

Société Alzheimer Society

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The Alzheimer Society is Strengthening Program Delivery in New Brunswick Communities this Fall

The Alzheimer Society is proud to be offering a number of education programs and support services this Fall that will provide New Brunswick families with the information they need along their journey with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. In partnership with the Department of Social Development and its Home First strategy, First Link enables the Alzheimer Society to consistently deliver quality programs across many New Brunswick communities. First Link is an early intervention initiative whereby healthcare professionals refer their clients to the Alzheimer Society, this proactive approach dramatically reduces the length of time that families traditionally would have taken to access support on their own. Upon referral, the Alzheimer Society can provide information and support, recommendations of available services in their community, and provide access to those programs provided by the Alzheimer Society locally through its six Resource Centres.

One such program is the Memory Café, which will be returning from summer hiatus across 12 communities during the months of September and October. Offered in Doaktown, Edmundston, Fredericton, Miramichi, Moncton, Plaster Rock, Richibucto, Rothesay, Saint John, Sussex, Tracadie and Woodstock, the Memory Café is a core program that the Alzheimer Society delivers to the 16,900 New Brunswick families who are currently living a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and dementia. This is a social program that involves persons with dementia, their families as well as others from the general public who are interested in learning about dementia. The program occurs monthly, and the goal is socialization with an educational component. The Memory Café includes a presentation on a different topic each month, followed by entertainment and refreshments. This program is geared towards people of all ages, and along all stages of the dementia journey.

The Alzheimer Society hopes to introduce new locations in the coming months to ensure that no New Brunswick family will have to travel more than 50 kilometres to access this beneficial program. Attendees, and volunteers alike, experience an environment that is free of stigma, that far too many encounter in other social situations following their diagnosis.

"The Memory Café allows my wife, who has Alzheimer's, and I to socialize with other people who have dementia, their caregivers and caring volunteers. It's an opportunity to enjoy an afternoon of fun, food, interesting speakers and great entertainment which means a great deal to my wife and me," says George Allen, program attendee.

In addition to the Memory Cafés, the Alzheimer Society will also be providing its Alzheimer Journey: First Steps family education series during the month of October. Provided in Edmundston, Fredericton, Moncton, Saint John, Woodstock and the Acadian Peninsula, the Alzheimer Society will be providing the essential information those families require in the

early stages of diagnosis. This free education series is designed to provide information to persons living with dementia as well as to their family members.

“I believe it is critical that families receive accurate information about dementia. With that knowledge, they are able to provide safe care-planning for the future. I am honoured to be a volunteer with such an important program,” says Sherry Gionet, program presenter.

The consecutive weeks of education will introduce families to important topics that will help guide them through the process of learning how to live with dementia. The session topics include *What is Dementia, Communications & Coping, Navigating the System, Legal Matter and Resources & Support*.

“I highly recommend the Alzheimer Journey: First Steps program for family members and caregivers who are beginning their journey with Alzheimer’s disease and dementia. The information provided is thorough and very helpful for those seeking to understand dementia and how to support those living with the disease,” says Monique Levesque-King, program attendee.

The Alzheimer Society is currently expanding on this program as well, by providing an electronic version to be made available on www.alzheimer.ca/nb to in an effort to increase accessibility. Families will be able to access the presentations all yearlong through video recordings of the sessions. This online version is scheduled to be made available in the winter of 2017. Also, the next offering in the series will be presented in March 2017 titled the Alzheimer Journey: Care Essentials which will cater to the middle stages of the disease. To view the complete menu of the Alzheimer Society of New Brunswick’s available programs and services please visit www.alzheimer.ca/nb under the “We Can Help” section.

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*.

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