



Alzheimer Awareness Month targets women with "The 72%" campaign Women doubly affected says Alzheimer Society

January 6, 2015 – Toronto, ONTARIO – Did you know that women represent 72 per cent of Canadians living with Alzheimer's disease¹? They could be your mothers, wives, sisters, grandmothers or friends – even you.

The Alzheimer Society is kicking off Alzheimer Awareness Month with a nationwide campaign called *The 72%*. It aims to inform women in their 40's and older about the warning signs of Alzheimer's disease and how the Alzheimer Society can help.

Why women?

Women live longer than men and age is a significant risk factor. That's why there are more women living with Alzheimer's disease than men.

Yet the impact on women is twofold. They also account for 70 per cent of family caregivers², which takes a tremendous toll on these women who eventually provide round-the-clock care. The burden is especially high for women raising families and holding down jobs.

"With this campaign, we're making Alzheimer's disease a women's issue," says Mimi Lowi-Young, CEO, Alzheimer Society of Canada. "Women lead busy, hectic lives, often paying the price with their own health and well-being. We're asking them to invest time in understanding the warning signs. Whether they're concerned about getting Alzheimer's, have just been diagnosed or are a caregiver, we want women to reach out to their local Alzheimer Society. We can support them throughout the disease."

Take a moment to know the signs

Warning signs, often misunderstood or ignored, are critical. In absence of a cure, early diagnosis allows for treatment and support so people can live as well as possible and start planning for their future needs.

"Women traditionally monitor the health of their families so it's even more important they understand this disease to be able to recognize changes in those they care for," adds Lowi-Young.

¹ Figure derived from data in the *Rising Tide: The Impact of Dementia on Canadian Society*, 2010.

² Figure derived from the Canadian Study of Health and Aging Working Group: Patterns of caring for people with dementia in Canada. *Can J Aging* 1994; Vol. 13 no 4: 470-487

Starting January 6, the Alzheimer Society invites all Canadians, including women, to visit www.alzheimer.ca/the72percent to take a moment and learn the warning signs and share them with friends and families on Facebook and Twitter.

Visitors will also be able to download other helpful resources and find their local Alzheimer Society.

Alzheimer's disease facts

Alzheimer's disease is the leading form of dementia. It is progressive and eventually, fatal.

Today, 747,000 Canadians are living with some form of dementia. This number will nearly double to 1.4 million in less than 20 years. For every person diagnosed, there are many who are directly affected as caregivers.

The risk of dementia doubles every five years after age 65. Accumulating evidence shows the disease can lie dormant in the brain up to 25 years before symptoms appear.

Common warning signs of Alzheimer's disease include memory loss, impaired judgment, thinking or reasoning and changes in personality and behaviour that are out of character. In addition to age, other risks factors include cardiovascular disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and smoking.

To participate in the campaign, visit: www.alzheimer.ca/the72percent.

The 72% campaign is proudly supported by the KPMG Foundation.

About the Alzheimer Society

The Alzheimer Society is the leading nationwide health charity for people living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Active in communities right across Canada, the Society offers help for today through our programs and services, and hope for tomorrow by funding research into the cause, prevention and a cure.

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