

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Twitter helps educate about Alzheimer's disease symptoms

"In Jim's Shoe's" offers daily accounts from perspective of a person living with Alzheimer's disease

Province-wide – Imagine having your family routine interrupted by memory problems: having trouble counting change to buy a newspaper, or becoming disoriented on a familiar route behind the wheel of a car. A new Twitter campaign allows followers to do just this, and experience day-to-day life from the perspective of a person in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease.

During the month of January – Alzheimer Awareness Month – the Alzheimer Society of B.C. will be tweeting real life experiences adapted from the journal of Jim Mann, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease at the early age of 58.

"This journal has helped me since my diagnosis in 2007 to consider and clarify situations as they occurred and has ensured accurate information to pass to my medical team," said Jim. "I believe getting an early diagnosis has prompted me to ensure I am living a fulfilling life; it gave me the opportunity to make important choices about how I want to live my life on the dementia journey."

He hopes that by sharing his journal online, he will help to break down barriers of stigma associated with the disease.

"There are so many stereotypes and misconceptions associated with Alzheimer's disease that they become barriers to seeking information, support, and even a diagnosis," Jim explained. "We need to face this disease and talk about it openly so that people can have greater awareness and are motivated to do something about it."

Recent survey findings suggest there is more work to be done to raise awareness. A national survey indicates that low public awareness about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias results in delayed diagnosis and a subsequent treatment gap for people with dementia.

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. is encouraging anyone concerned about memory loss in themselves or a loved one to see their family doctor and visit www.letsfaceitbc.ca for information about warning signs, preparing for a diagnosis, and other useful resources. The posts for In Jim's Shoes will also be available on the website for those who do not have Twitter accounts.

To follow In Jim's Shoes, follow the Alzheimer Society of B.C. (@AlzheimerBC) or search #injimsshoes.

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About the Alzheimer Society of B.C.

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. provides a province-wide network of support, education, and information resources for families impacted by dementia. The Society is a non-profit organization that also advocates for better dementia health care and raises money to fund research and ensure there is Help for Today. *Hope for Tomorrow...*[®]

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