

# A Guide for Creating Dementia Friendly Communities in Alberta

[www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca](http://www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca)



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This Dementia Friendly Communities pilot project in Alberta, and the development of this guide, was made possible thanks to funding support from:



The Brenda Strafford Foundation thanks the many individuals and organizations who have collaborated with us and have demonstrated leadership in creating the first Dementia Friendly Communities in Alberta.

## A Guide for Creating Dementia Friendly Communities in Alberta

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Based on The Brenda Strafford Foundation's Dementia Friendly Communities Pilot Project

### The Brenda Strafford Foundation

4628 Montgomery Blvd NW  
Calgary, AB T3B 0K7  
theBSF.ca

dfc@theBSF.ca

For more information and resources,  
visit: [www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca](http://www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca)

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## Foreword

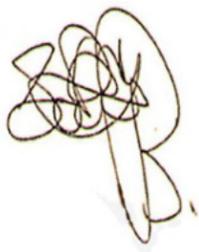
On behalf of the Government of Alberta, I am pleased to extend my congratulations to The Brenda Strafford Foundation for the development of a Dementia Friendly Communities toolkit.

Through this resource, the foundation has shared what it has learned since the launch of the Dementia Friendly Communities Initiative in 2016. The toolkit will assist communities in meeting the needs of Albertans living with dementia. The information and best practices outlined in the pages to follow will support more dementia-friendly community initiatives throughout Alberta.

My ministry was pleased to provide financial support towards the foundation's implementation and evaluation of its Dementia Friendly Communities Initiative, including the development of this toolkit. The project helped communities recognize the needs of those impacted by dementia, engaged and educated the public, and assisted businesses and other organizations to support people living with dementia. It is so important and valuable to provide training to help individuals recognize the possible signs of dementia. We need to continue to build community capacity to address dementia, and to reduce the stigma associated with this chronic condition.

Dementia Friendly Communities helps seniors to remain active in their communities. This supports our government's commitment to ensure seniors are able to stay in their homes and remain in the community for as long as possible.

Again my thanks to The Brenda Strafford Foundation for its work in developing the Dementia Friendly Communities toolkit. It will have a long-lasting impact on those living with dementia, their caregivers, and the broader community.

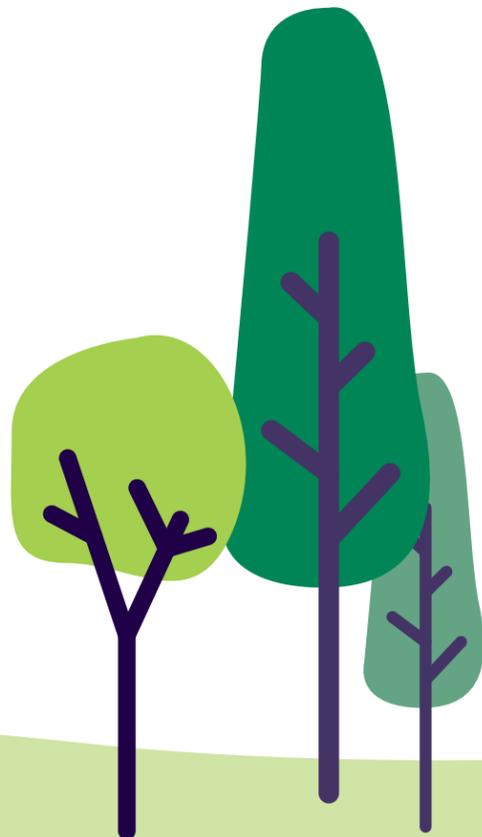


Josephine Pon,  
Minister of Seniors and Housing  
Government of Alberta



As of March 31, 2018, more than 45,800  
Albertans are living with dementia

(Alberta Health's Population Estimates of  
Dementia in Alberta)



## Preface

The Brenda Strafford Foundation (BSF) is proud to present this 'Guide for Creating Dementia Friendly Communities in Alberta.' This guide is the culmination of a two-and-a-half year pilot project led by BSF in collaboration with our supportive provincial funding partners and passionate local community partners.

Driven by our philosophy, 'The preservation of dignity and the pursuit of happiness,' The Foundation has established a reputation as a leader in research and innovation in seniors care for more than 40 years. As a charitable organization, our strategic priorities include using our expertise and resources to better meet changing community needs.

We know that the population is aging. And we also know that people want to stay living in their homes as they age. Dementia Friendly Communities are about mobilizing community resources and building the community capacity to do that... To support individuals living with dementia to 'age in place,' to remain living in their homes, and stay active and well in their communities.

Together, we must find innovative and community-focused solutions to ensure that we meet the needs of individuals living with dementia and their caregivers. Everyone has a role in helping find these solutions!

It is essential for advocacy, action and collaboration to happen at all levels – locally, nationally and internationally.

On the international stage, the World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes dementia as a public health and social care priority. In 2017, WHO launched the 'Global Action Plan on the Public Health Response to Dementia 2017-2025.'

At the national level, earlier this year (in June 2019) the Public Health Agency of Canada released 'A Dementia Strategy for Canada: Together We Aspire.' This federal strategy identifies common principles and national objectives to help guide action in Canada towards a future in which all people living with dementia and caregivers are valued and supported, quality of life is optimized, and dementia is prevented, well understood, and effectively treated.

Provincially, in 2018 the Government of Alberta released the 'Alberta Dementia Strategy and Action Plan' that outlines goals and steps to improve dementia diagnosis and care, while enhancing supports for Albertans living with dementia and the families, caregivers, and communities who support them.

And locally, in our own communities where The Brenda Strafford Foundation operates, we have experienced first-hand the ground swell of support from community members who are ready to take action to ensure that their families, friends and neighbours impacted by dementia are supported to maintain a high quality of life, at home, in their local communities.

We have been inspired by the many partners stepping forward to be part of the change in our pilot communities. Education and training opportunities have been offered to help first responders, local businesses and organizations better understand, recognize and



respond to signs of dementia to better support the needs of those they serve. Schools are exploring ways to educate students throughout the curriculum and create intergenerational opportunities to engage with seniors in the community. Faith centres, community associations, and many other non-profit and public service organizations are ensuring supports and resources are mobilized and accessible in the community.

Through our commitment to generating and sharing knowledge, BSF has documented our journey and lessons learned along the way to create this guide as a locally sensitive, evidence-based approach for the development of Dementia Friendly Communities throughout the province.

The project would not have been possible without the support and advice of our provincial funding partners: the Government of Alberta (Seniors and Housing); Alberta Health Services; and Alberta Innovates. And it would not be possible or sustainable without the foundation of strong partnerships within the communities where we operate. The key to the pilot project's success, as well scalability throughout the province and long term sustainability, lies in the engagement of many partners working together on various levels.

The Brenda Strafford Foundation is grateful for the opportunity to lead this exciting and impactful initiative that will benefit so many people in so many communities.

Together, we are leading the way toward a dementia-friendly future in a dementia-friendly Alberta.



Mike Conroy,  
President and CEO  
The Brenda Strafford Foundation

## Introduction

Throughout the journey of creating a Dementia Friendly Community in the geographic areas of Calgary Westhills and Okotoks, Alberta, we have heard the voices and stories of many community members who are living with or have been impacted by dementia. We have also engaged with various stakeholders along the way to ensure this initiative was an inclusive journey, reflecting a diverse representation of the community, while also leveraging the strengths of our community partners. By working together, we can better understand and meet the community's needs.

Many of these voices, stories and partnerships will come to life throughout this guide to illustrate the steps we embarked upon in our pilot project.

We hope these stories and case studies will inspire you on your journey toward creating a Dementia Friendly Community.

## About Dementia

Dementia is an overall term for a group of symptoms that are caused by brain disorders.

### Symptoms of dementia include:

- **Memory loss**
- **Challenges with thinking and decision-making**
- **Communication difficulties**
- **Changes in mood and behaviour**

These symptoms progressively become significant enough to affect daily life.

Though the risk of dementia increases with age, dementia is not a normal part of aging. Dementia is not limited only to senior citizens; young onset dementia is diagnosed in individuals who are under the age of 65.

### Many disorders or diseases can cause dementia:

- **Alzheimer's Disease**
- **Fronto-Temporal Lobe Dementia**
- **Vascular Dementia (Multi-infarct)**
- **Lewy Body Dementia**
- **Parkinson's Disease**

To understand more about dementia, visit your local Alzheimer Society. You can find Alzheimer Societies in Canada at: [www.alzheimer.ca](http://www.alzheimer.ca).

## What is a Dementia Friendly Community?

A Dementia Friendly Community provides community-based support and services through local action for those living with, or impacted by, dementia. A Dementia Friendly Community can be determined by both the social environment and the physical environment of the community.

*"A Dementia Friendly Community is one in which people with dementia are empowered to have high aspirations and feel confident, knowing they can contribute and participate in activities that are meaningful to them."*

~ Alzheimer's Society UK

### Goals of a Dementia Friendly Community

The main goals of a Dementia Friendly Community are:

- **To build community capacity to support individuals to age-in-place and remain in the community for as long as possible**
- **To raise awareness of dementia with the aim to reduce stigma associated with dementia**

## Everyone in a community can benefit from being more inclusive of those with dementia

Dementia is everybody's business and impacts everyone in the community. Chances are we all know someone who is living with or impacted by dementia, either in our own families, or in the wider community within which we live, work and socialize.

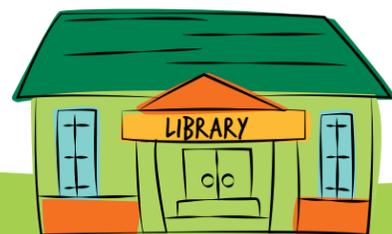
By mobilizing the community to better understand and support the needs of those living with dementia, and their caregivers, it will positively impact their lives and enable them to live in their own homes and stay active in the community for as long as possible.

Good customer care is crucial, and people with dementia are likely your customers too. By understanding and supporting their needs, it is a win-win situation as they will likely return for future business, and their families/caregivers will likely refer you to others due to their positive experience.

A Dementia Friendly Community will benefit the whole community. By being supportive, inclusive and responsive, everyone in the community will benefit, including people living with dementia and their caregivers, as well as businesses and services in the community.

## We all have a role to play in creating a Dementia Friendly Community

Becoming a Dementia Friendly Community takes the support of many partners -- whether you are a government or municipal service, not-for-profit or social service agency, business, community centre, faith centre, school or youth group. There is an opportunity for everyone to play an important role in creating a community that supports people living with or impacted by dementia to remain safe, valued, active and engaged.



# Using this Guide

This guide documents the steps we took, and the lessons we learned along the way, in our Dementia Friendly Communities pilot project. It is intended to be used as a guide to creating a Dementia Friendly Community in other communities. You will find recommended steps, helpful tips, case studies and resources to guide you on your journey.

You may find there will be differences in how you apply this process based on many factors including the size of your community, the resources available to you and the services or resources available within your community, whether your community is urban or rural, and other variables.

This is not intended to provide a 'one size fits all' approach to creating a Dementia Friendly Community, but rather guide you through a process and provide resources that will enable you to identify and meet the unique needs of your community.

Through the Okotoks Memory Café we met Neil Godfrey, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease at age 61.

"At the age of 60, I began to notice cognitive issues. Instant evaporation of my thoughts; searching for words or names. Struggling with technology, general confusion. Often I was disoriented. Familiar tasks weren't so familiar any more. My organization skills were failing. I was regularly confused and disoriented. My spatial recognition issues caused me to struggle, searching for letters on the keyboard. I still have issues with directions and instructions of 'how to' and 'where to' – it can cripple my brain. Although there are challenges, I try to focus on the things that I CAN do, not what I can't do! Even broken crayons can still color."

~ Neil Godfrey

Together We Can Create  
Dementia Friendly Communities



# Phase I

## Understand the Current State

The first phase in creating a Dementia Friendly Community is to understand the current state and determine your community's readiness to embark upon this journey. Assessing the current state of your community helps you understand “the big picture”—the composition of the community, and the supports and services currently available to individuals impacted by dementia. While implementing our pilot project at The Brenda Strafford Foundation (BSF), we found this phase helped us identify the challenges we needed to address, and helped us see opportunities for improvement.

### We suggest you break this phase into the following steps:

- A. Define your “community”
- B. Collect demographic data about the community
- C. Identify local groups and services that provide support for people living with dementia
- D. Collect personal stories and anecdotal information from community members

You may undertake this first phase on your own, or you may already be working with a group of like-minded individuals who will assist you. If you are working alone at this point, in Phase 3 we provide suggestions for forming a team to help you move the project forward to achieve the maximum positive impact on your community as quickly as possible.

## A. Define your “community”

You will find it very helpful, as you plan and implement your project, to know exactly who will benefit from your efforts.

The most common way to define your community is by geographic boundaries. For example, for the BSF pilot project, we chose to focus on two geographic areas as our “communities”: Okotoks, and the Westhills communities (Signal Hill, Christie Park, Aspen, and Strathcona) in Calgary. Therefore, in this guide we have focused on addressing the needs of a geographically-defined community.

However, since a community is, literally, a group of people who share something in common, you may want to define your community by something other than geographic boundaries. For example, the “community” you might want to make more dementia friendly could be a large organization, or a club or association. Feel free to adapt the suggestions in this guide to the needs of your type of community.

### Tip:

You may be able to find some data by reaching out to your local Alzheimer's Society, your local municipal census office, Alberta Health Services, or Statistics Canada.

The open government portal is a collection of datasets and publications by Government of Alberta departments and agencies. The public can use and access this open government data freely (e.g., for the purpose of carrying out research) at: [open.alberta.ca](http://open.alberta.ca)

## B. Collect demographic data

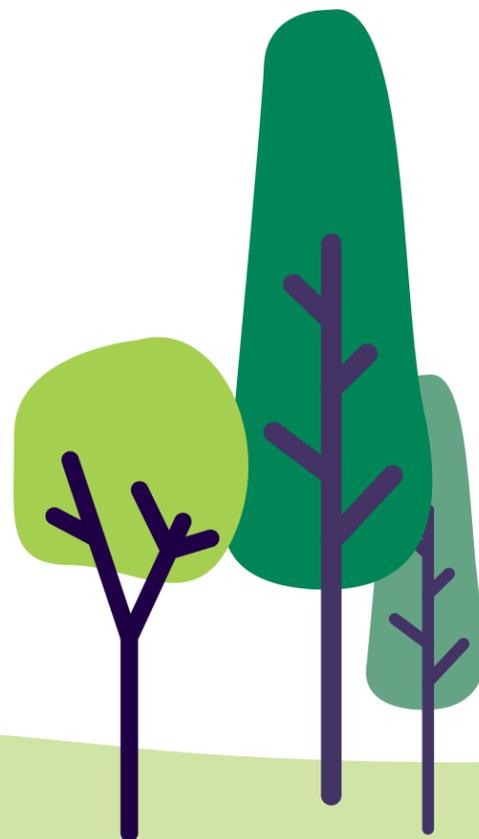
Collecting demographic data will help you understand the composition of your community. This will, in turn, inform your choices about how to most effectively use project resources. You may want to collect some or all of the following types of data.

### The current population, by:

- **Age group**—it will be especially helpful to see how many seniors currently live in your community, as these are the people most likely (but not exclusively) to be affected by dementia
- **Cultural/ethnic self-identification** (including Aboriginal Canadians, and individuals identifying with cultural/ethnic groups originating outside of Canada)
- **Language fluency**—this will help you determine if you need to account for non-English speakers in your plans
- **Educational level**
- **Employment/self-employment level** (e.g., full-time, part-time, retired)
- **Occupation/profession**
- **Housing type** (e.g., own their own home, rent an apartment/house, live with friends/family, etc.)
- **The number of individuals affected by dementia, specifically how many:**
  - Have been diagnosed with dementia
  - Are acting as caregivers for other members of the community diagnosed with dementia
  - Have family members or close friends affected by dementia

### Information about general community services:

- **Availability of public transportation**
- **Number and types of schools**
- **Number and types of retail stores** (food, clothing, hardware, etc.)



# Phase I

## C. Identify local services and support groups

Identify all the local organizations, agencies, businesses, and support groups currently serving people affected by dementia, and compile a list of names with contact information. Include organizations specifically dedicated to helping individuals with dementia (e.g., Adult Day Programs), as well as organizations that provide services to the entire community including individuals with dementia (e.g., schools, banks, faith centres, etc.).

**As you move forward with your project, this list will help you:**

- Determine the services and resources that already exist (so you don't duplicate services)
- Identify gaps where services don't exist (as potential areas of need to focus on)
- Identify stakeholders in the community who you may be able to engage to participate in your project

Note: If possible, designate one person (yourself, or one of your teammates) to keep this list updated on an ongoing basis.

## D. Collect personal stories and anecdotal information

Consider reaching out to some of the local organizations you identified in the previous step, to collect some personal stories and anecdotes that can help paint a picture of what life is like for people living with dementia in your community.

**During the BSF pilot project, we found we were able to collect a lot of valuable information by:**

- Regularly attending the Adult Day Program and consulting with its members
- Engaging one-to-one with individuals living with dementia in the community
- Incorporating input from organizations such as Seniors Clubs, and City or Town recreation groups

"Building a dementia-friendly community takes collaboration, investment and time. It involves health services, social services, law enforcement, local government, charities and volunteer groups. It also requires individuals listening, showing respect and offering a helping hand. There is still a ways to go, but successes such as training front line workers to recognize clients with dementia can make a difference. Making all community members feel valued is one of our Council's strategic priorities and we greatly appreciate the opportunity to participate in this important project."

~ Mayor Bill Robertson, Town of Okotoks

## Janette Messer, Community Programs and Events Manager, Town of Okotoks

### Co-chair of the Okotoks Coordinating Committee

The Town of Okotoks was involved with the DFC Project right from the beginning. We worked closely with The Brenda Strafford Foundation project team to ensure there was alignment with the current services and programs that were being offered. An initial conversation between BSF, myself, and the Town of Okotoks Community Wellness Manager took place early in the project. We discussed the best strategy for optimal uptake in the community, agreeing that creating a Coordinating Committee to oversee the project would be a critical step in the project plan. Once the Coordinating Committee was established, I agreed to co-chair as I was involved in engaging the community partners, and have a finger on the pulse of the community.

The project has been very successful. Of course, there were bumps along the way and many lessons learned. The partnership has increased community capacity and increased the awareness and understanding of dementia. Being able to provide space and personnel to assist with the Memory and Aging Program, connecting the program coordinator with Town staff to orchestrate the launch event (Picnic at the Piano), and facilitating connection to Town staff for attendance at the training session for First Responders and all Town staff are all pieces of the project that helped to better support the community as a whole.

In terms of sustainability, three Town staff members (from the recreation centre, town facility staff, and first responder departments) were trained in a 'train the trainer' approach to continue offering training to new staff members beyond the end of the pilot project.

The DFC Project in Okotoks has encompassed many areas including awareness, education, and caregiver support.

### Town of Okotoks partnership highlights include:

- Town employees actively participating on the DFC Okotoks Coalition (Coordinating Committee)
- Dementia Awareness training opportunities for Town staff and first responders
- Providing facilities/venues for events such as the Memory and Aging Program, 'Dementia Talks' Library Speaker Series, Town Training sessions and more
- Partnering to offer the Memory and Aging Program and Brain in Motion study in response to community's desire to focus on risk reduction
- Introducing a "Move and Groove Social Café" providing a new outlet for the community to connect with one another, increasing social interactions and physical activity
- Active involvement and endorsement by Mayor Bill Robertson



From left: Pat MacIssac (Deputy Fire Chief), Jennifer Mallamo (DFC Coordinator, BSF) Janette Messer (Community Programs and Events Manager), Mayor Bill Robertson, Chris Socholotuk (Operations Supervisor, Alberta Health Services EMS)



## Phase 2

### Define the Ideal Future State

Now that you have a clear picture of the current state of your community, the next phase will be to consider how you would like things to be—an “ideal future state.” This will give you concrete and specific goals towards which you can focus your efforts as you implement your Dementia Friendly Community project. It doesn't have to be a lofty goal. It can be a simple goal to get started and build your momentum.

#### We suggest you break this phase into the following steps:

- A. Analyze your data
- B. Engage the community



#### Tip:

While engaging with community members, we suggest you take note of any individuals or organizations that seem particularly interested in the project. These might be ideal candidates to approach in the next phase (assembling your action team).

And remember that engaging with community members is not just confined to this phase—it's important to continue this activity on an ongoing basis throughout the project. The more support you can drum up, the better!

#### A. Analyze your data

Asking yourself the following questions about existing services in the community may help you identify the needs in your community, and refine your vision of the ideal future state:

- Are people aware of all the services already available to them?
- If not, could they be made more aware if you made the list/database you developed in Phase 1 available to the public (on a website or in a community publication)?
- Do people know how to access existing services?
- Could existing services be more effective if they worked more closely with each other?
- Are there any gaps in services that need to be filled?

#### B. Engage the community

During the BSF pilot project, we found one of the best ways to develop a clear picture of the ideal future state of the community is to engage with other community members and groups. Their perceptions of what the community needs most, and which issues and concerns are the most pressing, will be invaluable to you. The ideas and perspectives you gather from your community may affirm the results of your own analysis, and/or they may bring to your attention areas of opportunity you hadn't considered.

What are some ways to engage with other community members?

#### Below are examples of some methods that worked for us at the BSF:

- Focus groups
- Community surveys
- Attending community partner events, e.g., resource fairs and tradeshows
- Joining existing committees, e.g., Age Friendly, Seniors Interagency
- Town hall (or “all hands”) meetings

In our experience, hosting a town hall meeting is a great way to hear and record varied and passionate opinions from community members about what they envision for the community.





Bryan Gilks (right), pictured with other DFC Coordinating Committee members, and BSF project staff

## Bryan Gilks, Family Caregiver

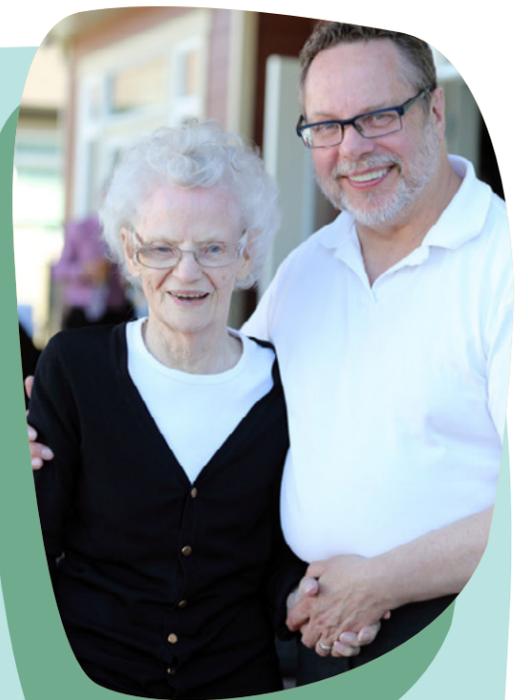
### Co-chair of the Calgary Westhills Coordinating Committee

My mother attends an Adult Day Program at BSF's Bow View Manor. I was approached by the Program Director to attend a town hall meeting for the Dementia Friendly Communities project. After that presentation, I was interested enough to attend the committee formation meeting. It was at this point I realized that my personal and professional skillset would make a significant contribution to the project.

Next came the journey as the Coordinating Committee Co-chair for the Westhills pilot community project. It started by working with a committed team of mostly non-profit agencies, community volunteers and talented staff at The Brenda Strafford Foundation.

The committee and project coordinator established an overall vision, a workable timeline and possible strategies required to accomplish the tasks. As with any evolving project, there was time taken to evaluate what things were working, what items needed to be re-assessed and which areas would provide the best opportunities for increased community involvement. It was evident that flexible and alternative ways to engage individuals and groups would be needed.

As the Westhills project proceeded major community champions emerged, and as a result of community engagement and collaboration, this project has now touched the lives of countless individuals. Not only of those living with dementia and their caregivers, but also businesses and their employees, students, first responders, volunteers and many other citizens within the community... and beyond.



Bryan and his mother

*"The commitment and networking of caregivers, community residents, health care representatives, educators, faith and business leaders, and various organizations who serve the community, alongside representatives from various levels of government has been the foundation of this project's success. As co-chair, I have been blessed to work with so many people who believed that individuals living with dementia have the right to age with dignity in their homes and communities. Now it's time for leadership in other communities to respond to this challenge."*

~ Bryan Gilks

## Phase 3

### Assemble Your Action Team

Ideally, your action team will be comprised of a group of engaged stakeholders who are invested in overseeing the changes that will impact their community, and who will commit to join you in taking action to drive your Dementia Friendly Community initiative forward.

#### We suggest you break this phase into the following steps:

- A. Identify and recruit key stakeholders and community champions
- B. Establish a Coordinating Committee
- C. Assign key roles
- D. Hold your first Coordinating Committee meeting
- E. Engage and manage volunteers in supporting roles

#### A. Identify and recruit key stakeholders and community champions

Everyone who cares about, or who has a vested interest in, your project is a stakeholder. Key stakeholders are those groups or individuals who can exert additional influence over the success of the project. An individual key stakeholder may be a “community champion”, i.e., someone who will join your team and be influential in raising awareness and support for the project. Identifying key stakeholders and prospective community champions is crucial to the success of your project.

Since you reached out to members of the community in the previous phase, you may already have a good idea of who the key stakeholders and potential community champions are. You may also find them inside your own organization.

#### When identifying key stakeholders and prospective champions, we suggest you consider individuals or groups who:

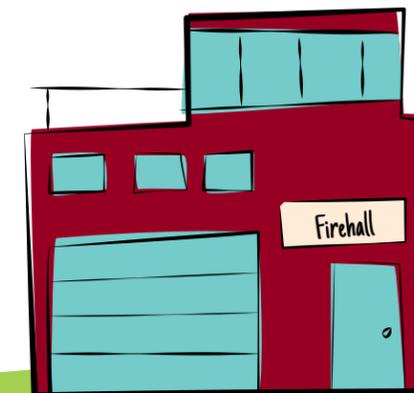
- Have a personal stake in the success of a Dementia Friendly Community
- Can influence fellow community members in a positive way
- Can influence their organization (locally, and even up to a corporate level)
- Reflect the diversity of your community, so you can leverage a variety of perspectives, knowledge, ideas, and skills to help you create meaningful change in your community, and access a variety of resources

#### Tip:

We recommend you try to recruit at least one person from the local municipal government. For example, as part of the BSF pilot project, the Town of Okotoks Community Programs and Events Manager, and the Mayor of Okotoks, both participated in our Coordinating Committee. In Calgary Westhills, a representative from the City of Calgary’s Age Friendly Calgary initiative sat on our Coordinating Committee.

#### Tip:

If you want to recruit team members from a local business, be prepared to clearly explain not only how your project will benefit the community, but also how it will benefit the business specifically—see **Appendix A** for an outline of “Key Messages” for business partners.



# Phase 3

## B. Establish a Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee has two main purposes:

1. To provide input into developing and executing the action plan (as per the following Phases 4 and 5)
2. To connect with other groups and agencies to support the project moving forward

Your Coordinating Committee will, ideally, be comprised of the key stakeholders and community champions most able and willing to help the project come to fruition. During the BSF pilot project, we found that our Coordinating Committees made a big difference in the success we were able to achieve because the membership of each committee was drawn from the local area and was, therefore, in tune with the needs of its own community.

When considering who to invite, we suggest you comprise your Coordinating Committee of a diverse group of people from different sectors.

### Tip:

All community stakeholders will be important to your project, but it is critical to include the voices of those living with dementia and their caregivers to ensure relevance and success.

Giving these individuals the opportunity to participate actively in discussions, and have their voices and views heard and documented, benefits both the project and the individuals themselves. They will feel engaged and supported, and that they are making a positive contribution, and your committee will make decisions based on a real understanding of the challenges and opportunities people living with dementia experience every day.

Some examples of stakeholders represented on the BSF Coordinating Committees include:

- First responder organizations (Fire, Police, EMS)
- Faith centres
- Adult Day Program leaders
- Dementia Home Care
- Care partners / Caregivers of loved ones living with dementia
- Home care social workers
- Primary care networks
- Alzheimer's Society
- Alberta Health Services geriatric social workers
- Seniors' services and agencies (e.g., Calgary Seniors Resource Society, Kerby Centre, CARYA)
- Organizations that serve the community (e.g., Meals on Wheels)
- Physicians
- Community associations
- Municipal government (e.g., City of Calgary, Town of Okotoks)
- Chambers of Commerce
- Architect/Community planners
- Schools/Universities
- Local businesses
- Banks

Once you have decided who you want to invite to the committee, approach them in person (ideally), by phone, or by email or posted letter. The invitation letter should give a brief outline of the project, the type of involvement being sought, and an invitation to join the committee; we suggest following up with a phone call a week or so after sending the letter.

With a roster of individuals willing to join your Coordinating Committee, create a stakeholder map (Organigram) that identifies each of these members and their level of involvement—see **Appendix B** for a sample stakeholder map from the BSF pilot project. We suggest you also ask your new committee members if they feel anyone is missing who should be invited to the group.

Note: New members can always be added later, as the project progresses and your momentum builds.



“As the Administrator of Tudor Manor, I was involved in the project from the outset. We had an initial meeting to define the scope of the project, and while it was clear that this was a new idea – reaching beyond our core services as a supportive living facility, to support those with dementia to age well in their own community – I could see that there were some important linkages that my staff and I could offer. In the initial phases, when the project coordinator was establishing the membership of the Coordinating Committee, I was able to connect her with people in the community that I knew would be important to the success of the project.

There were so many positives about the project in terms of supporting people with dementia in the community, but there were also important opportunities to train our own staff, and others in dementia friendly strategies. For instance, we offered training to staff in our onsite intergenerational daycare facility, and school students attending our Opening Minds Through Art program run through our recreation department.”

~ Brenda Carroll,  
Tudor Manor Administrator

# Phase 3

## C. Assign key roles

Before assigning key roles to committee members, ensure there is a common understanding of the purpose of the committee, expectations for the group as a whole, and expectations for individual key roles—see **Appendix B** for a sample “Terms of Reference” document you can use for this purpose.

### At the BSF, we found the following were the key roles that needed to be filled to make a Coordinating Committee effective and efficient:

#### Coordinator, or Primary Community Champion:

This person is accountable and responsible for overseeing the coordination of the project. This role could be filled by several types of people: it could be a volunteer; it could be a person who could integrate this role with an existing role at their organization (as a volunteer, or as a company donation); or it could be someone you hire as a dedicated coordinator or project manager—see **Appendix C** for a sample job description you could use to advertise the position. If this role is filled by a volunteer, we suggest you ensure that your project plan, timelines, and expectations are sensitive to that person’s availability and level of commitment.

#### Committee Chairperson:

Consider inviting two co-chairs for your Coordinating Committee. One co-chair should be the Primary Community Champion (described above) or a key representative from the organization leading the project (if applicable). The second co-chair could be a member of the local community who is not directly associated with the individual or organization leading the project, as this will help demonstrate your commitment to engaging the broader community in a meaningful way as well help with the transition and sustainability of the project.

For each of the two Coordinating Committees in the BSF pilot project, we invited the Administrator of the BSF’s local seniors’ care home—Wentworth Manor in Calgary Westhills, and Tudor Manor in Okotoks—to be a co-chair. In Calgary Westhills, the other co-chair was a caregiver living in the community; in Okotoks, the other co-chair was a representative from the Town of Okotoks.

#### Communications Officer:

This person is responsible for ensuring your communications plan is being followed—see **Appendix D** for a Sample Communications Plan. We suggest one member of your team be dedicated to this role, because ongoing communications with the community and your stakeholders is vital to the success of your project. This person can be supported by other members of the team—e.g., they can enlist the support of volunteers to publicize events and news (by distributing printed materials, or by disseminating the information through their own social media networks).

#### Secretary:

This person is responsible for scheduling meetings, recording and distributing minutes of meetings, etc.

## D. Hold your first Coordinating Committee meeting

### We offer the following tips to help you run your first (and subsequent) Coordinating Committee meetings:

- **Agree on a convenient date/time and frequency for meetings—we found that establishing a regular/recurring meeting schedule helped ensure the project was moving forward as planned**
- **Consider using “Doodle Poll” ([www.doodle.com](http://www.doodle.com)) to schedule meetings. Doodle Poll is a free, online scheduling tool that allows you to offer several choices for potential meeting dates/times to a group of participants, and then choose a final date/time based on the largest number of people available**
- **Ensure you prepare and follow an agenda every meeting so members feel they are using their time efficiently and with purpose—see **Appendix E** for a Sample Coordinating Committee Agenda and try to include the following elements in each meeting:**
  - Presentation of updates and news concerning the project, including actionable items from previous meetings
  - A “round table discussion” where members can discuss and brainstorm new ideas, challenges/obstacles they’ve encountered, and share new learnings and solutions
  - Assignment of new actionable items (each with a specified accountable person)
- **Record the minutes of each meeting, including actionable items, and send copies to all group members after the meeting**

#### Tip:

Although scheduled meetings are critical to your project, we also found it’s very important to maintain regular communication between members of the Coordinating Committee outside of meetings. This encourages everyone to stay engaged and informed about progress and matters of importance to the project.



# Phase 3

## E. Engage and manage volunteers in supporting roles

Stakeholders (individuals or organizations) who are not formal committee members still have important roles to play in your project. In the BSF pilot project, for example, many of our valued community partners—including Rundle College, Guardian Angel School, and the Okotoks Seniors Club—were not on a Coordinating Committee but still contributed immensely and had a very active role moving the initiative forward. Therefore, it is important to form and nurture relationships with these supportive volunteers.

**Appendix G** describes various volunteer positions, and their corresponding responsibilities, that would be helpful (e.g., Assisted Shopping, Escorted Transportation, and Friendly Visiting).

### Tip:

When looking for volunteers to fill these supporting roles, consider approaching local community stakeholders that already have a system in place for vetting and on-boarding new volunteers.

For our BSF pilot project in the Westhills Calgary Community, for example, we collaborated with the Calgary Seniors Resource Society and Alberta Health Services Volunteer Services to recruit volunteers. In Okotoks, we coordinated with Alberta Health Services Volunteer Services to find and train volunteers for friendly visiting, escorted transportation, and assisted shopping.



Rundle College students host a Seniors Tea social outing for residents at Wentworth Manor

## Intergenerational Partnerships

Partnerships with schools and youth-based organizations ensure that youth are educated about dementia and equipped with knowledge and understanding at a young age. This helps to promote empathy and reduce stigma in younger generations.

Rundle College has demonstrated leadership in creating intergenerational partnerships with The Brenda Strafford Foundation's Wentworth Manor in the Calgary Westhills pilot community.

### Rundle College partnership highlights:

- Incorporating dementia education throughout their curriculum from grades K-12
- Creating a 'Dementia Friendly Schools' checklist for other schools to use
- Visiting and volunteering with seniors living at Wentworth Manor, forming intergenerational relationships, increasing social engagement and further reducing stigma associated with dementia

Some highlights of intergenerational activities between Rundle College and Wentworth Manor include a 'Seniors Tea' at Rundle College, where students host senior residents for an afternoon of refreshments, conversation and entertainment. Rundle College students also partner with the Wentworth Manor Therapeutic Recreation department to facilitate the renowned 'Opening Minds Through Arts' art therapy program, designed to promote meaningful interactions between senior participants and student facilitators, as well as provide an outlet for creative expression for those with dementia.



Students and residents participate together in the OMA art therapy program

*"Students are now very much aware when they see a symptom of dementia and how that person may be struggling. It's empowering for them. They have a sense of knowing how to handle the situation, why it's happening, what they can do about it and how to make the individual feel more comfortable."*

~ Teacher, Rundle College



## Phase 4

# Create a Plan of Action

Now that you have your team in place, it's time for your Coordinating Committee to start working on your plan of action. How will you take your community from its "current state" to its "ideal future state"?

We have used our experiences at the BSF to outline some of the steps you can take to build an action plan. You may find that not all of the steps we took would be applicable to your own community, and that's fine—our goal with this guide is to support your initiative by providing you with ideas you can use as a springboard from which to launch your own project.

The most important thing is to ensure that everyone is working toward the "ideal future state" you identified in Phase 2, in a strategic and coordinated way, while keeping in mind that the plan needs to be flexible to account for the changing and evolving needs and desires arising from the community.

## We suggest you break this phase into the following steps:

- A. Identify your primary areas of focus
- B. Define specific initiatives and actions
- C. Assess your financial resources
- D. Create a timetable for meeting your goals

*Dementia Friendly Community projects are taking place all around the world!*

Looking at what they have already accomplished may inspire you, and may give you ideas for resources and approaches you may not have otherwise considered.

When we started our pilot project at the BSF, we began by looking at what others had done before us, and then developed our own resources as our project progressed. These are some of the projects we found especially helpful:

- [www.alz.co.uk/dementia-friendly-communities](http://www.alz.co.uk/dementia-friendly-communities)
- [www.dementiafriendly.org.au](http://www.dementiafriendly.org.au)
- [www.dfamerica.org](http://www.dfamerica.org)
- [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/dementia/communities.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/dementia/communities.htm)

## A. Identify your primary areas of focus

With your Coordinating Committee, brainstorm the primary areas you want to focus on during your project.

### These priority areas should:

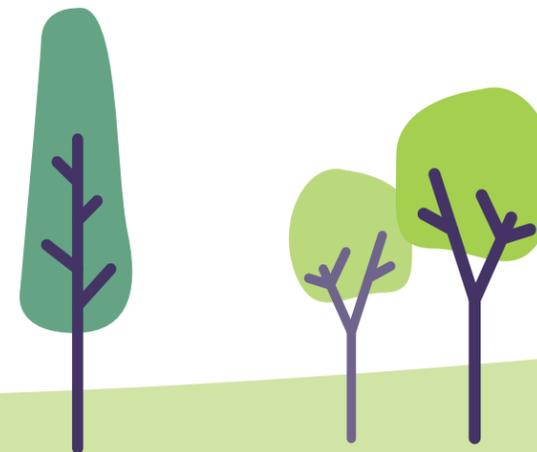
- Be informed by the data you collected from the broader community during your discovery efforts in Phase 1
- Reflect the needs of the community (including those living with dementia, and the broader community)
- Be based on the varied perspectives brought by your committee members
- Inform all actions taken by your committee—i.e., any time a new idea is presented to the committee, ensure it matches at least one of your priorities before expending time or resources on it

### During the BSF pilot project, we identified the following five primary areas of focus:

- Public Awareness
- Education
- Safety
- Loneliness and Social Isolation
- Evaluation, Sustainability, and Toolkit

Regardless of the areas you choose to focus on, we suggest you do the following for each area:

- Identify the person on your team who will be accountable for success in this area
- Create a sub-committee working group comprised of Coordinating Committee members and other stakeholders who have interest and expertise in the focus area, and who can meet regularly and report back to the Coordinating Committee (you can use the same Terms of Reference used to assign key committee roles, as the goals are the same)
- Define the current baseline (i.e., a snapshot of the existing situation) for this area
- Define your ideal outcome (i.e., what, specifically, you want to achieve) in this area
- Identify specific initiatives and actions you plan to take to achieve your ideal outcome—see following Step B
- Identify the personnel resources required to achieve your goals in this area (including equipment, project team members, and other volunteers)
- Determine how you will track key milestones or progress along the way
- Determine how you evaluate success for this area



# Phase 4

## B. Define specific initiatives and actions

As part of our pilot project at the BSF, we implemented the following initiatives to meet the goals of our focus areas. You may find, as we did, that initiatives like the ones described below may overlap and, therefore, address the needs of more than one area of focus at the same time.

### Public Awareness

Public awareness can happen on many levels, from community events to comprehensive campaigns. Any event or conversation is a potential opportunity to reduce stigmatization and stereotyping of those with dementia.

- **PowerPoint (PPT) presentations for use with community groups (e.g., seniors clubs, community associations, banks, etc.):** Our team created a PPT deck for each specific audience, but all covered similar topics (definition of dementia, myths about dementia, the importance of creating a Dementia Friendly Community, etc.). See **Appendix H:** Powerpoint Presentation.
- **Local Business Gatherings:** Using the connections we had made with local businesses/organizations that completed the dementia awareness training, we used these gatherings to encourage other surrounding businesses to participate in our project.
- **Dementia awareness eLearning:** One of our key partners, First Lutheran Church, created an eLearning course that has become part of the BSF online guide and which is available to anyone interested in learning more about dementia (including myths and facts about dementia, tips for reducing the risk of dementia, tips for creating a dementia friendly environment and a Dementia Friendly Community, and video interviews with some Community Champions). This module was funded by a grant provided to the First Lutheran Church by Lutheran Triune Educational and Benevolent Society of Calgary.

### Education

- **General dementia awareness, training and information sessions, and Library Speaker Series events:** We delivered these initiatives in partnership with local libraries.
- **Dementia awareness training for local businesses and organizations, and first responder groups:** This initiative was designed to provide members of the business community and first responders with general information about dementia, as well as tips on how to respond if they were involved in a situation or incident involving an individual with dementia. As part of each 45-minute training session, participants were invited to try the Aging and Cognitive Impairment Simulation activities described in **Appendix I**.
- **Dementia awareness training for local schools:** This training was similar to that offered to businesses and first responders, and also included lesson plans (provided by the Alzheimer's Society UK) and a toolkit including details on how they fit with the Alberta curriculum. See **Appendix J** for Sample Teaching Plans. In Okotoks, high school students were trained in Dementia Friendly strategies. One session incorporated a clinical neuropsychologist who addressed future career opportunities in seniors' health. As a result of these training sessions, some of the students became volunteers at Memory Cafés and other public events.



### Safety

- **Partner with relevant organizations with safety focus:** In our pilot, we partnered with Age Friendly Calgary who were looking at the feasibility of implementing a Silver Alert program. First responders in both pilot communities also played an important part in implementing safety-focused initiatives, e.g., Calgary Fire Department Community Safety Team worked with 3-1-1 to implement a new Home Safety Program that allows Calgarians with dementia, along with their families and caregivers to request a free Home Safety Visit.

### Loneliness and Social Isolation

- **Intergenerational Programs:** This initiative was designed to develop mutually beneficial relationships between seniors and local high school students—see **Appendix J** for teaching plans and more information about how to set up an intergenerational program.
- **Conversation Cafés/Memory Cafés:** This initiative involved providing informal, safe, social gathering spaces for those impacted by dementia.

### Evaluation, Sustainability, and Toolkit

- **"Dementia friendly" checklists:** The goal of this initiative was to create and distribute to local organizations checklists they could use to self-assess their level of "dementia friendliness," to help them become aware of ways they could improve their services to the community. See **Appendix K** for the Business DFC Checklist, **Appendix L** First Responder DFC Checklist, and **Appendix M** School DFC Checklist.



"By experiencing the simulation component of the training, and viewing a touching video of someone facing dementia, students got to translate their knowledge to 'what's next for me? How can I make a difference for those living with dementia?' Some of the students shared that they have loved ones in their life experiencing dementia. This training gave them the ability to interact with those loved ones in a profound way. Just knowing, for instance, that a person with dementia will remember a positive interaction encouraged them that they are capable of making a difference. I was pleased to see that some of the students even volunteered to assist at the Memory Café, which was really encouraging. I was so grateful for the opportunity to partner with the Dementia Friendly Communities project in this intergenerational capacity."

~ Jody Swift, Teacher, Ecole Secondaire Foothills Composite High School / Alberta High School in Fine Arts



# Phase 4

## C. Assess your financial resources

Realistically, your plan will be dependent on the finances available to execute it.

### Identify the funding resources available to you, which may include:

- Fundraising income
- Donations
- Grants

Set a budget based on your financial resources, and ensure it is feasible for the entire course of the project.

See **Appendix N** for a sample "Pathway to Impact" from the BSF pilot project grant application.

### Your budget should take into account the following costs:

- Staff wages (if applicable)
- Volunteer recognition activities and items
- Travel expenses for staff and volunteers
- Education and training for staff and volunteers
- Laptops, cell phones, and other information technology or communication devices
- Rental costs for venues for meetings and events
- Design and printing of brochures, advertising, and display materials
- Project evaluation (discussed in Phase 5)

#### Tip:

You may be able to access a general grant related to the overall goal of your project, and separate grants specifically targeted to your focus areas.

Below are some examples of in-kind and free venue support we received during the BSF pilot project:

#### In-kind support:

- Free advertising and course registration through municipal partners
- Free printing provided by a local printing company
- Refreshments for community meetings and events donated by local businesses

#### Free venues:

- Use of public library facilities for Education and Speaker Series events
- Use of local churches as venues for various events and activities (including nondenominational events) such as Conversation Cafés/Memory Cafés, and awareness and outreach events
- Use of the local Seniors' Club as a venue for Memory Café events
- Use of Town facilities for education programs
- Use of meeting space from community partners

#### Tip:

In-kind donations and access to free venues are an important opportunity for cost-savings. Building relationships with sponsors and supporters also helps spread awareness of your project and increase engagement with your community.

## D. Create a timetable for meeting your goals

Now that you know what you want to achieve, decide on a realistic timetable. We suggest you establish a timetable not only for each area of focus, but also for each discrete initiative/action within each area of focus.

Depending on the area of focus, or initiative, you may want to consider taking a phased approach for your action plan. For example, in some cases we tested an initiative on a single representative from each sector in the community (i.e., one bank, one retail outlet, one faith centre, one café/restaurant, etc.). After evaluating the results of this "beta testing" (the successes and the mistakes), we made adjustments to our plan before spreading and scaling up our outreach efforts.

### However you decide to execute your plan, your timetable should probably include:

- An expected start date
- An expected completion date
- Approximate dates for Coordinating Committee meetings
- Major project checkpoints/milestones
- Some leeway, so you can make adjustments to your plan based on the changing needs of the community

#### Tip:

To start making an immediate impact in the community, and to encourage your team, determine if there are any "quick wins" you can achieve in a short time and with minimal effort.

#### Tip:

Remember that you can't do everything at once. It's okay to start small and grow strong!



# First Responders Engagement

Given the increasing number of people living with dementia, first responders are more likely to encounter individuals living with dementia in crisis or emergency situations. First responders play an important role in keeping those living with dementia safe in the community.

## Okotoks First Responders

The DFC Okotoks Coalition (Coordinating Committee) included representation from the Okotoks Fire Department and Alberta Health Services EMS, who contributed immensely to the pilot objectives.

By leading the working groups, first responders in Okotoks supported progress in the priority focus areas for the community as identified by the coalition.

The Town of Okotoks has hosted a dementia awareness training workshop at the Okotoks Fire Department for municipal front line staff and first responders. The Town's 'train the trainer' sustainability approach includes a first responder who is responsible for continuing to offer training to new staff beyond the end of the pilot project.

*"People with dementia are one of the vulnerable populations that we deal with on a regular basis... Having firefighters understanding and empathizing a bit more just makes them better providers."*

~ Pat MacIsaac, Deputy Fire Chief, Okotoks Fire Department



First responders were among the participants at the Town of Okotoks dementia awareness training

## Calgary First Responders

The DFC Calgary Alliance (Coordinating Committee) included representation from the Calgary Fire Department (CFD) and Calgary Police Services.

The CFD Community Safety Team collaborated extensively with numerous City of Calgary and external stakeholders to support implementation of the Dementia Friendly Community pilot project.

Dementia awareness training was provided to approximately 1400 CFD staff, both uniformed and non-uniformed, in February and March 2018 through an online training module. Special hands-on age simulation training was delivered to firefighters working at Coach Hill Fire Station 29 (within the Calgary Westhills pilot area), and to all new CFD recruits in 2018 and 2019.

*"The training helps firefighters develop awareness of what life is like with dementia through experiential learning. It helps participants develop new skills to support people with dementia more effectively so that firefighters can better support our city's vulnerable populations."*

~ Derek Arthurs, Community Safety Officer, Calgary Fire Department

Shortly after completing the training, the Coach Hill department received a call and successfully managed to help a senior who was stuck in very deep snow. The crew noticed that the gentleman was not appropriately dressed for the conditions with no gloves or hat and had been trapped for a long period of time. Thanks to the dementia awareness training, they recognized that he was displaying symptoms of dementia, and found the training to be extremely helpful in dealing with the situation.

*"There were several clues touched on in your course that helped us identify that he indeed had dementia, and this helped us deal with him appropriately and empathetically, and explain to him that we were there to help, as well as how we were going to go about helping make him feel better."*

~ Captain Todd Puzey, Calgary Fire Department

The Calgary Fire Department's Community Safety Team all worked with 3-1-1 to implement a new Home Safety Program that allows Calgarians with dementia, along with their families and caregivers, to contact 3-1-1 and request a free Home Safety Visit. Community Safety Officers will visit residences to share important home safety information, inspect smoke alarms and, when needed, replace and install free smoke alarms.

As a result of their contribution to Dementia Friendly Communities, the Community Safety Team was recognized by the City of Calgary as the 'One City' award recipient in the Safety category. The awards recognize employees who make life better every day through their work.



Firefighters working at Coach Hill Fire Station participated in age simulation training



## Phase 5

# Implement the Plan

During the pilot project at the BSF, we found that, as we implemented our action plan, there were several important things to consider to increase the likelihood of a successful project.

We believe that if you take the following actions while implementing your project, you will achieve greater success:

- A. Engage local businesses
- B. Nurture partnerships with local organizations, agencies, and support groups
- C. Spread the word
- D. Evaluate and evolve



Good Earth Coffeehouse Strathcona successfully participated in dementia awareness training

## A. Engage local businesses

When implementing our BSF pilot project, we found it very rewarding to build and maintain relationships with local businesses and organizations we felt had a vested interest in creating a Dementia Friendly Community. (For your community, these would be the groups you identified in Phase 1, and that you interacted with in Phase 2 when you reached out to the community for input into the project.)

**Guidelines you may find helpful when dealing with each local business or organization:**

- Identify an “influencer” or key decision-maker within the business, and make this person your key contact
- Provide the group with a clear outline of what you can offer them, e.g.
  - General dementia awareness training for their staff/volunteers
  - A Dementia Friendly Checklist they can use to improve services to their clients
  - Information on local resources available to individuals in the community living with dementia
- For larger organizations, consider one or both of these approaches:
  - Contact someone at corporate headquarters who you feel would support your initiative—for example, the success of the BSF partnership with ATB Financial came mainly as a result of our relationship with the Corporate Wellness Manager, who facilitated dementia awareness training to four branches
  - Contact a local staff member, e.g., a floor manager or branch staff member, who is directly invested in or connected to the community
- If there are any Business Improvement Areas (BIAs)—formerly known as Business Revitalization Zones (BRZs)—in your area, it may be more efficient to contact them instead of each of the individual businesses of which they are comprised

“Excellent introduction and dementia awareness. I think it will really open up conversations internally and find ways to improve our client experience.”

~ Anonymous (from a business training evaluation)

## B. Nurture partnerships with local organizations, agencies, and support groups

During the BSF pilot project, we found the partnerships we had formed with local groups were invaluable in helping us raise awareness about our project and in helping it succeed. We partnered with the Town of Okotoks, City of Calgary, Age Friendly Calgary, CARYA, Kerby Centre, Calgary Seniors Resource Centre, Foothills Seniors Interagency Committee, Alzheimer's Society of Calgary, and Calgary Dementia Network, to name a few.

These partnerships enabled us to participate in (and sometimes help organize) numerous events, including a Calgary Police Services Wellness event, Canada 150 event, Okotoks Chamber of Commerce Trade and Lifestyle Show, Foothills Seniors Resource Fair, and Town of Okotoks Seniors Week Tea. These community events were an opportunity to share our story with the public, and often enabled us to recruit more volunteers for the project. Also, because of our participation, we were perceived as being able and willing co-promoters for future events. These types of events can help you increase engagement and involvement with the local community, at a minimal cost to you (compared to hosting your own events).

Nurturing relationships with local groups can also involve attending and presenting at conferences. For the BSF pilot project, taking part in conferences provided great opportunities for networking and sharing our message, and helped move our project forward. Some of the conferences we attended included Grey Matters, Dementia Re-Imagined, and Alberta Recreation and Parks Association.

We also found that partnerships created for one purpose can expand to meet the needs of the community in other ways—e.g., through working with the University of Calgary on topics for our Library Speaker Series, we connected with a clinical neuropsychologist who was able to facilitate the Memory and Aging Program (which is designed to help community members understand how memory changes, and what they can do to improve it).

### Tip:

We found it useful to document all the groups in our network of relationships using an “organigram” (organizational chart). We used the chart to identify community partners, and what level of commitment each had to the project—See **Appendix B: Organigram**.

## C. Spread the word

Ideally, your communications plan will include ideas for promoting your project, as well as tentative dates for each promotion. During our pilot project at the BSF, we pursued several types of avenues to spread the word about our project and specific events, including:

### Social media networks (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn):

Use social and local media to publicize your events, and encourage your community partners to also use their social media networks to spread information about the event.

### Community publications:

In our case, we partnered with several publications to increase our visibility in the community, including the Dementia Connections Magazine, Alberta Health Services Apple Magazine, Okotoks Town Recreation Guide, Okotoks Western Wheel, Okotoks Living Magazine, Strathcona Community Association Newsletter, and Coffee News.

### Media outlets:

We arranged numerous opportunities for the Mayor of Okotoks to be on radio shows to discuss upcoming events and spread awareness of our project.

### Printed educational material:

Materials can be customized for various business sectors (e.g., banks, grocery stores, cafés/restaurants, first responders, faith centres, and schools).

### Tip:

Create and maintain a list of suitable locations to distribute printed material, including local organizations and businesses (e.g., primary care networks, community associations, seniors clubs, interagency partners, and the local Alzheimer Society).

### Tip:

Create and maintain a list of media outlets sympathetic to your cause.

### Tip:

Volunteers can be a great help spreading the word about events, by distributing postcards/posters and/or sharing the event on social media.



# Phase 5

## D. Evaluate and evolve

You can evaluate the success of your project before you reach the scheduled end date (if there is one). Even if you have not yet achieved the “ideal state” you envisioned for your community, it’s encouraging to regularly celebrate the progress you have made thus far, and acknowledge and document the positive impact you have had on your community to date. This is important for team members as well as for project funders. Scheduled evaluations also allow you to identify strategies that aren’t working so you can take a different approach when evolving your plan further.

How did we evaluate our progress during the BSF pilot project? We used the following methods, but you may find other methods work better for your unique situation.

### Formal evaluations

Because our project was scheduled to last two-and-a-half years, we decided to have a formal evaluation of our progress at six months, 18 months, and finally at project completion, in line with the reporting schedule to our funding partners. We collected and analyzed data, shared it with project stakeholders, and made changes to the project plan to improve the outcome.

### Continuous evaluation activities

These included conducting surveys at community events, including project evaluation questions when interviewing new project team members, and reflecting on comments and suggestions received from external and internal stakeholders.

### Tip:

When implementing our plan, we utilized the PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) method throughout the course of the project.

For more information on the PDSA cycle, access the following resources available at:

[www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/Tools/PlanDoStudyActWorksheet.aspx](http://www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/Tools/PlanDoStudyActWorksheet.aspx)

[www.hqontario.ca/portals/0/documents/qi/rf-document-pdsa-cycles-en.pdf](http://www.hqontario.ca/portals/0/documents/qi/rf-document-pdsa-cycles-en.pdf)

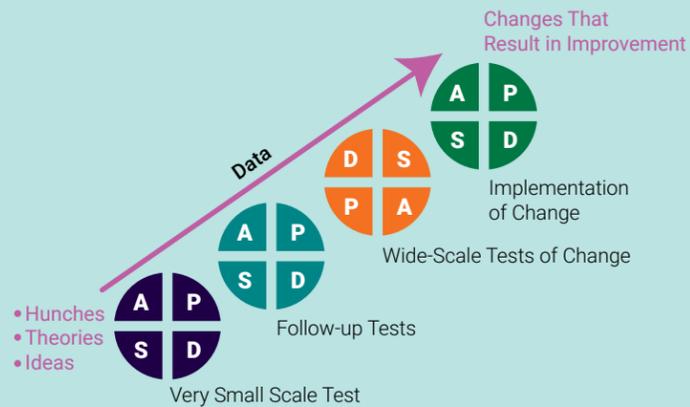


Diagram Credit: Health Quality Ontario



Risk Reduction talk at Signal Hill Library featuring guest speakers from the University of Calgary. Cam Clark, PhD, pictured speaking at this talk is a clinical neuropsychologist who went on to facilitate the Memory and Aging Program in Okotoks

## 'Dementia Talks' Library Speaker Series

Community outreach events help to engage the local community, increase public awareness of both dementia and the Dementia Friendly Communities pilot project, and provide information about resources and supports.

The Brenda Stafford Foundation developed 'Dementia Talks' – a Library Speaker Series presented in partnership with Calgary Public Library (Signal Hill branch) and Okotoks Public Library featuring experts from the University of Calgary and other local partners as guest speakers. Talks related to areas of interest or knowledge gaps identified in collaboration with key stakeholders and community feedback.

Topics included: 'Understanding Dementia,' 'Risk Reduction,' 'Memory,' 'Caregiver Support,' 'Young Onset Dementia' and 'Seniors' Safety.'

These Library Speaker Series events provided an invaluable opportunity to increase people's knowledge and understanding about dementia, gather feedback and insight from the community, develop mailing lists and recruit volunteers. Community partner resource booths open before and after each session further helped to connect people to services and resources in the community.

The Signal Hill Library partnership expanded to include hosting Dementia Awareness training for the general public interested in becoming a Dementia Friendly Communities volunteer. At the Okotoks Library, branch staff were trained in dementia friendly strategies.

*"The Calgary Public Library is proud to promote values of inclusion, curiosity, and collaboration and we strive to improve the quality of life for our library members. We have achieved that through this mutually beneficial partnership supporting Dementia Friendly Communities. The Brenda Stafford Foundation has been able to leverage libraries as an established 'go to' place for information in the community, while we have been able to provide our members with access to expert guest speakers and information on dementia-related topics that our members have clearly demonstrated a keen interest in learning more about."*

~ Patrick Mealey, Community Learning Advocate, Calgary Public Library

Some 'Dementia Talks' topics were particularly well attended, and this interest was influential in determining additional services in these areas. For instance, the Dementia Risk Reduction Talk attracted a full house in both communities, with 70 people in attendance at Okotoks, and 100 people at Signal Hill.

To build on the obvious interest in this area, the Memory and Aging Program was introduced with great success in the Okotoks pilot community. This 5-week program facilitated by Clinical Neuropsychologist, Cam Clark, PhD, aims to educate older adults on normal and abnormal age-related changes in memory, strategies for improving memory performance, and modifiable lifestyle factors that affect memory and can impact brain health in a positive way.

*"This has come at a very important time as I have recently been dealing with a friend who seems to think that I am showing signs of dementia. I am learning lots just through this program. If nothing else it has been very good knowing a lot more about memory. This has been a real support and most helpful for me."*

~ Anonymous (from a Memory and Aging Program participant)



## Phase 6

### Leave a Legacy

As we write this guide, we are nearing the end of our two-and-a-half-year pilot project. We know how you might feel when you arrive at this phase in your project. Having worked hard to implement your plan, and having made positive changes to your community, you will probably want to ensure that the programs and initiatives you created will be sustainable, relevant, and impactful in the long-term. How you will do that depends a lot upon the strength of the partnerships you have formed with key stakeholders, and the extent to which you have inspired and mobilized the community.

Here are some examples of how the partnerships we developed throughout the BSF Dementia Friendly Community pilot project allowed us to leave a legacy in the community, thanks to the efforts of individuals and organizations that chose to continue the cause:

The Calgary Fire Department supported our legacy in several ways:

- By adding general dementia awareness training to their on-boarding process for all new employees
- By volunteering to champion dementia awareness training and education to other departments within the City of Calgary, and other fire departments outside of Calgary
- By taking a proactive approach in community outreach and community safety initiatives to support dementia-friendly education, awareness, and services for the community

The Town of Okotoks trained several staff members in different departments (including the recreation centre, town facility staff, and first responders team), using a “Train the Trainer” model, so these individuals could facilitate dementia awareness training for new employees joining the town staff.

Rundle College (K-12) added dementia awareness training to their school curriculum, and this inspired other schools within and beyond the pilot area to adopt dementia education into their own curricula.

Intergenerational programs—e.g., the Opening Minds Through Art program (facilitated by student volunteers from Ecole Secondaire Foothills Composite High School and High School of Fine Arts for Tudor Manor residents and facilitated by Rundle College students for Wentworth Manor residents) is continuing within BSF Manors independent of this pilot project.

Memory/Conversation Cafés continued at community venues in Westhills and Okotoks, facilitated by volunteers.

First Lutheran Church received funding to create an eLearning Course to be used as part of the pilot project guide.

Groundwork was laid for the Brain in Motion research study in Okotoks, in partnership with the University of Calgary.

The Memory and Aging program continued in Okotoks, guided by a neuropsychologist hired to lead the program.

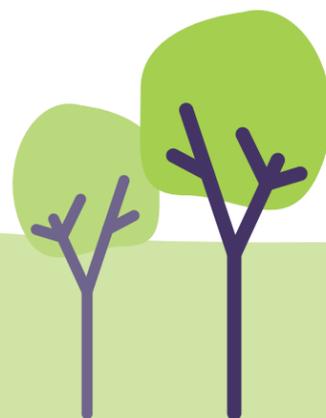
To help ensure you will leave your own lasting legacy when your project is complete, we suggest you ask yourself the following questions:

- **How will you ensure your key stakeholders will continue to take ownership and accountability for making their services dementia-friendly?**
- **What ongoing resources (financial and personnel) will be required to ensure your project initiatives will be able to continue?**
- **What existing services, forums, and events in the community could be leveraged to ensure dementia-friendly considerations become integrated into established processes?**

All the time, effort, and resources you have devoted during your project to create a Dementia Friendly Community have been well spent. Every person living with dementia in your community, now and into the future, will benefit from your effort, even if they never realise who it was that made their community a better place. Also, remember that it is not just the individuals with dementia whose lives you have improved, it's also the people who care for and about them, as well as all the community members who are touched in a positive way by the care and generosity of your efforts.

We at The Brenda Strafford Foundation applaud all your efforts, and thank you for adding one more dementia friendly community to our world.

As astronaut John Glen once said, “If there's one thing I've learned in my years on this planet, it's that the happiest and most fulfilled people are those who devoted themselves to something bigger and more profound than merely their own self-interest.”



# Implementing Community Memory Cafés/ Conversation Cafés

Memory Cafés/Conversation Cafés are safe and social gathering places where those impacted by dementia can get out socially, share memories and experiences, and make new friendships and support groups over a comforting beverage. The purpose of the café is to offer caregivers of those with dementia an opportunity for their loved one to socialize, while also offering the chance for caregivers to network with other caregivers. Memory Cafés/Conversation Cafés have been initiated with success in both pilot communities of Calgary Westhills and the Town of Okotoks.

## First Lutheran Church Dementia Awareness and Conversation Cafés

*"As a missional organization, First Lutheran Church (FLC) became involved in the Dementia Friendly Communities Westhills pilot project to extend our support to an ever-growing population within our own faith community, and the greater community. We saw that people needed access to more information and education to increase awareness about dementia. We also saw that those affected by dementia needed an opportunity to gather and share the journey with others in similar situations."*

~ Liz Gahan, Ministry Coordinator

FLC initiated dementia awareness training for staff, hosted a resource fair open house event for the general public, and a local business gathering event for neighbouring organizations to help increase awareness about dementia and the Dementia Friendly Communities pilot project.

We also had great success with establishing our Conversation Café, offered two times every month, supported by grant funding that we successfully applied for to sustain the initiative. These cafés are non-denominational and open to all who are impacted by dementia in some way. There has been a lot of interest from others in the faith community who are keen to set up their own Memory Café/Conversation Café, e.g., FCJ Christian Life Centre held one in September 2018, and the First Baptist Church now also hold a regular Conversation Café.

Due to the demand we saw from others seeking support in how to increase awareness of dementia, we proactively sought out additional grant funding to help create a dementia awareness eLearning course. This online learning resource is intended to support and inspire others, developed in partnership with BSF to supplement this Guide to Creating Dementia Friendly Communities. You can find this eLearning module online at: [www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca](http://www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca)



## 'In the Moment' Okotoks Memory Café

Motivated by a dear friend recently diagnosed with dementia, Joyce Landis became an active member of the Memory Café planning committee that took the idea of a 'Memory Café' and brought it to fruition in Okotoks. Joyce's husband, Ray, has also joined the Memory Café volunteer crew and his listening ear is so welcome, especially for our male attendees.

*"For me, personally, I have always truly believed that when one gives of themselves in an effort to be of service to the well-being of the community, or to individuals, or to a particular cause, in return, they always receive far more benefits than what they have given. It is my joy and pleasure to serve in this capacity."*

~ Joyce Landis

"In the Moment" Memory Cafés are hosted on the first Wednesday of the month at the Okotoks Seniors Club. A community donor stepped forward to provide refreshments for the first year of cafés, and the Seniors Club has agreed to continue to host the cafés (providing the refreshments and supplies) with the assistance of Dementia Friendly Communities volunteers. Promoting inclusion, we are partnering with the Foothills Advocacy in Motion Society to provide opportunities for those with developmental disabilities to gain work experience through serving guests at the café.

*"This is an example of the power of community partnerships. The ability to branch out beyond our core programs and services has been well received. Our goal as a club is to offer a welcoming experience for all seniors, and this is one example of how we have engaged community supports to increase the services offered to the community, beyond just membership in the club, while maintaining our goal of a welcoming experience for all."*

~ Ed Thom, President of the Okotoks and District Seniors Club

*"As a caregiver to my wife Joan, I have found that all of the functions, presentations, activities and outings that have been undertaken in the DFC project have been important. The Memory Café events are especially important as they provide a comfortable and dementia friendly social event for both the caregiver and the person with dementia, in a safe place where one can share ideas and feelings while not feeling inhibited because of any stigma related to dementia. The Memory Café events also provide a sort of caregiver support group environment where the person with dementia can also interact without feeling left out of the conversation or the event, while the caregiver can be involved in more in-depth conversations. As a community activity, the Memory Café is a valuable asset to continue providing social opportunities for those affected by dementia."*

~ Alan Rae, Family Caregiver



## What's next?

We have developed this guide to enable you to set up your own Dementia Friendly Community.

The Dementia Friendly Communities pilot in Calgary and Okotoks has been extremely successful, as can be seen in the testimonials given by those involved directly in the project or community members who have benefited because of it.

From undertaking this work in the Westhills community of Calgary and the Town of Okotoks, it is clear that there is an interest for Dementia Friendly Communities moving forward. We hope that you are able to take pieces of this guide to support those in your own community facing dementia in a positive way in the future.

We are now exploring ways to extend the initiative beyond the pilot areas and have already been working with 'Early Adopters' who are committed to developing a Dementia Friendly Community within their local community.

At the beginning of this guide we introduced you to Neil Godfrey, who is living with dementia. His advice to us, if you know people in your life who are also impacted by dementia:

*"Treat them with love, grace, dignity and patience. Be understanding. Visit them. Treat them normally. Spend time with them. Include them. Be an advocate for them. And remember, even broken crayons can still color."*

~ Neil Godfrey



Neil and his wife Joanne

## Appendices



# Templates and Resources

**Appendix A: Key Messages**

**Appendix B: Organigram**

**Appendix C: Terms of Reference Sample**

**Appendix D: DFC Coordinator Job Description**

**Appendix E: Sample Communications Plan**

**Appendix F: Sample Agenda**

**Appendix G: Volunteer Job Descriptions**

**Appendix H: Powerpoint Presentation**

**Appendix I: Simulation Activity**

**Appendix J: Teaching Plans**

**Appendix K: Business DFC Checklist**

**Appendix L: First Responder DFC Checklist**

**Appendix M: School DFC Checklist**

**Appendix N: Draft Pathway to Impact Framework**

**Appendix O: Sample Evaluation Plan and Survey**

These resources and templates are available to download at [www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca](http://www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca)

# Impact Testimonials

*"We thought this would be a great opportunity to collaborate from a full service architectural and engineering perspective. Stantec's attendance at various information sessions, coordinating committee and community meetings was an invaluable means to gather information and understand the gaps as expressed by the community stakeholders."*

*There is a desire in the design community with care providers and policy makers to close the gap between government policy and the needs of patients/residents living with dementia. This has led us to query if we could identify specific planning and design interventions to provide an environment that is a valuable therapeutic resource for the care of individuals with dementia and to encourage residents to remain in their communities longer.*

*The community engagement process through BSF has proved to be highly educational and informative in talking with and listening to people living with dementia, along with family members, researchers, care providers and other professions directly connected to people living with dementia."*

*~ Pamela Butvin, Architect, Stantec*

*"Meals on Wheels was invited to join the DFC Coordinating Committee as a community service agency who works with seniors. Our work with clients with dementia is limited to their diet, meal delivery, and navigating casual interaction/communication. As such, we focused on gleaning awareness and strategies to aid that work."*

*Our agency was provided a staff in-service to help us gain a better understanding of life with dementia. We learned some great tips for aiding our interactions with clients with dementia, and staff left with refreshed patience and understanding for their work with clients with dementia. New volunteers have been equipped with a broader awareness of the interactions they may have and how to make them successful."*

*~ Christine Hentschel, Client Services Manager, Meals on Wheels*

*"The Healthy Okotoks Coalition (HOC) is a non-profit society with a goal to be involved in all of the health-oriented initiatives that take place in the community. I became involved at the level of the Coordinating Committee when I saw the opportunity to work together to generate awareness of dementia in Okotoks. Community leaders who were members of the HOC then spread the word through their networks. It's important to work together on a common goal to avoid duplication of services."*

*~ Kim Pomares, Healthy Okotoks Coalition*

# Useful Information and Resources

## Dementia Friendly Community Initiatives

### Alberta Initiatives:

The Brenda Strafford Foundation - Dementia Friendly Communities: [www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca](http://www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca)

### Other Provincial Initiatives (within Canada):

Alzheimer Society of British Columbia - Dementia Friendly Communities: [www.alzheimer.ca/en/bc/Get-involved/dementia-friendly-communities](http://www.alzheimer.ca/en/bc/Get-involved/dementia-friendly-communities)

Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan - Dementia Friendly Saskatchewan: [www.dementiafriendlysaskatchewan.ca](http://www.dementiafriendlysaskatchewan.ca)

### Canada Initiatives:

Alzheimer Society of Canada and Government of Canada - Dementia Friends Canada: [www.dementiafriends.ca](http://www.dementiafriends.ca)

### Worldwide Initiatives:

Alzheimer's Disease International - Directory of initiatives by country available at: [www.alz.co.uk/dementia-friendly-communities/initiatives](http://www.alz.co.uk/dementia-friendly-communities/initiatives)

## Dementia Strategies

### Provincial Strategy (Alberta):

Alberta Health. (2017). *Alberta Dementia Strategy and Action Plan*. Available at <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/9781460136898>

### Federal Strategy (Canada):

Public Health Agency of Canada. (2019). *A Dementia Strategy for Canada: Together We Aspire*. Available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/dementia-strategy.html>

### Global Strategy:

World Health Organization. (2017). *Global Action Plan on the Public Health Response to Dementia 2017-2025*. Available at [https://www.who.int/mental\\_health/neurology/dementia/action\\_plan\\_2017\\_2025/en/](https://www.who.int/mental_health/neurology/dementia/action_plan_2017_2025/en/)

## Dementia Language

### Dementia Language Guidelines

Alzheimer's Society (Canada). (2017). *Person-centred Language Guidelines*. Available at [https://alzheimer.ca/sites/default/files/2017-11/Person\\_Centred\\_Language\\_Guidelines-e.pdf](https://alzheimer.ca/sites/default/files/2017-11/Person_Centred_Language_Guidelines-e.pdf)

Alzheimer's Society (U.K.). (2018). *Dementia Friendly Media and Broadcast Guide*. Available at [https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-09/Positive%20language%20guide\\_0.pdf](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-09/Positive%20language%20guide_0.pdf)

Alzheimer's Society (U.K.). (2018). *How to Spot (and Challenge) Negative Language in the Media*. Available at <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/blog/how-spot-and-challenge-negative-language-media>

Alzheimer's Society (U.K.). (2018). *Positive Language: An Alzheimer's Society Guide to Talking About Dementia*. Available at [https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-09/Positive%20language%20guide\\_0.pdf](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-09/Positive%20language%20guide_0.pdf)

Dementia Australia. (2018). *Dementia Language Guidelines*. Available at <https://www.dementia.org.au/files/resources/dementia-language-guidelines.pdf>

Innovations in Dementia. (2014). *DEEP Guide: Dementia Words Matter*. Available at <http://dementiavoices.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/DEEP-Guide-Language.pdf>

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland. (2014). *Dementia Friendly Language*. Available at [https://www.alzheimer.ie/Alzheimer/media/SiteMedia/Fundraising/Camino/2014/Dementia-Friendly-LanguageFinal-for-Web-Aug-15\\_2.pdf](https://www.alzheimer.ie/Alzheimer/media/SiteMedia/Fundraising/Camino/2014/Dementia-Friendly-LanguageFinal-for-Web-Aug-15_2.pdf)

### Terminology: 'Dementia Friendly' versus 'Dementia Inclusive'

Dementia Connections (2018) describes how communities and organizations have historically used the term "dementia friendly." Now, some dementia advocates are moving away from the term "dementia friendly" in favour of "dementia inclusive."

Dementia Connections. (2018). *What's the Difference Between "Dementia Friendly" and "Dementia Inclusive."* Available at <https://www.dementiaconnections.ca/blog/2018/9/14/whats-the-difference-between-dementia-friendly-and-dementia-inclusive>

## Alzheimer Societies and Associations in Canada

Alzheimer Society of Canada: [www.alzheimer.ca](http://www.alzheimer.ca)

Alzheimer's Association Canada: [www.alz.org/ca/dementia-alzheimers-canada.asp](http://www.alz.org/ca/dementia-alzheimers-canada.asp)

More useful information and resources are available at [www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca](http://www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca)

# Acknowledgements

The Brenda Strafford Foundation thanks the many individuals and organizations who have collaborated with us and have demonstrated leadership in creating the first Dementia Friendly Communities in Alberta.

## Coordinating Committees & Working Groups:

### Calgary Westhills Alliance

#### Co-Chairs:

- Dementia Friendly Community Coordinator, The Brenda Strafford Foundation
- Bryan Gilks, Family Caregiver

#### Alliance and Sub-Committee Working Group

##### Representation from:

- Age Friendly Calgary
- Alberta Health Services
- Alberta's Mobile Footcare Service
- Alzheimer Society of Calgary
- ATB Financial
- Calgary Dementia Network
- Calgary Fire Department
- Calgary Police Department
- Calgary Seniors Resource Society
- Calgary West Central Primary Care Network
- Caregivers
- CARYA
- Clinical Pharmacist, Foothills Medical Centre
- First Lutheran Church
- Good Earth Coffehouse Strathcona Square
- Home Instead
- Meals on Wheels
- Kerby Centre
- Stantec
- Strathcona Christie Aspen Community Association
- University of Calgary
- Wentworth Manor Adult Day Program

### Okotoks Coalition

#### Co-Chairs

- Administrator, Tudor Manor
- Janette Messer, The Town of Okotoks

#### Coalition and Sub-Committee Working Group

##### Representation from:

- Alberta Health Services
- Adult Day Support Program
- Alzheimer Society of Calgary
- Calgary Rural Primary Care Network
- Caregivers
- Catholic Schools and Public Schools
- Geriatric Social Work
- Healthy Okotoks Coalition
- Meals on Wheels
- Okotoks Chamber of Commerce
- Okotoks EMS
- Okotoks Fire Services
- Stantec
- Town of Okotoks and Mayor of Okotoks

## Strategic Advisory Group:

#### Co-Chairs:

- Jenny Robinson (The Brenda Strafford Foundation)
- Dr. Elaine Stokes

#### Members:

- Airdrie Collaborative
- Alberta Association on Gerontology
- Alberta Health Services
- Alzheimer Society of Alberta and Northwest Territories
- Alzheimer Society of Calgary
- Caregivers Alberta
- City of Calgary
- Government of Alberta (ministries of Health and Seniors and Housing)
- Kerby Centre
- The Brenda Strafford Foundation
- University of Calgary

## Steering Committee:

- Alberta Health Services
- Alberta Innovates
- Government of Alberta (Seniors and Housing)
- The Brenda Strafford Foundation

## Other Acknowledgements:

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- ATB Financial branches (Okotoks, Walden, West Springs, Westhills)
- Brain in Motion
- Calgary Public Library
- Cameron Clark, PhD, Clinical Neuropsychologist
- Dementia Network Calgary
- Ecole Secondaire Foothills Composite High School / Alberta High School of Fine Arts
- Foothills Community Support Services
- Foothills Seniors Interagency
- Guardian Angel School
- Okotoks Interagency
- Okotoks Public Library
- Okotoks Seniors Club
- Rundle College
- YouQuest

## The Brenda Strafford Foundation Project Staff:

Navjot Virk,  
*Research and Innovative Practice Manager/Dementia Friendly Communities Project Manager*

Jennifer Mallamo,  
*Dementia Friendly Communities Okotoks Coordinator*

Emma Richardson,  
*Dementia Friendly Communities Westhills Coordinator*

Meghan Jackson,  
*Dementia Friendly Communities Evaluation Support*

Julie Arnold,  
*Communications and Marketing Manager*





[www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca](http://www.dementiafriendlyalberta.ca)

