

In the LOOP

SPRING 2022

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Alzheimer
Society
NOVA SCOTIA

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...and more!

Join the IG Wealth Management
Walk for Alzheimer's today at www.walkns.ca



SPRING 2022

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AlzEducate



Join us for our upcoming online education sessions:

May 26 1:30-2:30 p.m.

June 16 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Visit alzheimer.ca/ns/virtual-education to register and find a link to past session recordings.

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asnsraffle.ca

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GOOD LUCK!

20 Years of InfoLine Service

Jenna Farrell

Manager, Communications & Marketing

We're recognizing the 20th anniversary of our InfoLine service this May. It's amazing to look back on the past 20 years and reflect on the growth of the service, and how we've expanded to support more and more Nova Scotians on the dementia journey.

InfoLine was developed in 2002 by Mary Anne Nardecchia and a group of dedicated volunteers providing support and information over the phone to families living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

"The information, knowledge and support were sought by callers looking for guidance and understanding at a very difficult time in their lives," says Mary Anne.

**™We completed
over 4,000 contacts
this past year
alone.**

Kaija Whittam

Manager of Client Services

As the number of calls grew, the service needed to expand. This included formal training for the volunteers and a designated office space. This marked the beginning of what we know now as InfoLine.

"It began by recognizing a growing need for family support, and grew into a program that continues to evolve and keep relevant over time," says Mary Anne. "It is truly amazing that InfoLine has continued to provide such an important service for so many people looking for help."

Ten years into the service, we were able to transition to full-time staff coverage, an electronic case management system and a set of standards that were adopted by societies across the country.

"The staff who work on InfoLine are involved in each of our programs," says Wenda MacDonald, who managed InfoLine from 2009-2020. "When you get in touch, a world of programs and support opens up. The staff can be in touch long term. I couldn't be more proud of the service and where it is now."

The move to an electronic case management system may seem like a small detail from an outside perspective, but it meant we had the capacity for much higher call volumes and regular follow ups. We went from hundreds of calls a year to over 2,000 by 2015, and we have continued to grow.

“We completed over 4,000 contacts this past year alone,” says Kaija Whittam, Manager of Client Services, who currently manages InfoLine. “We have a wonderful team of professional staff on the service who are dedicated, passionate, skilled and knowledgeable. We have registered social workers, recreation therapists and staff who have worked in the field for over 20 years. Throughout the pandemic we have been providing ongoing support to our clients, and our number of calls continue to grow. We will continue to be here to listen, and to care.”

Our InfoLine service provides help navigating the dementia journey, ongoing individualized support, registration for Alzheimer Society programs, connection to community-based services, educational material, and tips and strategies for living well.

If you have questions about dementia, we're here to help.

Call us toll-free at 1-800-611-6345



Saying Goodbye to Darce

Linda Bird

Former Director, Programs & Services

Darce Fardy, passed away on Saturday, March 12, 2022, at home in Halifax.

“He left this life surrounded by his loving family, at the time and place of his own choosing, and fully at peace. But only after a toast, a Manhattan, a laugh, a cry, and a rousing chorus of Ode to Newfoundland. We should all have such great fortune,” according to his obituary.

I learned of Darce Fardy after reading his first column in the Chronicle Herald. Darce was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease and wanted to help others by writing about his experiences.

Intrigued by his decision to share his personal journey in such a public forum, I called him up and we arranged to meet at a local coffee shop. Over that first cup of coffee, Darce explained that he wanted to make a difference by sharing his life with dementia so that others would start talking too, taking away some of the stigma that surrounds a diagnosis.

He was passionate, determined, committed and he had a twinkle of mischief in his eyes that I came to understand as a hallmark of his character.

In these early days, he was working out at the gym and thankful for the support he received to carry on his daily routines. By writing about his life, he hoped that others would feel encouraged to share their diagnosis with family, friends, and community connections so they too would get support and continue to be involved in activities they enjoyed. As one of the symptoms of dementia can be a lack of insight into one’s symptoms, having someone both able and willing to share is a rare and valuable perspective.

I continued to read his column and kept in touch. Our coffee breaks grew to include Darce’s wife Dorothea, who Darce would be the first to say played a huge role in supporting his independence and “rolling with” the changes. And Darce’s column was making a real difference. He was hearing from and responding to lots of people and



became a bit of a celebrity (outside of all his other accomplishments!) in the dementia world. I would hear from clients on the phone and from health care workers at meetings that they were reading, following, and appreciating the column.

Darce had more to offer than he needed in return. He helped us in many ways besides the column. He served on our Board for a short time, was a panelist at our Early Stage Forum and provincial conference (where he took the sails out of the interviewer by pre-empting their prepared questions the first chance he got to speak), presented to Dalhousie medical students, was the face of one of our fundraising campaigns and was featured in a public service announcement (PSA) to promote our InfoLine.

I watched the PSA recently and although it comes across rather somber, my memories were of two hours of laughter with Darce sharing moose stories with the production producer, a fellow Newfoundlander, who later dropped by with a package of moose meat for Darce.

It's rare that someone with a dementia diagnosis wants to publicly share their experience. And when they do, it's a gift. We are fortunate in Nova Scotia and at the Alzheimer Society to have many of these gifts over the years as they help us to gain a better understanding of what people are experiencing and ways we can better help. Darce was one of these gifts.

Thank you, Darce.

InfoLine | 1-800-611-6345



We are here to help

The province-wide InfoLine is a confidential service provided by a team of knowledgeable and caring staff.

IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's

We're over halfway through **WALK YOUR WAY IN MAY** and we're so excited to have so many folks on board for another year of great fun and fundraising.

It's not too late for you to join us and make an impact. You can still register and fundraise, or make a direct donation to your favourite team.

We may not be back in person yet, but we want to create of sense of community in all we do.

Like the rest of the world, we had to make many changes to ensure our programs and services were still available and accessible throughout the pandemic to the thousands of Nova Scotians on the dementia journey. We've developed a variety of online programs that support people right in their own home. We look forward to welcoming clients back in person, but we also know that we will maintain some virtual programming after we've seen the impact and reach it has had during the pandemic.

We have learned so much over the last few years about how to make a virtual Walk AMAZING!

WALK YOUR WAY IN MAY in support of the thousands of Nova Scotians living with dementia. **Register today at www.walkns.ca.**



Who are you walking for?
Register today
www.walkns.ca



What is WALK YOUR WAY IN MAY?

You choose the date and activity that works for you - any day throughout the month of May!

For example, you can:

- Do a 5km walk around your neighbourhood
- Have a family dance party in your living room
- Walk 17,000 steps for the 17,000 Nova Scotians living with dementia
- Whatever else you choose to do - just remember to have fun!

Find all the details online at www.walkns.ca

THANK YOU

for your tremendous support!



40 Years of Impact

John Britton, CEO

40 years! It's hard to believe it, but that is how old ASNS will turn on January 31, 2023. 40 years of supporting Nova Scotians on the dementia journey. 40 years of impact.

As we recognize past successes – and look ahead to our next 40 years – we wanted to take a moment to honour the beginnings of our own journey as a Society.

It truly all began 40 years ago this month, on May 12, 1982.

In those days, there was little support for people with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers. And it was difficult to find information.

Phyllis Horton was one of those caregivers who needed support, after her husband was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 1980. With very little information available, she contacted the Alzheimer Society in Toronto, and they suggested setting up a local society.

She turned to Constance Baird and local geriatrician Dr. John Gray. The three met on May 12, 1982, for coffee to discuss organizing this new society. It was made clear from day one that support was required across the province and not just in Halifax.

40 years later, and here we are – committed to advancing the vision of these incredible individuals and supporting people living with dementia in all corners of our province.



First Early Alzheimer Support Group
at the QEII Health Sciences Centre



Forget Me Not Painters - Agnes Kell Napier,
Roberta Way Clark and Peggy Shaw

The Phyllis Horton Student Research Award is still awarded annually for excellence in dementia research. The McGrath-Baird Prize in Gerontology is awarded at Mount Saint Vincent University. Dr. John Gray – who passed away in 2021 – is the inspiration for our work in supporting Nova Scotians in obtaining a timely diagnosis. Their names and their legacies will live on in the work we do, and the impacts we continue to have thanks to their dedication and vision.



Dr. John Gray, Judy MacLean,
Penny Doherty and Margaret Murray

We look forward to sharing more of our history as a Society as we embark on our 40th birthday year!

**Photos and details in this article from Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia: The History 1982-1999, written by D.J. Pass & Karim Mukhida.*

Family Caregiver Education Series



Do you have a friend or family member newly diagnosed with dementia?

Our Family Caregiver Education Series has moved online and spaces are available in upcoming sessions. For more information, visit www.alzheimer.ca/ns/fces or call Heather at 902-422-7961 ext. 243.

Let's Walk and Talk About Dementia

Originally published in the Cape Breton Post

Catherine Shepherd

Regional Coordinator, Cape Breton
Provincial Lead, First Link® Outreach

With spring finally here, I'm starting to think a lot about what's coming up at the Society and the opportunities that we have to provide dementia education to Nova Scotians. Whether you are looking for something to watch, such as our Family Caregiver Education Series on Eastlink or on our YouTube channel, thinking of joining a support group, or getting out and getting moving to help keep your brain healthy, we have ideas!

One of our biggest events of the year happens each spring, the IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's. Maybe knowing this is happening is just the motivation you need to lace up your sneakers.

The Walk is an opportunity to raise funds to support the programs and services at the Society, but it's also a key opportunity to raise awareness about dementia in our province. With the Walk being such a family-oriented event, I think it's the perfect time to have some discussions with your family, friends and neighbours about dementia.

We're once again doing **Walk Your Way in May!** You can choose any day throughout the month of May to do your walk. Take a stroll around your neighbourhood, head to your favourite hiking trail or, if getting outside isn't the right fit for you, just move in your own space.

"It's still early, but we're excited to see how many of our walkers are already registered and in fundraising mode," says Dawn Kehoe, co-chair of the Walk planning committee and fundraiser here in Cape Breton. "I can't wait to see the photos and videos of everyone out doing their Walk Your Way this year."

Dementia can be a tough topic to talk about. It can be especially hard to talk to children and teenagers about this disease, and it can be difficult for them to understand. But being out in the sunshine or in a comfortable and friendly space can make it a bit lighter to chat about. Think about doing the Walk Your Way as a family event, and while you're walking, take the opportunity to talk about what dementia is, how we can support those on the dementia journey, and about how we can reduce our risk and live a healthy life.

For children and teenagers, you can explain dementia in simple terms that are a bit easier to understand. You can try something such as: “When people have dementia, they may forget, they may get confused, they may need extra help when trying to remember or in taking care of themselves. It’s always important to talk about how every person with dementia is unique and the importance of treating each person with dignity and respect.”

We have some great resources where you can find even more information. Some of these ideas came from a brochure called Just for Kids: Helping children understand Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. We have one for teenagers, too! Both can be found on our website at www.alzheimer.ca/ns/family.

We’re here to support you in having these conversations with everyone – children, teenagers, friends and neighbours. The First Steps for Families resource page on our website has information and links to help get you started.

You can always call our Information and Support line at 1-800-611-6345 to talk through the information and prepare for these conversations, or just to get some helpful ideas.

We’re hoping for a beautiful and sunny May across Nova Scotia this year, with plenty of opportunities to get out with family and friends and walk and talk about dementia!

“We’ve had a great response to Walk Your Way over the past couple years when we haven’t been able to hold in-person walks,” says Dawn. “I hope that 2022 will be the best Walk Your Way yet!”

Talking about dementia



Visit alzheimer.ca/ns/family for information and resources to help you with these conversations.

Call us at 1-800-611-6345 if you have any questions or want to talk.



Participate in this year's IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's and use the opportunity to talk about dementia with your family, friends and neighbours.

Soci t  Alzheimer Society

NOVA SCOTIA

Donate or register today at www.walkns.ca

Dear Friend,

The year was 1982. It was May. May 12th, to be exact.

That was when a concerned group of caregivers and healthcare providers gathered in a community room in Halifax to discuss the growing needs of families caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia.



Travis, Alexa and Justin

They were determined to build better supports for families with nowhere else to turn. Then, in 1983, the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia (ASNS) was officially founded.

Since that time, thousands of Nova Scotia families have benefitted from the care, compassion, and resources provided by the society. That includes my family.

My mom, Alexa McDonough, dedicated her life to fighting for equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging.

That commitment was also at the root of her unyielding belief that every person with dementia – and every caregiver – should have access to support, and resources. That's what drove her to become an ASNS volunteer.

However, it wasn't until my grandparents, and then my Mom's own, Alzheimer's diagnosis that our family truly understood the ripple effect of the disease and the impact it has on family and friends.

While an Alzheimer's diagnosis is never easy for any family, my brother Travis and I – along with our spouses and children – were fortunate.

You see, we have a close-knit family to draw on for help, we have access to resources that others may not and, with our mom being such a public figure, we were lifted up by an outpouring of community support.

But, many caregivers lack the resources, support, and access to medical expertise that allowed my mom to improve her quality of life and made our family's Alzheimer's journey more manageable than it might otherwise have been.

ASNS needs our support to fund critical programs that can not only change the future of living with dementia, but also have the ability to improve the quality of life for those who need support right now. My family's experience is proof.

That's why I'm asking you to support other families through their own Alzheimer's journey – or a caregiver in need.

To make your gift, simply complete and detach the contribution reply form and return to ASNS, or donate online at www.alzheimer.ca/ns/donate.

No matter the size of your donation, please know that your contribution will provide much-needed support today. But, just as importantly, you will be giving a family like mine the gift of hope for tomorrow.

Sincerely,



Justin McDonough

Name: _____

Full mailing address: _____

Yes! I would love to make a donation to support Nova Scotians living with dementia.

I'd like to make a one-time tax-deductible contribution of:

\$20 \$50 \$100 \$ _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

Please charge my donation to my:

Visa MasterCard AMEX

Cardholder name: _____

Card number: _____

Expiry: ___/___ CVC: _____

Cardholder signature: _____

OR

I have enclosed a cheque payable to the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia

Thank you! Please return to 112-2719 Gladstone St, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 4W6. You can also make your secure donation at www.alzheimer.ca/ns/donate.

Interested in learning about becoming a monthly donor or planning a legacy gift? Contact Denise at 902-229-6093 or denise.collier@asns.ca.

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112-2719 Gladstone St, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 4W6
902-422-7961 or 1-800-611-6345 (toll free within NS)

No one should face dementia alone.

*Read how you make that possible in
our latest newsletter.*

