

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chair and members of the Community and Corporate Affairs Committee

FROM: Brandi Gillett, Community Librarian

DATE: January 9, 2020

MEMORANDUM NO.: MEM-LIB-2020-0001

RE: Programs and Services for individuals living with Alzheimer's or related forms of dementia

PURPOSE OF THE MEMORANDUM:

The purpose of this Memorandum is to inform Council of the Library's programs and services for individuals living with Alzheimer's or related forms of dementia.

BACKGROUND:

Dementia, an overall term for a set of symptoms that are caused by disorders affecting the brain, affects over 564,000 Canadians with over 25,000 new cases diagnosed each year.¹ By 2031 that number is expected to rise to 937,000, an increase of 67%. Symptoms can include short-term memory loss, change of behavior, confusion and difficulties with language. This may affect a person's ability to perform everyday familiar and daily tasks.² Dementia is not a mental health disorder. It is a progressive disease which means the symptoms will gradually get worse as more brain cells become damaged and eventually die.

Dementia is not a specific disease. There are close to 120 different types of dementia including Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia (due to strokes), Lewy Body disease, head trauma, frontal-temporal dementia, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, Parkinson's disease, and Huntington's disease. These conditions can have similar and overlapping symptoms.

In Halton Region, there are roughly 10,300 people living with dementia.³ Dementia effects one in every ten seniors in the region. Its impact is much wider when you

¹ <https://alzheimer.ca/en/Home/Get-involved/Advocacy/Latest-info-stats>

² <https://alzheimer.ca/en/on/About-dementia/What-is-dementia>

³ <https://alzheimer.ca/en/Home/Get-involved/Advocacy/Latest-info-stats>

consider caregivers, friends and professionals who support these individuals. Support services for caregivers are equally important as is care for those living with dementia.

The Library has recently expanded its programs and services for individuals living with Alzheimer's and other related forms of dementia. Working closely with the Alzheimer Society of Hamilton and Halton, the Library has developed collections including Cognitive Care Kits and expanded lectures and workshops, and improved access to regional services in the community.

COMMENTS:

Community Partners

To improve access to specialize community services, the Library has strategically partnered with the Alzheimer Society of Hamilton and Halton to offer regular programs and services at both branches. Their peer support workers have regularly scheduled times for client meetings which improves access to regional services within the community. These services are aimed at complimenting programs and services already offered in the community such as the Town of Halton Hills' accredited adult day programs for clients with Alzheimer's Disease or related dementias that provide a safe and secure place where older adults can socialize and engage in social, cognitive and recreational activities.⁴

Through displays and educational sessions, the Library is raising awareness. Danielle Arbour, Public Education Coordinator with the Alzheimer's Society of Hamilton and Halton spoke at the Halton Hills Lecture in January on Keeping a Healthy Brain. There were over 180 tickets sold for the event. The Alzheimer's Society will continue to offer ongoing workshops on Alzheimer's and Dementia throughout 2020 including Caring for the Financial Matters of a Person with Alzheimer's Disease or Another Dementia; Dementia Education Series: 4-part learning series for care partners and friends of persons living with Dementia; and Recreation with Dementia.

Professional Development

Frontline Library staff are committed to offering stellar customer service to all patrons including those living with dementia. This could mean modifying our communication style to simplify language, repeating a word or phrase, or talking less than usual to allow patrons time to process information.

Staff attended the *Designing for Centenarians Summit*⁵ at Hamilton Public Library and the *Ontario Public Library Association Community-Led Think Tank* in London in 2019. Participation in sessions such as "*Supporting Individuals with Dementia and Their*

⁴ <https://www.halton.ca/For-Residents/Older-Adults/Community-Programs-Older-Adults>

⁵ <http://fopl.ca/news/designing-for-centenarians-summit-october-1-2019/>

Caregivers;” “Ageing Populations” were fundamental in helping staff to better understand the needs of individuals and caregivers.

Library staff in the Community and Adult Services Department have received Dementiability Methods Training⁶ through Dementiability Inc.⁷ In this two-day training session staff learned principles of the *Dementiability Methods: The Montessori Way* approach to working with adults living with cognitive and/or physical impairments. This training is being adopted by long-term care facilities across the country and is changing the way individuals support those living with dementia. This training has informed the development of staff training sessions and library programs and services including the Cognitive Care Kits that will launch in February.

Collections

The Library has developed a Dementia-friendly collection of books and resources suitable for individuals with the disease. A collection of 14 unique Cognitive Care Kits are free to all community members.

A Cognitive Care Kit is a uniquely curated kit to help those living with a cognitive impairment from Alzheimer’s disease or other forms of dementia. Each kit contains an assortment of activities, games and workbooks that encourage social engagement and bring enjoyment through leisure activities. Here is a small sampling:



Sequenced Puzzle



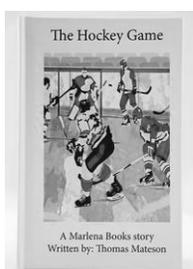
Conversation Cards



Lacing Shapes



Connecting Memories
Colouring Book



Marlena Books



Sorting Kit



Pocket Packs



Eldersong

⁶ <https://www.dementiability.com/the-montessori-way>

⁷ <https://www.dementiability.com/>

The kits, available to individuals living with the disease and caregivers are free to borrow with a Halton Hills Library Card. First-time borrowers must attend an *Introduction to Cognitive Care Kits* session, where each item is explained and demonstrated. After the initial training, customers may borrow subsequent kits without additional training.

What are the benefits?

Cognitive Care Kits will allow the Library to expand its services, resources and programs further into the community to help support the skills and abilities of those who are living with dementia related illnesses. The kits will also allow the Library to create meaningful partnerships with key community organizations dedicated to supporting individuals and caregivers including the following:

- Alzheimer Society of Hamilton and Halton
- Acclaim Health
- Halton Healthcare
- Halton Age-Friendly Network
- Amica Georgetown
- Bennett Healthcare Centre
- Extendicare Halton Hills
- Mountainview Residence
- Hillsvie Active Living Centres

CONCLUSION:

The number of people living with dementia is expected to triple by 2050. Based on those predictions, Canada could see 152 million dementia cases according to the Alzheimer Society of Canada.⁸ As the number of older Canadians grows rapidly, so to, does the need for dementia friendly programs, services and collections. The Library is committed to working with the Alzheimer's Society of Hamilton and Halton and other community organizations to improve access to resources in our community and to offer programs and services including workshop, Cognitive Care Kits and other materials for individuals living with Alzheimer's or related forms of dementia.

Reviewed and approved by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoff Cannon', written over a light blue rectangular background.

Geoff Cannon, Chief Librarian

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brent Marshall', written over a light blue rectangular background.

Brent Marshall, Chief Administrative Officer

⁸ <https://alzheimer.ca/en/world-alzheimers-month-2018>