

Société Alzheimer Society

Alzheimer Society of Canada CEO named co-chair of Ministerial Advisory Board on Dementia

Toronto, ON, May 14, 2018 – The Alzheimer Society of Canada is pleased to announce that its CEO, Pauline Tardif, has been appointed co-chair of a Ministerial Advisory Board. This Board will advise the Federal Minister of Health Ginette Petitpas Taylor on matters related to the health of Canadians living with dementia as the Government of Canada begins to develop a national dementia strategy.

The Minister made the announcement today in Ottawa, where she's hosting a national dementia conference of key stakeholders, people living with dementia and caregivers who have come together to discuss and share their perspectives and insights to inform the strategy.

“I'm extremely honoured and privileged to co-chair the Advisory Board and to engage Canadians with dementia, their families and their caregivers, as well as researchers, advocacy groups and health-care professionals in this important work,” says Ms. Tardif. “I'm also excited to work alongside our government partners and with my co-chair, Dr. William Reichman, President and Chief Executive Officer of Baycrest Health Sciences, to ensure that the needs of those who we support are met as the Government of Canada works towards the development of a comprehensive national strategy.”

The Alzheimer Society has advocated for a national strategy for over a decade, calling for increased collaboration and innovation in research, more timely diagnosis and intervention, and enhanced care and community-based services.

“Through increased awareness and understanding, I'm determined to reduce stigma and correct misinformation surrounding dementia,” says Ms. Tardif. “As co-chair and a representative of the Alzheimer Society, I will focus on what is possible at every stage of the disease so that the advice we provide through the Advisory Board ensures that those living with dementia are respected and engaged as full citizens in our communities.”

Today's announcement is another step towards developing a comprehensive and coordinated national dementia strategy to improve the lives of Canadians living with dementia now and into the future.

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About the Alzheimer Society

The Alzheimer Society is Canada's leading nationwide health charity for people living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Active in communities across Canada, the Society provides information, programs and services, and raises funds for research to better understand the causes of dementia, improve treatment and care, and to find cures.

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Key facts:

- More than half a million Canadians are currently living with dementia. In less than 15 years, this number will rise to 937,000.
- 65 per cent of Canadians with dementia over 65 are women. That's because women are more likely to live longer than men, and age is the biggest risk factor.
- Dementia is not a natural part of aging even though age is the biggest risk factor. After 65, your risk for dementia doubles every five years.
- Dementia is not just a disease of the elderly - you could be diagnosed in your 50s, 40s or even 30s.
- Right now, there are 16,000 Canadians under the age of 65 with dementia.
- Dementia can be present in the brain up to 25 years before symptoms begin to appear.
- Canadians currently spend \$10.4 billion per year to care for those living with dementia. By 2031, they will spend \$16.6 billion, an increase of 60 per cent.
- Costs for those with dementia are estimated to be five and a half times greater than for those who don't have dementia.