



MAKING A REFERRAL TO *First Link*®

“Working together to link individuals and families affected by Alzheimer’s disease or a related dementia to a community of learning, services and support.”

- **Referrals** from physicians, health professionals and community organizations
- **Proactive contact** with individuals and families
- **Connections to:**
 - **LEARNING** - Dementia education programs offering information about diagnosis, day-to-day living, positive approaches to care, strategies for managing challenges and how to prepare for the future
 - **SERVICES** - Alzheimer Society programs and services, and information about other community and health care services
 - **SUPPORT** - support groups and opportunities for individual support
- **Planned follow up** at 3 months, 6 months, one year, etc. and a bi-monthly First Link® bulletin

Who to refer to *First Link*®?

- Individuals with a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease or a related dementia
- Caregivers
- Family members
- Individuals with a diagnosis of MCI (Mild Cognitive Impairment)

When to refer?

- As soon as a diagnosis is made
- At any other time in the dementia journey

Why refer?

- It is often difficult for individuals and families to ask for help
- Information and support will help patients and families cope with more confidence
- Planning for the future is critical
- There are community and health care services that families need to know about
- With knowledge and skills, people are able to maintain quality of life while living with dementia

OVER

Who can make a referral?

- Physicians
- Health Care professionals
- Community organizations working with individuals and families affected by dementia

How to refer?

Ask the individual or family member for permission to forward their name to First Link®.

Physicians can easily refer with the First Link® referral pad. The lower portion of the form is given to the patient or family member; the top portion is sent to First Link®.

Health Care Professionals and Community Organizations complete a one-page referral form that is faxed to First Link®.

What happens when *First Link*® receives the referral?

Individuals or family members will receive:

- A phone call from the First Link Coordinator
(For those newly diagnosed, we wait 3 to 4 weeks before calling to allow time to adjust to the diagnosis; others are contacted as soon as possible.)
- An information package specific to their needs
- Referrals to community and health care services that may be helpful
- Follow up contact at 3 months, 6 months, one year, etc.
- A bi-monthly bulletin from First Link® to keep them informed about education and support programs available throughout the community

First Link® will send a confirmation to each referring professional when contact has been made with the individual or family. As it sometimes takes a number of attempts before connecting with the person, your confirmation may be delayed.

For more information and for referral packages, CONTACT: FirstLink@alzheimerbc.org



Ministry of
Health Services

Alzheimer Society
BRITISH COLUMBIA