

NEWS RELEASE

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Alzheimer Society of B.C. expands First Link® dementia support

Vancouver, B.C. (September 21, 2016) – In time for World Alzheimer’s Day, the Alzheimer Society of B.C. is announcing the expansion of First Link® dementia support into communities in the Central Interior, South Okanagan and Similkameen regions. First Link connects people with dementia, their caregivers, family and friends with support, education and information at any stage of the journey. In addition to services already offered in these communities, the expansion of First Link will allow the Society to build relationships with health-care providers, and to proactively connect with more families on a regular basis through ongoing support calls.

“First Link dementia support provides access to ongoing, reliable support services and education essential for people to live well with dementia,” says Maria Howard, Society CEO. “The expansion of First Link will enable us to deliver that support and education more effectively to the Central Interior, South Okanagan and Similkameen regions, including Kamloops, Ashcroft, Williams Lake, Penticton, Keremeos, Osoyoos and other neighbouring communities.”

The ongoing expansion of First Link was made possible by a \$2.7 million dollar funding commitment from the Ministry of Health, announced in May 2016. Building on services currently offered at Resource Centres in Kamloops and Penticton, this addition is the next step in ensuring that all British Columbians with dementia are able to access ongoing support from the Society to help them live well with the disease.

“First Link helps families understand the diagnosis and get support and education to help manage their changing lives,” said Health Minister Terry Lake. “The program expansion to more communities in British Columbia means those with dementia won’t have to face the journey alone.”

“The more people understand Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias, the better prepared they are to manage it at all stages of the disease,” says Howard. “We’re very happy to expand First Link dementia support in the Central Interior, South Okanagan and Similkameen regions and provide ongoing connection, information and touch points throughout the journey for individuals with dementia and their family and friends.”

For more information about First Link® dementia support, please visit alzheimerbc.org.

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About dementia

Dementia is an umbrella term for a set of symptoms that are caused by disorders affecting the brain. Symptoms may include memory loss and difficulties thinking, problem-solving or language, severe enough to reduce a person's ability to perform everyday activities. A person with dementia may also experience changes in mood or behaviour. Dementia is not a specific disease but can include Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, Lewy body disease, frontotemporal dementia and others. These conditions can have similar and overlapping symptoms.

About the Alzheimer Society of B.C.

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. provides a provincial network of support and education for families impacted by dementia and people concerned about memory loss. Communities across the province count on the Society for support services, information and education programs, advocacy to improve dementia care in B.C. and to fund research to find the causes and cures. As part of a national federation, the Society is a leading authority on the disease in Canada.



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