

FocusON dementia



This election, make dementia a priority

BACKGROUND: Supporting Unpaid Caregivers

Supporting unpaid caregivers through self-directed respite care and caregiver education are crucial to an effective Ontario Dementia Plan.

As a member of the Ontario Caregiver Coalition, the Alzheimer Societies across Ontario are calling on all candidates to **support unpaid caregivers through self-directed respite options and caregiver education programs.**

How?

1. Implement a self-directed model of respite care that provides caregivers with more control over who provides care and when. This model of respite care would allow for greater flexibility in care and should be in addition to what is currently available through the Community Care Access Centres.
2. Expand education programs for persons with dementia and their caregivers

What evidence exists to support this call to action?

- 1 in 10 Canadians are providing care for persons with dementia
- Dementia caregivers provide 75% more personal care and report 20% higher distress levels.
- Caregiving is associated with increased risk in physical health (fatigue and sustaining an injury), psychological health (worry, emotional distress, isolation), and financial burden (professional and personal savings).
- Unpaid caregivers are the hidden back bone of our health care system, saving us 31 billion dollars annually.

Why do we need an Ontario Dementia Plan?

The burden of dementia is increasing at an alarming rate around the globe.

Organizations like Alzheimer's Disease International are calling on all governments to develop dementia plans to meet the needs of this growing population.

Ontario is no different. Dementia has been identified as a major contributor to increased wait times for emergency care and long-term care, increased pressure on the home and community care sector, increased use of anti-psychotic medication, and increased rates of caregiver distress.

In order to adequately support people with dementia and their families, and reduce the impact of dementia on the health system, **Ontario must establish a Dementia Plan.**

Soci t  Alzheimer Society

Going to a local debate, town hall or event? Is a canvasser or Candidate at your door asking for your support?

Be sure to ask the following questions to gauge their support:

1. What is your plan to reduce the impact of dementia on unpaid caregivers?
2. How will you ensure that caregivers do not become casualties of an inadequate home care system?
3. As a candidate for Provincial Parliament, how will you work to support a commitment to creating a comprehensive Ontario Dementia Plan?

Do you have twitter or Facebook? If so, use the sample posts below to engage the parties on our solutions!

Be sure to direct tweets to the Parties (handles below)

Sample Tweets and Facebook Posts:



Tell Ontario to make #dementia a health priority #ONDementiaPlan
#onpoli #voteon

It's time for an #ONDementiaPlan #onpoli #voteon

Will your candidates commit to supporting unpaid caregivers
#ONDementiaPlan #onpoli #voteon



Tell all political parties to commit to an Ontario Dementia Plan! With increasing numbers of seniors, 255,000 Ontarians will have dementia by 2020. We have no plan, but we need one. Ask your candidates what they plan to do to – Will their Party create an Ontario Dementia Plan? To find out how, visit - <http://bit.ly/1sNNgtJ>

Ontario Political Parties Twitter handles:

