

## Alzheimer Society Urges Community to Reach Out and ‘Make the Call’ for Alzheimer’s Awareness Month

**Hamilton, ON, January 13, 2021** – In honour of Alzheimer’s Awareness Month (January), the [Alzheimer Society of Brant Haldimand Norfolk Hamilton Halton](#) (ASBHNNH) is launching a campaign to let our communities know that help is available, and no one has to face dementia alone.

According to Dr. Carrie McAiney, Schlegel Research Chair in Dementia, “the earlier the referral to the Alzheimer Society, the better the quality of life for the person with dementia and the caregiver.”<sup>1</sup>

However, reaching out for the first time can be a daunting prospect for individuals and families already grappling with a diagnosis, or broader cognitive impairment.

In order to inspire people living with dementia and their families to reach out and ‘make the call’, the ASBHNNH has collaborated with clients Leonard and Naome Howe to share their story of becoming involved with the Society.

**This narrative (which uses extensive direct quotes), along with high-quality photographs is attached to this release for use by our media partners.** A sample is included below:

*“The first time you reach out is a big moment,” recalls Naome, “there is a sense that if you cross that threshold of making that phone call, everything will be different than it was before.”*

*“Even more recently, when we’ve connected with other healthcare service providers, none of that would have happened if our Counsellor, Amanda, hadn’t made the first connection for us with these providers,” adds Naome, highlighting the system navigation support that Amanda has offered the couple. “That’s huge,” she continues, “because the system is already overwhelming, confusing and frightening. It’s not that the Alzheimer Society takes away the challenges you have, but there is a sense of knowing the lay of the land that helps a great deal.”*

Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of dementia are irreversible and progressive brain disorders that slowly weaken memory, thinking, skills, and eventually, the ability to carry out the simplest tasks. Currently, there are 25,000 new cases of Alzheimer’s diagnosed in Canada per year and that number is expected to triple by 2050.

As the number of people living with dementia increases, the cost of caregiving provided by family members and friends is expected to balloon from \$12 billion by 2040. That is why building connections that matter is at the heart and soul of what we do at Alzheimer Societies across Ontario.

The support offered by local Alzheimer Society’s has never been more critical – and continues to be accessible through Covid-19.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Throwing a lifeline’: the role of First Link™ in enhancing support for individuals with dementia and their caregivers

“Although the scope of the world has changed, counsellors and staff have been working to support our clients throughout the pandemic,” says Mary Burnett, CEO of the ASBHNNH. “We can connect virtually for education, group programming and counselling. We are always just a phone call or email away!”

### **Media Contact**

Matthew Kowalyk

Marketing and Communications Coordinator

Alzheimer Society of Brant Haldimand Norfolk Hamilton Halton

[communications@alzda.ca](mailto:communications@alzda.ca)

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### **About the Alzheimer Society of Brant Haldimand Norfolk Hamilton Halton**

In 2016, the Alzheimer Society of Brant, Haldimand Norfolk, Hamilton Halton completed its official amalgamation bringing together three previous Society chapters: Alzheimer Society of Brant, Alzheimer Society of Haldimand Norfolk, and Alzheimer Society of Hamilton Halton. The individual chapters served their communities for more than 25 years. People with dementia are at the centre of everything we do. The Society focuses its programs and services around three pillars of care: education, counselling services and wellness activities. It provides education to families along their journey through dementia and counsellors operate on-going support groups and meet one-on-one with clients in their home. The Society promotes health & wellness programs for people living with dementia and care partners; as well as people who are at greatest risk of developing dementia including seniors and marginalized populations.

### **Social Media**

Through the course of the month, follow along the Alzheimer Society of Brant Haldimand Norfolk Hamilton Halton’s [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).