

# FocusON dementia



This election, make dementia a priority

## BACKGROUND: Supporting People with Dementia

Improving care for people with dementia in the later stages of the disease is a crucial part of an effective Ontario Dementia Plan. As dementia progresses people need more choice about where they will live and who will care for them.

The Alzheimer Societies across Ontario are calling on all candidates to **improve care to people with dementia in the later stages of the disease regardless of where they live.**

### How?

1. Ensure all staff that provides care to people with dementia receives effective, evidence-based training in dementia care.
2. Increase the housing options outside of traditional long-term care for persons with advancing dementia.

### What evidence exists to support this call to action?

- Sixty percent of people living in long-term care have dementia. Forty-five percent of long-term care residents have behaviours.
- Thirty-two percent of residents in Ontario homes take anti-psychotic medication without a diagnosis of psychosis
- The provincial average of physical restraint use is 14%, but some regions have been able to reduce their average to 8% while others struggle at 20.5% (Health Quality Ontario, 2012)
- Alternatives to long-term care are limited. Group homes, shared housing arrangements and investment opportunities in smaller-scale housing are needed.

### 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 across the province, **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 increase the number of smaller-scale housing alternatives for people with dementia?
2. How will you ensure that people with dementia are receiving care from trained staff?
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 #voteton

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

Will your candidates commit to supporting people with #dementia #ONDementiaPlan #onpoli



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:

