

## **New Ontario Dementia Care Alliance Launches to Create a More Dementia-Friendly Province**

*Expert panel to provide proactive, evidence-informed recommendations that are costed and implementable*

**TORONTO, ON**, December 20, 2022—A panel of 17 leading experts in dementia care convened this month to create the much-needed Ontario Dementia Care Alliance (ODCA), a new advisory body seeking to transform dementia care in Ontario through evidence-informed and experienced-based recommendations.

“Dementia lies at the heart of challenges faced by our health and long-term care systems,” said Cathy Barrick, CEO, Alzheimer Society of Ontario. “There are over 260,000 Ontarians living with dementia today, and that number is going to triple within 30 years. We’re barely able to support those who need care today, let alone three times that number. We do not have the luxury of time: without immediate, evidence-informed action, Ontario will not be able to meet the care needs of tens of thousands of people who will be diagnosed with dementia in the coming years.”

The ODCA’s mission is to create a more dementia-friendly Ontario using expert advice that will educate, advocate, and improve access to quality dementia care across the province. Its expert members represent the full spectrum of dementia care, and will proactively offer costed and implementable recommendations to the Government of Ontario to improve the experience of clients and providers, and deliver better value.

“There is reason to be hopeful about the future of dementia care,” continued Ms. Barrick. “Ontario will likely have our first-ever approved treatment for Alzheimer’s disease within three years—before the next provincial election. As things stand today, Ontario is not ready to deliver a treatment to the people who would most benefit. Getting there will take the collective efforts of health system leaders and the provincial government: the ODCA will help kick-start that collaboration.”

Expert members of the ODCA are:

- **Dr. Sandra Black, OC, O. Ont., MD, FRSC:** Senior Scientist, Sunnybrook Research Institute; Brill Chair in Neurology, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto and Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre.
- **Dr. Michael Borrie, MB, ChB, FRCPC:** Head, Department of Geriatric Medicine, Parkwood Hospital; Professor, University of Western Ontario Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry, Department of Medicine, Division of Geriatric Medicine.
- **Dr. Sharon Cohen, MD, FRCPC:** Medical Director and Site Principal Investigator, Toronto Memory Program.
- **Andy Donald, RPH, MSc:** Founder and CEO, The Health Depot Pharmacy.

- **Deb Galet:** Vice President, Long-Term Care and Ambulatory Care & Chief Heritage Officer, Baycrest.
- **Dr. Jennifer Ingram, MD, FRCPC:** Founder, Kawartha Centre—Redefining Healthy Aging; Adjunct Professor, Trent University, Trent Centre for Aging and Society.
- **Dr. Linda Lee, MD, FCFP:** Founder, MINT Memory Clinics; Schlegel Chair in Primary Care for Elders, Research Institute for Aging.
- **Lisa Levin:** CEO, AdvantAge Ontario.
- **Adam Morrison:** Director, Policy and Planning, Provincial Geriatrics Leadership Ontario.
- **Dr. Tarek Rajji, MD:** Chief, Adult Neurodevelopment and Geriatric Psychiatry Division, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health; Executive Director, Toronto Dementia Research Alliance.
- **Dr. Lisa Saksida, PhD, FCAHS, FRSC:** Professor and Canada Research Chair in Translational Cognitive Neuroscience, University of Western Ontario Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry; Co-Scientific Director of the BrainsCAN Canada First Research Excellence Fund Program in Cognitive Neuroscience, University of Western Ontario.
- **Dr. Rick Swartz, MD, PhD:** Staff Neurologist, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre; Associate Professor, University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine.
- **Laura Tamblyn Watts, LLB:** Founder and CEO, CanAge.
- **Barbara Tarrant:** Care partner.
- **Dr. Carmela Tartaglia, MD, FRCPC:** Marion and Gerald Soloway Chair in Brain Injury and Concussion Research; Associate Professor, Tanz Centre for Research in Neurodegenerative Diseases, University of Toronto.
- **Dr. Jennifer Walker, PhD:** Senior Core Scientist and Indigenous Health Lead, ICES; Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Health, Laurentian University; Assistant Professor, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto.

Members of the ODCA will meet quarterly to discuss pressing issues relevant to their area of expertise. Twice a year, coinciding with the Fall Economic Statement and Provincial Budget, the ODCA will release its costed, expert-informed list of recommendations to the provincial government. These will be tangible and implementable: immediate steps the province could take to improve the care experience of providers and families in a matter of weeks, not decades, without necessarily making billion-dollar commitments.

The ODCA is administratively supported by the Alzheimer Society of Ontario. Funding support is provided by Eisai Canada and Roche Canada, both of whom also sit on the ODCA Steering Committee. Neither the Alzheimer Society nor funders have editorial control over ODCA positions, and statements made by the Society are not necessarily reflective of the views of ODCA members.

## **About the Alzheimer Society**

The Alzheimer Society is a federation of 26 frontline community support service providers, operating in every community across Ontario. We supported over 95,000 clients last year, including both care partners and people living with dementia. We provide education and training to physicians and other health care professionals, as well as to the general public, and work to reduce the stigma that is far too often associated with dementia. As a health service provider, we offer system navigation, care partner respite, adult day programs, therapeutic recreation, and so much more at little or, for nearly all of our programs, no cost to families. With hundreds of staff and thousands of volunteers we seek to alleviate the personal and social consequences of Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia, and to promote research into a cure.

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