

# In the Loop

*Soci t *  
**Alzheimer**  
*Society*

NOVA SCOTIA

**SPRING 2020**

**COVID-19: A MESSAGE  
FROM OUR CEO**

**KEEPING PEOPLE LIVING  
WITH DEMENTIA ENGAGED**

**THE WALK HAS  
MOVED ONLINE!**

A photograph of two female nurses, Lindsay and Clare, smiling. They are wearing blue scrubs. Lindsay is on the left, and Clare is on the right, wearing glasses and a black jacket over her scrubs. They are standing in front of a filing cabinet.

**THANK YOU FRONTLINE WORKERS**

**LINDSAY & CLARE (PICTURED)  
FRONTLINE RN'S AT THE QEII**

# SPRING 2020

## CONTENTS

### On the Cover

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**Page 3:** COVID-19: A Message from Our CEO

**Page 6-7:** Keeping People Living with Dementia Engaged

**Page 13:** The Walk Has Moved Online!

### Features

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**Page 4:** A Thank You To Frontline Workers

**Page 10:** Silver Linings: How To Stay Positive During COVID-19

**Page 11:** What Are Your Four Words?

### Contributors

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**Find the Alzheimer Society on your favourite social media platform:**



**FACEBOOK:** [facebook.com/alzheimerns](https://facebook.com/alzheimerns)



**TWITTER:** [twitter.com/alzheimerns](https://twitter.com/alzheimerns)



**INSTAGRAM:** [instagram.com/alzheimerns](https://instagram.com/alzheimerns)



**YOUTUBE:** [youtube.com/alzheimerns](https://youtube.com/alzheimerns)

# COVID-19: A Message from Our CEO

**John Britton, CEO**

On March 11, 2020, COVID-19 suddenly and drastically changed the face of the world we live in. In the weeks to follow – and for a timeframe we still don't know – the impacts have gotten more and more severe. Restrictions have tightened. Spending time with our family and friends that don't live in our home is not possible. Isolation is our new normal and its effects are compounded by the restrictions we face. Travel is grounded. Businesses that are non-essential are closed, with many of them unable to survive this new reality. Sadly, many of those organizations are charities and they have been forced to lay off staff and close programs.

At the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia, we have taken a different approach. Times are difficult, and our fundraising this year has been badly affected. But we also know that Alzheimer's disease and other dementias do not stop because of a global pandemic. The need for support is increasing and we will be needed even more as we emerge from this crisis and assess its impacts on our world, our lives, and our communities. Our connections matter – now more than ever.

To this end, we made the proactive decision that we will remain operational, accessible to those we support, and we will do anything we need to do to ensure we stay open. As the crisis hit, we responded quickly by closing our office, postponing our in-person programming, and transitioning the entire team to work from home. Our InfoLine service remained uninterrupted during this transition, ensuring that those who needed us could easily reach us. And in the weeks since, our talented staff have been finding innovative ways to extend our service offerings online, using direct feedback and website analytics to ensure our program content is relevant and impactful.

Despite these challenges, we are seeing opportunity in the chaos. Investing resources into online programming will mean that this platform is available to us beyond COVID-19, meaning we can stay connected to even more Nova Scotians on the dementia journey. Our plan is to come out of this stronger, and more intent than ever to support Nova Scotians living with dementia. It's a monumental challenge, but we know that our support and services are more critical now than ever before. You can support our efforts by making a one-time donation or choosing to become a monthly donor. We appreciate that donating or fundraising might not be an option right now – if so, we still want to stay connected!

We know we will get through this global crisis together. If you need us, we are just a phone call or a video conference away. In the meantime, stay safe and healthy and look out for each other. We look forward to seeing you 'in person' soon.



John Britton, CEO, Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia

# A Thank You to Frontline Workers

## ASNS Staff

COVID-19 has changed the face of the world as we know it and how we connect within it. We are practicing social distancing, our daily routines have been disrupted, appointments are cancelled, we are only able to shop for essentials and lining up at grocery stores to do it. These issues – which we are all experiencing to some degree – are compounded for those on the dementia journey. Individuals living with or caring for a family member with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias at home or in long-term care may feel isolated and frustrated that they can’t go out or visit their family members. These are strange and challenging times indeed, and our team at the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia remain committed to supporting our clients.



Through all the challenges, though, one thing is for sure: all of us are grateful to frontline staff working to deliver home care services, working in long term care facilities and hospitals, and supporting people living with dementia and their caregivers. To our incredible frontline workers, we know you face added challenges every day due to COVID-19 and we are indebted to your courage and dedication.

We know that in Nova Scotia, great efforts are being made to keep people safe and healthy. This crisis is highlighting many system changes that need to be made to improve the care and safety of our seniors. In the midst of this pandemic, however, we feel it is important to acknowledge and applaud all the hard work of individual staff throughout the province who are ensuring people with dementia are receiving nutritious meals, help with bathing and getting dressed, keeping rooms clean and virus free, providing engaging activities, and most of all providing warm and friendly medical care.

Our connections matter more than ever in these difficult times. On behalf of all of us at the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia, we thank you for staying connected to those who need it most. We appreciate everything that you are doing. We’d also like to thank your family and friends who are supporting you as you work on the frontlines. Please stay safe.

*New!*

**Virtual Programs**

visit [alzheimer.ca/ns](http://alzheimer.ca/ns)  
to learn more!

*Alzheimer Society*  
NOVA SCOTIA

Online Activities:

**Virtual Artful Afternoon!**

#OurConnectionsMatter

*Alzheimer Society*  
NOVA SCOTIA

Online Education:

**AlzEducate**

Join us every Friday from 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

#OurConnectionsMatter

# Keeping People Living with Dementia Engaged

## Beth House, Coordinator, Education, Support and Outreach



Helping to keep people living with dementia engaged and active can be challenging at the best of times, but throw in a winter storm or a global pandemic and those regular go to's can get stale rather quickly.

We've put together a list of creative online and offline ideas to keep you and your person with dementia involved and connected during this trying time. Many of these can be used throughout most of the stages of dementia, just remember to adjust activities as the disease progresses.

### Online Options:

- Online puzzles – there are lots of good websites like [www.jigidi.com](http://www.jigidi.com) that let you find pictures to match interests and ability and even create your own puzzles from your photos. Some sites like [www.jigzone.com](http://www.jigzone.com) let you choose how many pieces your puzzle will be.
- Colouring websites – website such as [www.thecolor.com](http://www.thecolor.com) let you colour pictures online. Sites such as [crayola](http://crayola.com) let you download and print pages to colour.
- YouTube videos – search up funny animal videos, classic tv shows, or favourite musical performers or songs.
- Online games – look for something that matches the person's interests and abilities. Options such as solitaire are available at [www.solitr.com](http://www.solitr.com).
- Video calls – schedule video calls so they can speak with their family, friends, and others. FaceTime, Facebook Messenger, Google Duo, and Whatsapp are some options. If you need help using this technology, we have a handy guide on how to use FaceTime and Google Duo available on our website.
- Virtual travel – while regular travel may be out of the cards for the foreseeable future, virtual trips are available to everyone with an internet connection. Here's a list of some places you can visit and/or tour. Great Wall of China, the Vatican, the Galapagos, and the world's largest cave Son Doong Cave in Vietnam just to name a few (full list available on our website).

Is Technology not really your thing? There are other offline ways to stay engaged at home.

## Offline Options:



### Sorting and organizing activities:

- Sorting playing cards, by suit or by number
- Reorganizing a utensil drawer
- Unraveling a wool sweater for recycling or balling yarn
- Polishing the silverware
- Sorting clothes, laundry or fabric by colour, size etc.
- Untying knots (a dozen sailor's knots for example)
- Cutting squares of old clothes to make a patchwork rug or quilt

Spiritual Activities can bring a sense of comfort and peace in a time of stress or unease:

- Sacred Music– singing or playing recordings of favourite hymns
- Listening to services on the TV, radio, or online
- Reading aloud to or yourself from devotionals or books of faith
- Start or continue a journaling practice, perhaps using gratitude as a theme
- Try guided meditation using an app such as [www.headspace.com](http://www.headspace.com)



Reminiscing through old photo albums, working on crossword puzzles together by asking the clues out loud, talking about trivia questions from that old board game, or folding paper airplanes or simple origami shapes are all great ways to keep engaged when we can't get out.

Remember, the goal is to enjoy the activity, pass the time and weather this storm, not to check items off a list! These suggestions are just the tip of the iceberg. Enjoy yourselves, be creative, and most importantly have fun!

## Important Notices

### Annual General Meeting

We are pleased to announce our 2020 Annual General Meeting will be taking place as scheduled. We considered moving our AGM to the fall, however, we want to ensure our fall-focus is on client support so we have chosen to move ahead with a virtual meeting.

#### Annual General Meeting Details:

Date: Wednesday, June 24, 2020

Time: 6:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.

Platform: Video conference details will be sent to members and available on our website

#### Consider Becoming a Member!

The Annual General Meeting is open to any member of the Society. As a member you will support families, receive member benefits, and become informed about Alzheimer's disease or other dementias and how programs and services are helping families living with this disease. You will also receive an invitation to and voting privileges at Annual General Meeting. If you have any questions about the Society's membership program, please call Membership at 902-422-7961 or email [sarah.lyon@asns.ca](mailto:sarah.lyon@asns.ca)

### Update on our Annual Provincial Conference

With so many unknowns, we have made the decision to cancel our in-person provincial conference, originally scheduled October 19-20, 2020. One thing that remains steadfast is our dedication to sharing the latest topics and best practices in dementia care. We are actively exploring options for delivering a valuable virtual conference to keep you informed, connected, and safe. More details to come. To all of you providing home, community, residential, and hospital care in response to the pandemic, we are indebted to your courage and dedication.

### Phyllis Horton & Abe Leventhal Research Award Application Extension

As part of our 'hope for tomorrow', we are committed to supporting research in Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, as well as acknowledging the work of students who have chosen to do research in this field. **The deadline for applying to the 2020 Alzheimer Society Phyllis Horton and Abe Leventhal research awards has been extended from April 30th to September 20th.** To learn more about the application process and selection criteria, please visit [www.alzheimer.ca/ns/research](http://www.alzheimer.ca/ns/research)



Alzheimer InfoLine | 1-800-611-6345



## We're here to help

The Alzheimer InfoLine is a confidential phone service provided by our team of knowledgeable and caring staff.

We provide information, support, and referral for persons with dementia, families, caregivers, and professionals.

*Soci t  Alzheimer Society*  
NOVA SCOTIA

# Silver Linings: How To Stay Positive During COVID-19

## ASNS Staff



As the coronavirus continues to spread, it's normal to be feeling a variety of emotions like stress, uncertainty, and loneliness. Nova Scotians have been home for weeks practicing physical distancing and if you're someone who has been feeling the affects, please know you are not alone.

Given that we don't know how long we'll be dealing with this, it's important to maintain healthy practices including taking care of our mental health. Keeping a positive mindset can go a long way during this difficult time. It can help us deal with isolation and handle stress better. Below are some tips aimed at maintaining a positive attitude, which will enable us to "ride out the storm" as best as we can:

- Keep a gratitude list. Notice things you feel grateful for and write them down. Reflect on them when you're feeling low.
- Set limits to the time you spend on problems. Instead focus on troubleshooting and finding solutions. If you notice watching the news or social media heightens your fears about the virus over time, limit your exposure each day and find a balance that works for you.
- Practice mindful breathing. Notice for a few minutes how you are breathing in and out. Keep coming back to noticing your breath when your mind wanders.
- Be gentle with yourself. Treat yourself the way you would treat a friend. Watch for negative self-talk and putdowns. Replace them with encouraging thoughts.
- Shift from negative thinking. Try to catch those negative thoughts that can make things worse. Refocus using positive thoughts such as "I can do this" and "who can help me?"

*For more tips and resources, visit [www.novascotia.ca/coronavirus/mental-health](http://www.novascotia.ca/coronavirus/mental-health)*

## What Are Your Four Words?

**Sarah Lyon, CFRE, Director, Philanthropy**

When asked to comment on how participating in an Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia support group impacted them, a caregiver had these four words to share: *Educational. Supportive. Social. Resourceful.* Each word as important as the next for someone who is on the dementia journey.

What would be the four words you would use to describe a program you partake in or an organization you belong to? What four words could you say to define how you feel when you donate to your charity of choice? When I made my legacy gift, these are the four words I would say sums up how I felt: *Gratitude. Happiness. Optimism. Joy.*

I'm grateful that an organization I believe in is there to help my community. I'm happy that I am in the position, after my family has been looked after, to leave a gift in my will. I have optimism that the world will become a better place because donors give. And just joy. It always feels good to give.

Every month, support groups meet across the province, from the rolling hills of Cape Breton to the shores of Yarmouth. This is just one of the programs and services that the Society is looking at changing to be available online as we all adhere to physical distancing regulations during the pandemic that is COVID-19. While face to face programming has stopped, supporting those on the dementia journey has not. Clients are receiving calls to offer the education, support, resources, and social aspect that caregivers regularly have at support groups. This continuation of services is made possible because of donors.

It's a difficult time in the world and in Nova Scotia. Things seem to change every day. While in isolation, why not think about your four words. What are the four words you would use to describe your spouse? Your children? Your friends? What four words best describe the feeling you have after you interact with your charity of choice? And then, share those four words with them. You will be putting a smile on their faces during a tough time.

***May is Leave a Legacy Month. Simply put, planned giving enables you to plan meaningful gifts to the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia that reflect your beliefs and values.***

***A gift in your will, also called a bequest, makes a lasting impact. It can also help you make a much larger gift than may otherwise be possible, ensuring the best possible help for today and hope for tomorrow.***

***For more information about making a planned gift, please visit [www.alzheimer.ca/ns/get-involved](http://www.alzheimer.ca/ns/get-involved) or call 902-422-7961 ext.227 and speak to Sarah.***

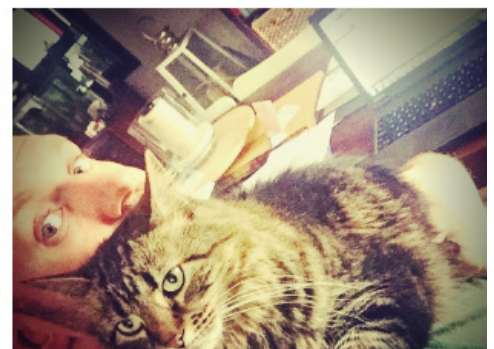
# Our Connections Matter

## We Have Some New Colleagues For You To Meet

Our workplace and our work buddies may have changed because of COVID-19, but our service and commitment to our clients has not.

The new cuddly colleagues and rest of team are here for the people who need us – We're just a phone call away. If you have questions or concerns about Alzheimer's disease or other dementias, call our toll-free and confidential InfoLine. Leave a detailed message and a member of our team will get back to you as soon as possible. We're here to support you as we navigate through this crisis, whether that's by providing advice, guidance, or being a listening ear during this difficult time.

Our connections to YOU matter to us!



# The Walk Has Moved Online!

**Dawn Kehoe, Manager, Community Giving**

COVID-19 has changed the world – and our community – as we know it. Amongst the chaos, one thing stands true: Nova Scotia’s strength of spirit. It is in our first responders, our health care heroes, essential workers, neighbours helping neighbours, and it is in YOU!

That’s why this year for the IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer’s we are still planning to come together as a community for an Online Walk! We are asking participants to hold their own Online Walk events in whatever manner suits their situation. You can fundraise and register just like always, but your event might look a little different. You could do a 5km walk around your neighbourhood, have a family dance party in your living room, or your walk team can have a stair climbing competition. Whatever works for your team, your family, and your situation!

You can also join us and all the Alzheimer Societies across Canada on Sunday, May 31, for the IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer’s Online broadcast! Starting at 1 p.m. (AST), you can watch a fun and exciting “televised” event from anywhere with an internet connection, on the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia’s Facebook page. You can stream the Walk live, while joining in the fun from your living room, backyard, or balcony.

Walk, watch, fundraise – or do all three! You can still participate safely and help raise much needed funds for local programs and services.

We hope you will join us to show that no matter what the world looks like, we are still united to support people affected by dementia.



**IG WEALTH MANAGEMENT**  
**WALK FOR ALZHEIMER'S**  
*Société Alzheimer Society*  
NOVA SCOTIA

**Join the Online Walk!**  
**Register today at [www.walkns.ca](http://www.walkns.ca)**



This is an unprecedented time in our history. The COVID-19 health crisis is far reaching and is having an undeniable impact on people across Nova Scotia.

**17,000 people in Nova Scotia are living with dementia. Those with dementia are among the most vulnerable in our communities right now, and are at greater risk of more serious outcomes from COVID-19.**

Many services and supports, such as respite and adult day programs for people with dementia and their caregivers are no longer available due to the pandemic. This is putting additional pressure on those living with dementia. In addition, the need for physical distancing and the closing of care facilities to visitors, can lead to stronger feelings of isolation.

Dementia doesn't stop being a life-changing disease in the middle of a global health crisis. The need for support, connection and understanding is increasing for families living with dementia due to COVID-19.

**We need your help now to help us reach all those people living in loneliness and panic, who are cut off from their support systems. Donate now to help us make those vital connections.**

We know that our connections to people living with dementia matter. That's why our priority in response to the pandemic is to ensure that people living with dementia and their family caregivers continue to receive the lifeline support through our toll free InfoLine. Our staff are working from home to continue supporting families across Nova Scotia who are faced with the everyday challenges of living with dementia.

We are also working together to implement creative solutions using technology to continue offering our support and education programs. It is our hope that these programs help families overcome the social isolation that we all are feeling.

**We know that the increased number of connections we are making to families living with dementia are very important to keeping them safe and supported.**

It is because of the generosity of donors that we can continue to help our clients and families during these uncertain times. But the reality is, we need help now more than ever. We need our donors' support to stay staffed and responsive.

Please make your donation today to ensure that supports are there for those who are the most vulnerable.

Thank you for your support. Stay safe and stay connected.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Britton", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Britton, CEO

Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia

**P.S. If you need help we are here to support you. Please contact our toll free InfoLine at 1-800-611-6345. If you can help us support people with dementia and their families through this incredibly uncertain time, please make your donation today.**

