



NEWS RELEASE
JUNE 15, 2011

Dementia services are available from the Alzheimer Society of B.C. for Okanagan residents

Okanagan region, B.C. - The Alzheimer Society of B.C. would like all Okanagan residents to know that our programs and services for people on the dementia journey continue to be available to them. "The Society is stronger than ever in the Okanagan region," explains Jean Blake, CEO of the Society. "Another non-profit organization who works in the Alzheimer's disease field recently requested emergency funding from the Kelowna City Council. That organization was not the Alzheimer Society of B.C."

In fact, thanks to \$1 million funding from the Ministry of Health Services last September, the Society has been able to offer expanded services in six areas of the province, including North and Central Okanagan. Families on the dementia journey now have access to new programs including Minds in Motion™ and First Link®.

Minds in Motion™ is a fitness and social program for people experiencing early-stage memory loss due to Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia and their care partners. The program promotes the concept of healthy living and the establishment of support networks early on the dementia journey. There are currently two Minds in Motion™ locations in the Okanagan, one in Kelowna and one in Vernon. First Link® is an early intervention service designed to connect individuals and families affected by Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia with services and support as soon as possible after diagnosis. Formal referral from physicians and health professionals allows for proactive contact with individuals and families. "It means we're able to proactively reach out to individuals who have recently been diagnosed with the disease, provide support sooner to them and their caregivers, and better prepare and support them through their journey with the disease," says North and Central Okanagan First Link® coordinator Phyllis Dyck.

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. provides services throughout the Okanagan through several resource centres.

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. is the only province-wide organization providing support, education, and information about Alzheimer's disease and related dementias through support groups, education programs, telephone workshops, and the Dementia Helpline toll-free province-wide at 1-800-936-6033. The Society serves Okanagan residents at three of our Alzheimer Resource Centres – the North & Central Okanagan resource centre found within the historic Knowles House at 865 Bernard Avenue in Kelowna and can be reached at 250-860-0305 or toll-free at 1-800-634-3399, the Vernon resource centre found at The People Place at 102 - 3402 - 27th Avenue in Vernon and can be reached by phone at 250-860-0305 or toll-free 1-800-634-3399, and the South Okanagan & Similkameen resource centre at 104 - 35 Westminster Avenue East in Penticton and can be reached by phone at 250-493-8182 or toll-free at 1-888-318-1122. In addition to Minds in Motion™ and First Link®, the resource centres all have support groups and education programs for both family caregivers and people with early stage dementia. Learn more about the Alzheimer Society of B.C., at www.alzheimerbc.org.

For more information, please contact:

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