

News Release

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Alzheimer Society of B.C. announces seven unique and creative projects to improve dementia care

VANCOUVER, B.C.: More than \$1-million will go to support seven projects from across the province, which have received funding from the Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s *Grant to Improve Dementia Care in BC*. These projects will not only improve care for individuals living with dementia but also help those working to support them.

"The dementia journey is one being faced by a growing number of families in B.C." said Rosemary Rawnsley, Executive Director of the Alzheimer Society of B.C. "Our goal is to improve support to individuals and their families and to provide tools that empower and strengthen them."

A \$1-million provincial grant by the Ministry of Health was provided to the Alzheimer Society of B.C. to implement a Dementia Service Framework.

"Being diagnosed with dementia is a life-altering event for individuals and their families, and we are committed to helping those affected by this devastating disease," said Ida Chong, Minister of Community Services and Minister Responsible for Seniors' and Women's Issues. "The coalition built under the leadership of the Alzheimer Society with the Ministry of Health and other partners will use these grants to ensure dementia patients receive the best care, based on best practices and established evidence."

The projects supported by this funding look at improving education about dementia, providing more supports to caregivers, filling the gaps between services and developing tools to better understand the effects of policy changes. In addition to these seven projects, two provincial learning forums will be held to share the information and outcomes with a wide variety of stakeholders.

"Each of the projects has taken a collaborative approach, working with a variety of partners to create tools that can be widely used - in most cases across the entire province," said Rawnsley.

"The Alzheimer Society is providing approximately \$760,000 of funding to these agencies, and another \$150,000 for the learning forums," added Rawnsley. "Including the additional partnerships, donations-in-kind and other revenue sources, more than \$1.4-million will be invested in improving dementia care in our province."



Alzheimer Society

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The seven projects look through unique lenses at the experience of dementia and its impact and emphasize there are many pathways to improving care. Each initiative focuses on at least one of the *Grant to Improve Dementia Care's* goals:

- early detection and / or intervention;
- the development of supports that help people stay in their community;
- the generation and/or spread of knowledge of evidence-based practices in care through the fostering of education, evaluation, research, and policy;
- improvement in acute care for people with dementia; and
- the use of technology as an enabler to support the person living with dementia, their families and caregivers, and their health care providers.

The University of British Columbia's initiative to develop educational resources in four languages is one of the projects receiving a grant. This project will provide the most up-to-date medical information on dementia in easy-to-read English and then translate it into Cantonese, Mandarin and Punjabi. The translated information will be culturally appropriate and distributed through a combination of web-based and community-based initiatives. It will also be placed on the revised and expanded Dementia Journey website, another of the projects receiving funding.

"We know that early diagnosis and intervention is key to ensuring quality of life for a person with dementia and, due to a variety of factors, ethnic minorities are more likely to be diagnosed at a later stage of the disease," said Rawnsley. "By creating easy-to-read information that is culturally appropriate and available in multiple languages, we hope to increase early stage diagnosis in ethnic communities."

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. ensures that people whose lives have been impacted by Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia can connect to a community of information, services and support. Funds raised also go towards research to search for the causes and the cure. For more information on the support services and education programs available locally and provincially, as well as additional information on the *Grants to Improve Dementia Care*, visit www.alzheimerbc.org.

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Attachments:

Background Information about the *Grant to Improve Dementia Care in BC*
Overview of the of Seven Projects

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