



it's time to act

Ontario's dementia imperative

Alzheimer*Society*
O N T A R I O

Photo above: Six-year-old Jaevin Spero hugs his great-grandmother, Doreen Cole, who at 76, lives with Alzheimer's disease.

A picture Jaevin drew of himself and Doreen sold on eBay for \$2,400.

Jaevin donated the money to Alzheimer's research through the Alzheimer Society of Niagara Region.

Founded in 1983, the Alzheimer Society of Ontario supports a network of 39 member chapters across the province.

Visit us at www.alzheimerontario.org



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Ontario's 21st Century Health Care Crisis

A Growing Threat

We're running out of time.

As Ontario's population rapidly ages, we have a narrow window of time to prevent dementia from causing a health and economic crisis of unprecedented proportions.

Already, dementia – most of it caused by Alzheimer's disease – results in total socio-economic costs to Ontario of \$7 billion a year.

Dementia threatens to bankrupt our health care system.

Dementia is a devastating disease with enormous impact on individuals, families, employers, the health care system and society as a whole:

- Almost two-thirds of those with dementia are women.
- Most Ontarians with Alzheimer's disease today are cared for outside of institutions – in their homes with their families.
- Most family caregivers are the spouses or daughters of those with dementia. In turn, they struggle with emotional stress, physical strain and exhaustion, depression and illness, and financial burdens. Yet they often do not receive adequate social support.
- Dementia is a leading cause of disability in Ontarians over 60, causing more years lived with disability than stroke, cardiovascular disease and all forms of cancer.
- 62% of those living in Ontario's long-term-care homes have Alzheimer's or another dementia – yet less than 10% of workers in these homes have had the specialized training necessary to care for those with the disease.
- Ontarians with Alzheimer's disease eventually become dependent on others for every aspect of their care.
- Progression of the fatal disease can be slowed, but not stopped. There is no cure.





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Numbers Climbing

Already, more than 160,000 Ontarians are living with dementia. In three years, that number will have swelled to more than 175,000. The numbers will spike over the next five years. And by 2031, the number of Ontarians living with dementia will have more than doubled.

The largest generation in Canadian history – the baby boomers – is about to turn 60. They'll enter the age of greatest risk in 2010. By 2017, the number of Ontarians 55 and older will increase by 30%.

The generation that fueled Ontario's economy over the past 50 years, will now fuel the dementia crisis. As baby boomers enter the age of greatest risk, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias threaten to become the health crisis of the 21st Century.

Yet there are opportunities to face and resolve this crisis in time if we make the necessary investments now.

Already, we can now diagnose Alzheimer's with greater accuracy. Research is uncovering new and effective ways to treat the disease. But more needs to be done.

We need answers: how to further improve diagnosis, how to treat it, how to slow its progress, how to support family caregivers and how to care for those with the disease. And answers cost money.

Without proper funding, the opportunities that lie before us to find that cure or new, highly effective treatments may well be lost.

And without funding, the terrible human costs – the pain of seeing family, friends and loved ones struggle and the lost contributions of thousands of older Ontarians – will continue and grow.

We are facing a crisis. There is no "maybe" in this. It's in the arithmetic of a rapidly aging population.





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Averting the Crisis

The Alzheimer Society of Ontario is asking every candidate in this provincial election to make the prevention, care and cure of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias a provincial priority. We're asking you to support – over the next four years – the establishment of \$340 million in new annual base funding to:

- Support a comprehensive public awareness campaign to educate Ontarians on brain health, the early signs of dementia and the intervention necessary to minimize its occurrence.
- Improve access to respite support and quality care.
- Increase research into the cause, treatments and potential cure for dementia.
- Ensure all front-line workers learn how to apply the latest research findings and receive the specialized training necessary to care for those with dementia.



The need is urgent. And time is short.

We're calling on the next Government of Ontario to both maintain existing services and advance new services through the following actions.



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ACTION - 1

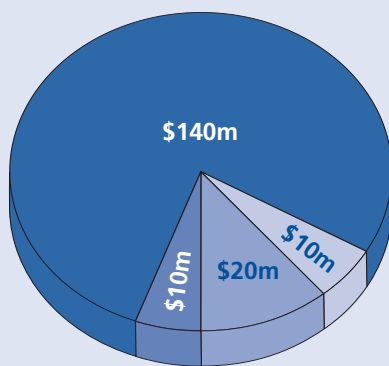
Promote Brain Health and Early Intervention
Invest \$180 Million Annually

Most Ontarians are aware of dementia but unaware of the benefits of early diagnosis or ways to lessen their risk. This investment will:

- Educate the public that dementia is not a normal part of aging and that early detection and treatment can delay the onset of dementia symptoms, thereby reducing its impact in terms of the duration of the disease and the human and economic toll. Research shows that slowing dementia's onset will produce substantial financial savings to society – savings that are greater than those of any other disease.
- Educate people with Alzheimer's disease and their families – giving them the opportunity to plan and to investigate treatment and care options while those with Alzheimer's still are able to take an active role in decision-making.
- Increase the capacity of primary care providers to recognize, diagnose, and treat people with dementia and to provide them with more specialized supports to care for people with the disease.

The \$180 million per year will be invested in:

- Launching a comprehensive public awareness campaign on brain health and the early detection and intervention of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias by providing \$10 million annually.
- Improving the recognition, diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias by providing \$140 million annually to support primary care.
- Increasing education and counselling, and support for those with dementia, their families and caregivers by providing \$10 million annually.
- Expanding and improving access to specialized geriatric consulting services for primary care providers through the provision of \$20 million annually.



ANNUAL FUNDS INVESTED IN:

- Recognition, diagnosis and treatment
- Public awareness campaign on brain health
- Specialized geriatric consulting services for primary care providers
- Education and counselling



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ACTION - 2

*Improve Access Support and Quality Care
Invest \$130 Million Annually*

The hard fact of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias is that caregivers bear a tremendous burden with little support.

- Two-thirds of Ontarians with dementia live in our communities.
- Almost all of them have informal caregivers; less than 10% of these caregivers have access to respite care – the ability to take a break from caregiving.
- The personal toll on these relatives and natural helpers is greater than almost any other disease.
- More than 35% of dementia care in Ontario is provided by family members.

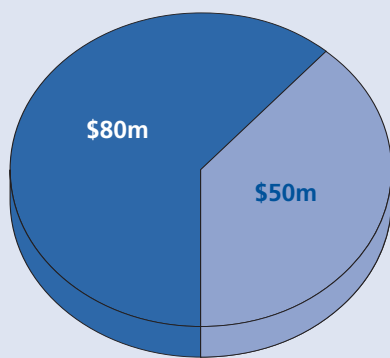
They spend significantly more time on caregiving tasks than those caring for people with other illnesses.

These impacts carry three times the stress and burden than that of other diseases. In 2007, the World Health Organization (WHO) rated the burden of disease for disability from dementia second only to terminal cancer.

Providing caregivers that support through counselling, respite and other services can reduce this burden, cut dementia health care costs and enhance the caregiver's quality of life and economic well-being.

The \$130 million per year will be invested in:

- Expanding – to 50% more caregivers – respite programs and support services tailored to the special challenges family members face in providing care to those with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias by providing \$80 million annually.
- Establishing an initial 14 behavioural assessment units in specific long-term-care homes across Ontario to provide more intensive assessment and plans to guide providers in caring for difficult dementia patients through the provision of \$50 million annually. Tragically, dementia can cause some persons to develop difficult behaviours that place them at risk of harming themselves and others. Families and long-term-care homes often lack the resources for assessing and treating these behaviours.



ANNUAL FUNDS INVESTED IN:

- Expansion of respite programs and support services
- Provision of more intensive assessment and plans to guide caregiving providers



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ACTION - 3

*Translate Research Insights Into Individual Care
Invest \$30 Million Annually*

Research is producing groundbreaking insights into the potential cure for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. New treatments are being introduced every year. Research discoveries are providing a better understanding of how to manage Alzheimer's and care for those with the disease. Today, Ontario is an acknowledged global leader in dementia research.

But stemming the disease and its devastating impact demands that government lead the way in funding dementia research. In the face of the tremendous research challenges of Alzheimer's disease, only government has the capacity to make the necessary difference.

Research has moved us closer to understanding the causes of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, to better treatments and to more effective ways of care, but much remains to be done.

We need to improve the translation of research to frontline primary care workers and community workers. Workers need better access to training in new techniques.

Less than 10% of workers in more than 600 Ontario long-term-care homes have received specialized training in dementia and even fewer community workers have received dementia training.

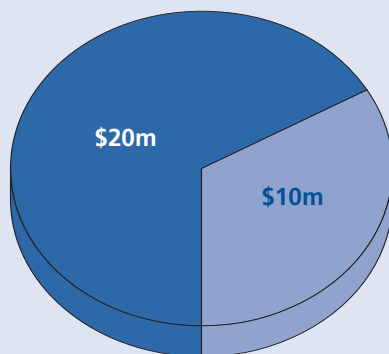
To counter the full scope of the dementia crisis, the new Government of Ontario must substantially increase its investment to translate research insights into dementia care.

The research goals are clear, they are necessary and they are attainable:

- To delay and ultimately prevent the onset of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.
- To treat and slow the progression for those already with the disease, and;
- To imagine and strive for a future without Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

The \$30 million per year will be invested in:

- Increasing the amount of initial, refresher and new-worker training by investing \$20 million annually to ensure all direct-care staff are trained within four years.
- Providing \$10 million annually in multi-year support to select research institutes to develop needed infrastructure and incentives and to ensure knowledge translation and transfer through the Alzheimer Knowledge Exchange (AKE).



ANNUAL FUNDS INVESTED IN:

- Training for all direct-care staff within four years
- Multi-year support to select research institutes and support of the AKE



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Dementia Summary

The Crisis

- Dementia – most of it caused by Alzheimer's disease – threatens to bankrupt Ontario's health care system.

The Facts

Dementia:

- Costs Ontario \$7 billion a year.
- Results in more years lived with disability than stroke, cardiovascular disease and all forms of cancer.
- More than 160,000 Ontarians have the disease – that number will spike over the next five years.
- By 2031, Ontarians with dementia will have more than doubled – almost two-thirds of them will be women.
- Most people with dementia are cared for in their homes – most by spouses or daughters who, in turn, struggle with emotional stress, physical strain and exhaustion, depression and illness, and financial burdens without adequate social support.

62% of those living in Ontario's long-term-care homes have dementia – yet less than 10% of workers in these homes have had specialized dementia care training.

The Need

We're asking provincial election candidates to support \$340 million in new base funding to:

- **Educate the public on health promotion, early identification and intervention.** Today, most Ontarians are aware of dementia but unaware of the benefits of early diagnosis or ways to lessen their risk.
- **Increase the capacity of primary care providers to recognize, diagnose, and treat people with dementia.**
- **Improve access to respite support and quality care.** Today, two-thirds of Ontarians with dementia have family caregivers, yet, less than 10% of these caregivers have respite support.
- **Increase research into the cause, treatments and potential cure for dementia.** Only government has the capacity to make the necessary difference. Delaying Alzheimer's onset and slowing its progression will produce substantial OHIP cost savings.
- **Ensure all front-line workers learn how to apply the latest research and receive the specialized training necessary to care for those with dementia.** Today, less than 10% of workers in our long-term-care homes have received specialized dementia training.

The Challenge

Dementia threatens to swamp our health care system unless we make necessary investments now.

\$340 million in new base funding is needed to address this crisis.

We're asking for your help to make the prevention, care and cure for dementia a priority of the next government by supporting the Alzheimer Society of Ontario's urgent request for funding.



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