

Media Release

For Immediate Distribution

Alzheimer Society of Canada applauds agreement to create national dementia plan

TORONTO, Ont. (October 2, 2014) – The Alzheimer Society of Canada welcomes Health Minister Rona Ambrose’s announcement yesterday that she and her provincial and territorial counterparts have agreed to collaborate on a national plan to curb the staggering personal, societal and economic toll of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias.

“This is excellent news,” said Mimi Lowi-Young, CEO of the Alzheimer Society of Canada. “Dementia is a huge threat to our public health system and to our nation’s productivity. It’s vital that we address it collectively in a coordinated way to make sure people living with this disease get the help they need and that our researchers can determine what causes it and can better understand how to treat it.”

The Alzheimer Society has been urging all levels of government to support the creation of a Canadian Alzheimer’s Disease and Dementia Partnership. This organization’s mandate would be to lead, coordinate and facilitate a national partnership of researchers, health professionals, provincial governments, industry, people with dementia and their families, as well as Alzheimer Societies across Canada to help develop and implement an integrated, comprehensive national dementia plan in Canada.

This plan would increase investment in research, improve support for family caregivers, increase dementia training of health-care providers and raise public understanding of the risks and warning signs of dementia and the importance of brain health.

At a meeting of federal, provincial and territorial health ministers in Banff, Alberta, Minister Ambrose announced that she and her counterparts were at the “early stages” of an agreement on working together to forge a national dementia plan. She said health ministers from across the country in both levels of government committed to bring research and best practices together and present them at the next meeting of the health ministers.

Lowi-Young said the Alzheimer Society is encouraged by the spirit of cooperation and is looking forward to working with the health ministers over the coming months to ensure an integrated plan is put in place to ease the burden for hundreds of thousands of people living with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. “We are committed to help in any way possible to drive this dementia plan forward,” she said.

Currently, 747,000 Canadians are affected by dementia, including Alzheimer’s disease. This number will increase to 1.4 million in less than 20 years. Annual costs to Canada’s economy will rise dramatically from \$33 billion today, to \$293 billion by 2040.

About the Alzheimer Society of Canada

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.

To learn more, visit www.alzheimer.ca

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