- Knowing when it's time for a move to assisted living in a retirement community.
- Taking a person-centred approach to finding the right community.
- Considering care options and costs.
- Considering the effect on a spouse or adult children.
- Accessing professional help from realtors, financial planners and downsizing experts.
- Helping the person living with dementia navigate the transition.

“At Chartwell, we're in the business of health, happiness and peace of mind – for older adults, their families and our communities. Making people's lives better is our purpose. That's why we're so proud to partner with the Alzheimer Society of B.C. to ensure that people living with dementia and their families have the support and information they need to live their best lives.”

– Jennifer Squair, Chartwell Retirement Residences

Register today!

Join us and Chartwell Retirement Residences for the free dementia webinar, “Successfully navigating the move to assisted living in a retirement community,” on April 3, from 2-3:30 p.m. PST. To register, visit alzbc.org/webinar-chartwell

What's coming up



Sunday, May 26

**For more information
and to register, visit:
WalkForAlzheimers.ca.**



**Two Wednesdays,
April 10 and May 15
2 – 3:30 p.m. PST**

**To register, visit:
alzbc.org/LE-Partners
(Part one)
alzbc.org/LE-Advocacy
(Part two)**



**To register, call the First Link®
Dementia Helpline:**

**Punjabi: 1-833-674-5003
Chinese: 1-833-674-5007**

IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's

We are excited to announce the *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's*, presented by Go Auto, will return to communities across B.C. on Sunday, May 26! Join us at a *Walk* event near you and show people affected by dementia they don't have to walk the journey alone.

Team up with your family, friends and coworkers and help us honour and remember people in your communities affected by the disease. Funds raised help to provide programs and services for families on the journey and contribute to research into the causes of and cure for the disease.

Who will you walk for? Register as an individual or create a team.

Lived experience: Working with lived experience partners

Lived experience partners help spread awareness about dementia by sharing their personal stories, experiences and perspectives. Meaningful engagement opportunities invite people directly affected by dementia to actively contribute to the Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s work.

In the first of a two-part lived experience webinar, we will feature a panel of people living with dementia and caregivers. They will share how partnering with us has helped them find purpose and meaning on the dementia journey. Part two will focus on advocacy action planning. Staff will share how people with lived experience can support our upcoming advocacy projects while boosting their own skills and confidence.

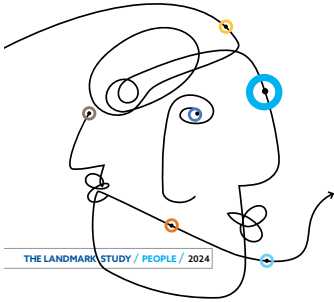
New! Minds in Motion® programs in Fraser region

Minds in Motion® is a fun and engaging fitness and social program designed for people living with early-stage dementia and care partners, to stimulate both the mind and body. We are now expanding the program to communities in:

- Surrey and Abbotsford (Punjabi)
- Port Moody and Burnaby (Chinese)

Canadian perspectives on dementia: Highlights from the Landmark Study

REPORT 2 THE MANY FACES OF DEMENTIA IN CANADA



THE LANDMARK STUDY / PEOPLE / 2024

Dementia is one of the most pressing health challenges facing Canada's aging population, but its scale and impact remain uncertain. The Alzheimer Society of Canada undertook the Landmark Study to address this knowledge gap. The

study's primary aims are to:

- **Increase awareness** of the diversity of who develops dementia in Canada.
- **Improve knowledge** of dementia.
- **Advocate** for better dementia care.
- **Create action** among people, organizations and all levels of governments to work together towards more inclusion, equity and diversity in dementia support and research.
- **Push for change** through more research investment, pushing back against stigma and creating policies to improve dementia care.

The first report, released in 2022, updated projections for the number of Canadians forecast to be living with dementia over the next three decades. In British Columbia in 2022:

- An estimated 85,800 people were living with dementia. This number projected to increase to 247,300 by 2050.
- An estimated 50,400 care partners provided 67.9 million hours of support per year. By 2050, a projected 144,900 care partners will provide 198.3 million hours of support per year.

In January 2024, the second report, *The Many Faces of Dementia in Canada*, was released. The report highlights the diversity of people who will likely develop dementia in Canada over the next three decades. It focuses specifically on Indigenous Peoples, ethnic and racially diverse groups, sex and gender differences in dementia as well as young onset dementia. In British Columbia:

- An estimated 1,530 Indigenous people were living with dementia in 2020. By 2050, a projected 5,900 Indigenous people will live with dementia, an increase of 286 per cent.
- By 2050, one out of every three people who live with dementia will be of Asian origin. This represents an increase of more than 700 percent from 2020.
- By 2050, there will be 1.7 times as many people assigned female at birth who live with dementia than of people assigned male at birth.
- By 2050, more than 6,000 people under the age of 65 will live with dementia.

Together, we need to adapt how we provide information and support everyone – including Indigenous, racialized and younger people – to live with dementia, while supporting equitable access to care, diagnosis and prevention tools for all.

Read the latest report

To read the latest Landmark Study report and learn more about what health-care providers, governments, researchers and people like you can do to change the future of dementia in Canada, visit alzbc.org/landmark2.

You can make a difference



Storytelling is one of the most powerful ways someone living with dementia can take a stand against stigma, build connections in the community and help other people on the journey know they aren't alone.

To better understand the caregiver experience, the Alzheimer Society of B.C. relies on the voices of people who have first-hand knowledge of the physical and emotional impact of caregiving. When caregivers

share how they navigate feelings of loss and celebrate moments of joy, it allows others to develop their own skills, strength and resiliency. Every story has a far-reaching impact.

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. is committed to ensuring no one walks the dementia journey alone. Our lived experience partners – people who have been directly affected by dementia – help us keep that commitment. They support the Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s mission to ensure people affected by dementia are not alone by sharing their experiences and insights. One way we have seen the powerful impact of these stories is through our lived experience webinars. Webinar participants often thank us for normalizing and humanizing their experience.

If you would like to learn more about how you can get involved, please email us at livedexperience@alzheimerbc.org or visit alzbc.org/LivedExperience.

Help us make change through advocacy!

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. supports people affected by dementia in advocating for themselves or people who care for them when navigating the health-care system, as well as advocating for systemic change. To ensure our advocacy efforts truly reflect the diverse needs of people on the dementia journey across the province, we are offering new opportunities for people with lived experience of dementia and caregiving to partner with us.

Throughout 2024, we will be launching several short- and long-term advocacy projects and want to invite both people living with dementia and caregivers to take part in this important work.

One key project is focused on the development and implementation of an election strategy for the upcoming provincial election. This strategy will prioritize the key issues affecting people living with dementia, their families and care providers. These issues include improving the diagnosis experience, supporting caregivers and improving cultural sensitivity and safety.

If you're eager to get involved but don't know where to start, join us on May 15, from 2 to 3:30 p.m., for a special webinar on advocacy action planning. This webinar will support you to build advocacy skills and confidence, and to learn about some of our upcoming projects and how you can support them. Register for the webinar at alzbc.org/LE-Advocacy.

Make a difference at the *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's*



Volunteers at the *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's* in North Vancouver

"I started volunteering with the *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's* in 2019 to honour my grandmother who lived with dementia for almost a decade. I believe facilitating the event within our community continues to make an impactful difference as it brings motivated youth, adults, leaders and people living with dementia and their families together." – Tasia Karasick

On Sunday, May 26, 2024, community members from 20 communities across B.C. will walk together at the Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s flagship fundraising event, the *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's*, presented by Go Auto. Together, we will send a message of hope to everyone affected by dementia.

We are recruiting for both volunteer committee members and day-of volunteers. If you have excellent interpersonal and communication skills, you may be interested in becoming a committee member. Roles include, but are not limited to: promotion and publicity, accounting and volunteer coordination. Event day volunteers are greatly needed to help with various activities from setting up, registering participants and painting faces to providing general support and post-event clean up.

The *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's* could not happen without volunteers like you.

Interested in volunteering for the 2024 *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's*?

To learn about event day volunteer opportunities and sign up, please visit alzbc.org/EventVol. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer committee member, please email ndunn@alzheimerbc.org.

About Connections

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Contact us to contribute content or to subscribe to receive *Connections* regularly.

- **Online** at alzbc.org/connections-newsletter
- **Email** newsletter@alzheimerbc.org
- **Call** 604-681-6530; 1-800-667-3742 (toll-free)
- **Mail** to the Alzheimer Society of B.C.
300-828 West 8th Avenue,
Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 1E2

Help us reduce costs by subscribing to *Connections* by email.

Are you a person living with dementia?

We also publish *Insight*, a publication for people living with dementia or cognitive impairment. For more information, visit alzbc.org/insight-newsletter.



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