

**Building a Stronger and More Inclusive Ontario Part 1:  
Understanding the Link Between Age-Friendly and Dementia-Friendly  
Communities  
Webinar 14  
Questions & Answers**

---

**Date:** May 17<sup>th</sup> 2018

**Presenters:** Felicia White, Susan Oster

**Host:** Age-Friendly Communities (AFC) Outreach Program

**Facilitator:** Sarah Webster, Ontario AFC Outreach Program

**TOPICS COVERED**

1. [Navigating dementia services](#)
2. [Driving and dementia](#)
3. [Recognizing dementia-friendly communities](#)
4. [Recognizing dementia-friendly businesses](#)
5. [Dementia-friendly communication](#)
6. [Availability of dementia-friendly training](#)
7. [Seniors' Service Guide Template](#)
8. [Intergenerational programming](#)
9. [Partnerships with school boards](#)
10. [Access to dementia-friendly resources](#)

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ADDRESSED DURING THE WEBINAR

---

**01. When we talk about people with dementia, the impact of that disease is not just felt by the person who has dementia but also by their caregiver, the family and their friends. I recently had a conversation with a caregiver living in North York, who complained that he hasn't seen a single paper with a flowchart showing resources for people with dementia. As the husband of a woman with dementia still living at home, he'd like to see a map showing where to find resources for caregiving, medical support etc. Does a chart or paper online exist?"**

Felicia: That's a really great question. All of our local Alzheimer Societies work really hard to help people navigate through this very complex system within our communities. I am not aware of an actual visualized map myself, but I think that's a really interesting approach to things. All of our Societies' websites have resources listed and linked but not in a process or map format. If a person is able to come in and get some one on one support, we do have people who are trained at each Society that can help navigate through that together. I think it gets complicated in a sense because there are so many areas that they might be interested in looking at (e.g. medical, community service supports etc.) As we build that dementia friendly framework, navigation is certainly a part of that and it's something that maybe we can start to suggest for communities and provide some examples of what that can look like.

Susan: Starting from a local society perspective, I think and as Felicia alluded to, it can be very challenging because in a lot of our different regions, things are done a little differently and so having one provincial chart may not be particularly helpful or may have to be so simple that it's not helpful anymore. Our social work team and those folks who are helping to support individuals when they come to us are really trained to help in that navigation role; that navigation and what that particular client may need could be unique, so having a cookie cutter approach may not be helpful as each person's needs might be quite unique and special. We want to make sure that what we're recommending is obviously appropriate for them and their own needs. One thing that we've done locally and just this year we

worked with some of our other community partners who provide services to individuals impacted by dementia is that collaboratively we put together a program guide so that everything that's available to support people who are impacted by dementia is all in one book. It's sort of a six-month guide and that's been well received in our region and was a really helpful exercise for the agencies to go through so we can see who is doing what. It helps us to look for gaps and things, and what services might not be being offered because it's all kind of in one spot.

Sarah: Thanks Susan. What's really interesting with this comment is that we've seen within our Age Friendly communities that one of our top priorities at a community level is communication and information. When communities ask older adults to identify strengths and weaknesses in their local areas, a lot of people said "we need this program or that program", when in fact those programs already existed. So it wasn't a matter of more programming that was needed, it was a matter of better access to information. And navigation comes up time and time again. Certainly a provincial picture is helpful but the local level is so different from community to community; we have seen many age-friendly communities develop senior service guides (online or in hard copies), to help with that navigation. So I would love to see even partnerships with dementia friendly communities so that those age friendly communities that are developing resources like that make sure to include specific information for our dementia partners as well.

02: I would love to hear more about what you learned about driving and dementia and what about scenarios where people with dementia forget where they parked their car at malls? They are still able to remember how to drive to and from local places but anything further, unfamiliar destinations become an issue. Did that come up at all in that specific study?

Susan: I don't think that he addressed specifically the location of the car. I can certainly direct you to our website. What sort of really sparked [the student's] interest in this topic and he actually ended up interviewing these individuals...in January, we had an awareness event called "The Driving Dilemma" on the topic of driving and dementia. We had three different panelists. One of our panelists was Phyllis Fehr, who might be well known to the group. She's a great advocate for individuals living with dementia and part of [Ontario Dementia Advocacy Group](#) (ODAG). She sort of set the tone on the panel and then we had a nurse practitioner and an occupational therapist researcher from Western present. That event is [archived on our site](#) under our speaker series section so I encourage people who are interested in that topic to start there. If people are interested more on Luca's specific research and some of the things he came up with, please reach out to me ([soster@alzheimerslondon.ca](mailto:soster@alzheimerslondon.ca)).

03: Is there criteria set at the national or provincial level through the society or elsewhere for a community to be recognized as dementia friendly? Would formal recognition be part of Ontario's framework and will it be aligned with the recently launched AFC recognition program?

Felicia: That's something that we are developing right now through our framework, so that way, when we're looking at the bigger picture and at people who are becoming dementia friendly partners and supporters within the community, we have our own internal criteria for that. When it comes to municipalities and communities in general, we want it to be able to work with those stakeholders that I've mentioned to make sure that what we're putting together is realistic and that they are part of that development process, so that will be part of our framework that we're working on right now. With respect to the recognition programs, we've already started phase one of that through our Alzheimer's Society training and we will be recognizing people within communities in a very consistent way, but then also have that provincial plan and criteria set out (we are working towards a fall 2018 launch for that the recognition program). Right now on our provincial website ([www.dementiafriendlyontario.ca](http://www.dementiafriendlyontario.ca)) we do have a page of recognition where we recognize organizations, businesses and other partners who have taken dementia friendly communities training and have committed to be supporters of this initiative within their community. I think provincially, in regards to the age friendly piece, we definitely have more work to do there to look at how we can come together in a solid way, yet some components of our initiatives will need to remain independent- Sarah, do you have any comments on that?

Sarah: Not specifically. The AFC community recognition program was just launched this year. So I don't think that there is, right now, an intention going forward to deliberately link the two into a single recognition but to certainly support and encourage recognition for communities for both dementia friendly and age friendly going forward.

Ellen Yachnin (Ministry of Seniors Affairs): Just to validate what Sarah just said, I mean we are probably a little bit more ahead with recognition than our colleagues supporting dementia friendly, but in the future we obviously want to continue to look at how to link programs - you never know what's going to happen.

04: I believe that I read a while ago about an initiative in Toronto for businesses that receive a sticker for their window identifying them as being dementia friendly. Any news on how that program is being received or promoted for people with dementia?

Felicia: Through the dementia friendly community training, local societies who feel that businesses, organizations and partners have really taken it to that next level and the majority of their staff and volunteers have been trained and are really involved as a partner; they do provide on the ground recognition as well. So you may see that in some of our communities (i.e. a window decal). We are coming together as a province but some communities are obviously a lot further along than others so that is something where we are building that consistent approach and looking at ways that we can provide the recognition that I talked about already in regards to province wide formal recognition while also identifying supporters in the community as well.

05: In terms of written material and resources, how do we make resources more dementia friendly? I am thinking of people who have aphasia or agnosia; we have lots of material around elder abuse prevention and intervention support.

Felicia: Communication is one of the largest elements within our training. Today we didn't really have the time to go through even just the teaser of what the training looks like; we were talking more about the big picture. I am not sure what area of the province you are in, but what we suggest is that you get in touch with the local Alzheimer Society or you can get in touch with me ([fwhite@alzheimeront.org](mailto:fwhite@alzheimeront.org)). We can discuss communication tips and strategies that we suggest when you're communicating verbally, but then also written communication, and work through that. One of the ongoing things that a lot of local Societies are providing is helping to guide any changes that you're looking to do post DFC training. Also, as people living with dementia are so involved in this locally, depending on their resources, they are sometimes able to provide advice on those things as well. One part of our training is [that] after an organization or business takes the training, they have the option of having a volunteer advisor come in afterwards, usually a person living with dementia and another volunteer. They will review any changes that you've implemented and then provide further feedback. So again, there are a lot of tips we can share; it's just that today we didn't have time for that, but I'd be happy to follow-up, as well as our local Societies.

06: Is dementia friendly communities training available nationwide or Ontario specific at this point?

Felicia: Right now there are four provinces in total that provide this – BC, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Manitoba. The Alzheimer Society of Canada does have the [Dementia Friends](#) campaign which is more of an individual call to action. All of our societies across Canada do

provide education and training. So even if they haven't publically announced that they are part of this dementia friendly community movement, they do have resources and opportunities to assist.

Sarah: I certainly encourage anyone on the phone to just contact your local society, but also wanted to highlight that one of the resources that we will send out in our follow –up package is a summary of age-friendly communities, dementia-friendly communities and compassionate communities divided by the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) in Ontario,

07. With regards the local seniors' service guides, it might be helpful to have a template of typical services or resources that seniors look for. That template could be used municipalities across the province.

Sarah: Thanks for that comment Julia and I will take that away as a knowledge broker question and see if we can pull together a template of what types of things are common to these guides, because there are a lot of similar sections for the guides that have been produced so far. We can certainly look at a template that can be shared.

08: What are some examples of intergenerational programming?

Susan: We are fortunate in London that we are actually located very close to Western University so we are involved with a number of different programs at the university often for student placements. Probably the majority of our regular volunteers are students. So with any of our social recreation type programs, often the bulk of people who are interacting with our clients are younger, or students, which adds a nice richness to the experience and they really learn a lot from each other. Sometimes it really has an impact on their career path or the direction that the student might take throughout the course of their university career and what they might be doing at the graduate or postgraduate level. We've had a number of our volunteers go on to amazing careers in medicine or other research. And they keep in touch with us and really thank us for the opportunities that they had with us because it was so impactful to be working one on one with our clients. The other program our Society has had since 2012 is an [intergenerational choir](#) that we partnered with one of our local high schools. It's been a wonderful experience and again we've been featured a couple of times on different CBC radio programs.

Felicia: Furthermore, many programs actually do not start out as intergenerational, but sometimes become that. One example is our [Minds in Motion Program](#). It started out only

being for those living with dementia and their immediate care partners. Then, depending on the center, we've had children from the daycare come in and be a part of that with them; or older students as well, come in and be part of that physical activity piece, doing some of the recreational exercises together. So there can be ongoing opportunities to see that happen.

Sarah: From the age friendly perspective, now that communities are implementing action plans, they're looking at how to weave in intergenerational programming across all 8 of those domains. So we are seeing intergenerational housing, intergenerational social programming, employment mentoring, etc. These types of examples are only going to grow across the province.

09: Are Alzheimer's societies rolling out any dementia friendly training to the local schoolboards for students at all?

Felicia: I think that is a really great idea for an approach. I know some local societies do have existing partnerships and so as Susan talked about too, it depends on each community and where the opportunities arise there, but that's definitely a good idea for a tactic for DFC roll out.

10: Is there access to action plans, resources for training, checklist, that kinds of thing?

Felicia: You can get in touch with me first and I can connect you with the appropriate staff person at our local Societies. As I've mentioned before, we are really getting moving on this, but each community will have various resources available to you at this time. We have our provincial resources and ideas for getting connected. Every local society will have training opportunities and education opportunities; but I can play a role in helping with that piece as well as needed. However, if you already know your local Alzheimer's Society, get in touch with them, work with them on moving DFC forward. But online ([www.dementiafriendlyontario.ca](http://www.dementiafriendlyontario.ca)) we have all of our current public resources available. We do have a resource section on that webpage and so that's where you can start and if you need any more resources or are looking for other information, certainly get in touch with us. As we continue to work on the provincial framework that I mentioned, there will be more information coming out for the public and it will be easily accessible online.

Sarah: Felicia, as resources are developed please also share with our Age-Friendly Outreach Program so we can send out through our age friendly distribution list as well.