

Soci t  Alzheimer Society

NEW BRUNSWICK /
NOUVEAU-BRUNSWICK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 30, 2016

Alzheimer Society Gala More than a Fundraising Event



The Alzheimer Society of New Brunswick is pleased with the growth of support for its *Turning Darkness to Light* Gala event taking place on Thursday, October 27, 2016 at the Fredericton Inn. One demonstration of that growing support is the endorsement by His Worship Mayor Mike O'Brien. Mayor O'Brien hopes that other mayors may be able to support this important event as a major step in raising public awareness of this important disease. "I am happy to participate in this important evening," says Mayor O'Brien. (Attached photo from left to right: Ken McGeorge and Chandra MacBean from the Alzheimer Society of New Brunswick and Mike O'Brien, Mayor for the City of Fredericton)

The rapid growth in the incidence of dementia, with Alzheimer's disease being its most common form, is disrupting the retirement of many seniors and the life plans of tens of thousands of New Brunswickers. The vision statement of the Alzheimer Society of New Brunswick includes the phrase: "...defeating the dark shadow of dementia" and those who attend the gala will see what exactly that *dark shadow* looks like. Despite the *dark shadow* that dementia casts, there is good news, there are programs and services available that assist those families as they care for their loved one. The problem being that there still remains gaps with the public's awareness of what is available and how to access that help.

There continues to be stigma associated with the disease that has kept families from openly discussing the disease and the impact it has on their every day lives, and that is part of the *dark shadow*. Dementia is not just about getting old and changes in their behaviour and does not discriminate based on education, race or social status. The root causes of many forms of dementia are still unknown.

In New Brunswick there are approximately 16,900 persons living with dementia and an additional 9 people who develop symptoms each day. A diagnosis of dementia have a lasting impact on the entire family, not just those receiving a diagnosis. The forecast for the coming years is startling and our health and social system needs to make many changes in order to ensure that our aging population will be cared for with honor and dignity.

The Gala will begin with great music, lead by the NB Youth Orchestra Wind Ensemble, the LaPointes, and a Piano Quartet. It will then proceed to the unveiling of several short video pieces that put a very human face on this disease and illustrate the challenges faced by families.

“This event will help us to tell the story of living with dementia in our province,” said Chandra MacBean, Executive Director of the Alzheimer Society of NB. “We are working hard to help the public and provincial policy makers understand that a Provincial Dementia Strategy is needed and the gala will add much to that message.”

Tickets can be secured by calling 506-459-4280 and can also be purchased through any of the six Alzheimer Society Resource Centres or members of the board of directors.

About the Alzheimer Society of New Brunswick:

The Alzheimer Society of New Brunswick has six Resource Centres within the province, and runs numerous education programs and support services for people with Alzheimer’s disease or a related dementia and their families. The Alzheimer Society of New Brunswick provides support and information through a toll free bilingual 1-800 line, and provides comprehensive information kits to help families navigate their way through a diagnosis or suspicion of Alzheimer’s disease. The Alzheimer Society provides in-office and telephone support, and organizes various fund development activities to help to further its mission and to contribute to the national Alzheimer Society Research Program.

Our Vision:

We see communities where no one suffers from dementia – we have taken a stand against the disease, defied its predicted path, and *defeated its dark shadow*.

Alzheimer Society Media Contacts:

Ken McGeorge
Capital Campaign Director
Alzheimer Society of New Brunswick
(506)447-7947 / 1-800-664-8411
kenmcgeorge@alzheimernb.ca

Jamie Matthews
Communications and Fundraising Coordinator
Alzheimer Society of New Brunswick
(506)459-4280 / 1-800-664-8411
media@alzheimernb.ca