CCA ACCREDITATION REVIEW
FINAL REPORT FOR
ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF TORONTO

Date of the Site Visit: December 9-11,2020
Date of the Report: February 22, 2021
Accreditation Term: February 22, 2021 – February 21, 2025

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

A. INTRODUCTION TO ACCREDITATION WITH CCA

The Canadian Centre for Accreditation (CCA) is a national not-for-profit offering accreditation to community-based health and social service organizations in Canada.

Accreditation provides an external review of an organization's operations in relation to accepted standards of good practice and risk management. Standards address all aspects of the organization, including governance, management, programs and services. It is also a system to promote learning, improvement, excellence and innovation.

CCA looks at the whole organization. Reviews are conducted by CCA-trained teams made up of senior staff, governing body members and volunteers from the community-based organizations that participate in CCA.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic the site visit portion of this accreditation cycle was done virtually.

B. ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report summarizes the findings of the CCA review process. Comments are illustrative and not comprehensive. The report includes the following:

Section 1: Introduction
Section 2: An overview of the accreditation process
Section 3: A summary of accreditation review results
Section 4: Concluding words

SECTION 2: OVERVIEW

A. THE ORGANIZATION

The Alzheimer Society of Toronto (AST) is a resource in the Greater Toronto Area for those with dementia and their caregivers. The organization's success is significantly due to a desire to work collaboratively with other organizations. AST aspires to be a leader in the development of best practices in the area of dementia care. AST programs and services are comprised of many components, including:

• Counselling
• Care Navigation
• Family and PWD (person with dementia) education sessions
• Support Groups
• Creative therapy groups
• Inter-professional collaboration and community partnership building
• Public education sessions
• Professional training programs
• Caregiver Framework Project
• Music Project
• Volunteer Engagement (volunteer respite, and peer-led support group)
• Fundraising and Events

Clients are seen at any of the four office locations, with events and services also provided in numerous other locations across the city, including community centers, libraries, and healthcare organizations.

The mission of the Alzheimer Society is to alleviate the personal and social consequences of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias and to promote research.

The role of the Alzheimer Society of Toronto is to offer support, information and education to people with dementia, their families and their caregivers, to increase public awareness of dementia, to promote research, and to advocate for services that respect the dignity of the individual.

The vision of the Alzheimer Society of Toronto is a world without Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

The values of the Alzheimer Society of Toronto are: Collaboration, Accountability, Respect, and Excellence.

The organization's clients are comprised of caregivers, people living with dementia, people who are concerned about memory loss or looking for more information, healthcare professionals, and other community agencies or anyone else requiring support and education. Alzheimer Society of Toronto proudly serves the clients and community and is committed to continuing to meet their needs.

B. REVIEW TEAM

The review team was made up of:

- Pedro Lara, Accreditation Specialist and Contract Manager, Canadian Centre for Accreditation
- Vicki Bales, President, Vicki Bales Consulting Inc. (CCA Reviewer)
- Wangari Muriuki, CEO, Wangari Muriuki Consultants (CCA Reviewer)

C. THE REVIEW PROCESS

A preliminary report was sent to the organization on December 28, 2020. The organization's response was received on February 8, 2021, and reviewed by Pedro Lara, CCA Accreditation Specialist.

D. THE ACCREDITATION DECISION

The Canadian Centre for Accreditation is pleased to inform you that your accreditation has been approved. All requirements for accreditation were assessed as met.

The organization's accreditation term is February 22, 2021 – February 21, 2025.

E. SUMMARY OF ACCREDITATION REVIEW RESULTS AT THIS STAGE

Results are summarized by module.

The following CCA modules apply to this review:

- CCA Organizational Standards
- Community-Based Support and Social Services

In order to achieve accreditation, organizations must satisfy the requirements of all modules that apply. A module is achieved when all its components are met AND at least 80% of its Leading Practice Standards are met. A component is met when all its Mandatory Standards and 50% of its Leading Practice Standards are met. If there is one Leading Practice Standard, it must be met.

SECTION 3: ACCREDITATION REVIEW RESULTS BY MODULE

A. CCA ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS MODULE

MAN Standards Required: 35
MAN Standards Achieved: 35
MAN Standards Must be met to achieve module: 0
LP Standards Total: 27
LP Standards Achieved: 25

By Component	MANDATORY STANDARDS						LEADING PRACTICE STANDARDS								
	Requirements		Results at Preliminary Stage		Results After Response Assessed		Requirements			Results at Preliminary Stage			Results After Response Assessed		
	M-Total	M-Must be met	M-Achieved	M-To be met for accreditation	M-Achieve	M-To be met for accreditation	LP-Total	LP-Must be met to achieve Component	LP-Must be met to achieve Module	LP-Achieved	LP-To be met to achieve Component	LP-To be met to achieve Module	LP-Achieved	LP-To be met to achieve Component	LP-To be met to achieve Module
Governance	3	3	2	1	3	___	4	2	___	2	0	___	2	0	___
Stewardship	7	7	5	2	7	___	0	0	___	0	0	___	0	0	___
Risk and Safety	4	4	4	0	4	___	1	1	___	1	0	___	1	0	___
Organizational Planning and Performance	3	3	3	0	3	___	3	2	___	3	0	___	3	0	___
Programs and Services	5	5	5	0	5	___	1	1	___	1	0	___	1	0	___
Community	0	0	0	0	0	___	7	4	___	7	0	___	7	0	___
Learning Environment	3	3	3	0	3	___	2	1	___	2	0	___	2	0	___
Human Resources	5	5	4	1	5	___	6	3	___	6	0	___	6	0	___
Volunteers	1	1	0	1	1	___	2	1	___	1	0	___	2	0	___
Systems and Structure	4	4	4	0	4	___	1	1	___	1	0	___	1	0	___
Totals for Module	**35**	**35**	**30**	**5**	**35**	**0**	**27**	**___**	**22**	**24**	**___**	**0**	**25**	**___**	**0**

Detailed Results for the CCA Organizational Standards Module

i. Strengths in this Module

Governance: The review team was impressed by the successful process for board orientation – it happens early, and it is ongoing. The organization ensures that the board members have the skills and experience needed to support governance. A good example is the use of the skills matrix. The Board takes the advocacy role seriously and makes sure voices are heard and people with dementia are recognized in decisions being taken that can affect them and the quality of their lives. The Board also does an excellent job of using this data to underline the role of caregivers.

Risk and Safety: The organization has set up its space and practices with safety in mind. The processes in place to ensure staff safety stand out as one of the clear strengths of the Alzheimer Society of Toronto. Safety is a priority and has been considered in all aspects, including professional development for staff. Good examples of that are the proactive Health & Safety committee, the comprehensive pandemic plan protocol and the COVID measures recently implemented. Also, it is worth mentioning the impressive complaints process. It is very clear and easy to follow.

Organizational Planning and Performance: Alzheimer Society of Toronto has an impressive strategic planning process, as well as excellent reports to the Board. Mission, Vision, and Values guide the work of the Board and staff which resonates throughout the organization. The Business Plans and Action Plan-Programs are intentionally linked to the Strategic Plan. And there is constant learning from client feedback, surveys and focus groups to learn about what works and what can be improved. Good examples are the Tech Survey, TeleConnect, Partnership with Reitman Centre at Mount Sinai (to address digital literacy), revamped training for professional care providers as well as caregiver training. The organization's staff at all levels is encouraged to identify opportunities for innovation and improvement. The review team heard during interviews great examples such as the monthly staff meetings, the full-day annual town halls, the Advisory Committee and the focus group sessions.

Programs and Services: The review team noted that everyone in the organization demonstrates a clear understanding and a strong commitment to the service philosophy, as well as to a strengths-based, client-centred approach. It was also obvious that the organization works hard to be as inclusive and responsive to the client's needs as possible. The Alzheimer Society of Toronto found creative ways to remove barriers to access. Because one of the biggest barriers to referrals is stigma, people do not easily seek out support. The organization is doing a great job to break down these barriers through public education across the city and targeted education to professionals like Police and Physicians. Excellent examples of that also include being present at different locations where people feel most comfortable, providing service in different languages and ensure there is dementia educational material online including on YouTube. Also, it is good to mention the importance of the Inclusivity and Equity committee, the outreach initiatives, and the networking events in the community. The intake practices are effective, the timely response from the organization (same-day response) is excellent because the sooner you get to people, the more effective can be the intervention. The Alzheimer Society of Toronto has an broad catchment area – including the satellite offices – strategically placed.

Human Resources: The review team was impressed with staff morale and how, throughout all levels of the organization, staff live its values daily. The staff's commitment and the organization's positive culture were evident to the review team during their visit. It is very clear how much people like working at Alzheimer Society of Toronto. The organization's leadership is open and facilitates growth within the organization. The staff's resilience is one of the organization's strengths, as demonstrated by their quick adjustment to the COVID pandemic, with services moving online. The review team was impressed by the various mechanisms used to monitor the quality of the work environment. For example: checking in with staff during COVID, using surveys, being flexible and open to change. The human resource policies have been applied consistently and the practices match them. Staff have the supervision, mentoring and ongoing support and feedback they need to carry out their jobs.

ii. Further Areas to Improve Quality in this Module

The organization is commended for its achievement of a sufficient number of Leading Practice Standards and indicators in this module.

The organization may wish to consider these unmet Leading Practice standards as areas of further development:

Standard ORG-GOV-4: *Orientation, training and development support effective governance.*
    Indicator ORG-GOV-4.4: *The board evaluates its work and performance at least once a year.*
    Indicator ORG-GOV-4.5: *Findings from evaluations are used to improve the work and performance of the board.*
    Indicator ORG-GOV-4.6: *Members of the board participate in training and development activities based on the results of board evaluations and planning.*
- The review team noted that the last board evaluation was conducted three years ago. Additionally, the team could not find evidence that the findings from evaluations are linked to any specific training on Board governance. CCA suggests Alzheimer Society of Toronto conduct a Board evaluation at least annually and use the results of the Board evaluations to guide its training and development activities.

Standard ORG-GOV-6: *The board of directors recruits and hires the chief executive, who is responsible for the administration of the organization.*
    Indicator ORG-GOV-6.1: *The board determines the qualifications required of the chief executive based on the needs of the organization.*
- The review team could not find a formal job description for the Chief Executive Officer. CCA suggests the organization develop one in order to determine the qualifications required for that position based on the needs of the organization.

There are a few instances where the organization met a Leading Practice Standard but did not meet every indicator. The organization may wish to consider these unmet indicators as areas of further development.

Standard ORG-GOV-5: *The board of directors has systems and structures in place to support effective decision making, oversight and control*
    Indicator ORG-GOV-5.5: *Board minutes demonstrate that any in camera meetings are limited to confidential issues (for example, bargaining, contractual issues), and document at minimum when the board went in and out of camera and the topics covered and any decisions made.*

- The review team could not find evidence that the Board registers the decisions coming out of in-camera meetings in the board minutes, as well as, under what criteria they would move to in-camera. CCA would encourage the Board to review its recording practices for in-camera sessions to reflect the practice of recording the reason and outcome of in-camera meetings in the board minutes.

Standard ORG-COM-5: *A clear strategy guides the organization's communications.*
Indicator ORG-COM-5.1: *The organization has a communications plan that outlines: Key messages are set and disseminated - Who are the authorized spokesperson(s) for the organization - Roles and responsibilities for creating and updating information, including online information, for example, on the organization's Web site, Twitter feed and social-media page - Procedures for informing and responding to the media and the public - Policies personnel are to respect when representing the organization in the community - The process for dealing with an organizational crisis, detailing how decisions will be made.*
- CCA encourages the organization to strengthen the communications plan in order to include who is responsible for updating the organization's website and managing the organization's social media, and to make clearer what policies personnel are to respect when representing the organization in the community, in order to centralize this practice and provide consistent content.

The CCA review team offers the following additional comments by way of encouraging Alzheimer Society of Toronto in its continued growth and pursuit of quality.

Standard ORG-GOV-2: *The organization has adopted an approach to governance that clearly distinguishes the role of the board of directors from the role of management.*
Indicator ORG-GOV-2.5: *The board documents its expectations regarding the nature and frequency of reporting on the organization's activities, operations and performance.*
- Although the review team heard during the interviews that the CEO reports on the organization's activities, operations and performance, via presentation, written and/or verbal update, during each scheduled board meeting CCA encourages the Board to set its own expectations around this and to document it.

Standard ORG-STW-9: *The organization carefully and responsibly manages its facilities and equipment.*
Indicator ORG-STW-9.1: *A written record of minor capital assets including key equipment and computer hardware and software is updated according to an established timeline.*
- CCA encourages the organization to develop a more effective process/system to maintain a timeline of asset acquisition, tests and updates, to ensure minimal impact on operations and finances.

Standard ORG-LE-2: *The organization provides orientation, supervision and evaluation for student placements.*
Indicator ORG-LE-2.5: *Students are evaluated as outlined in the learning contract.*
- Although ongoing feedback is provided by the students, CCA encourages the organization to develop a formal evaluation process aligned with the learning contract requirements.

Standard ORG-HR-7: *Staff are guided by job descriptions that clearly outline their roles and responsibilities.*
Indicator ORG-HR-7.4: *Job descriptions are up to date.*

- The review team noted, based on the staff survey, that a small portion of responders either did not agree that their job description is up-to-date or were not sure about it. The organization may benefit from developing a schedule for reviewing staff job descriptions and clearly include dates on it.

No immediate action is required for accreditation in the above section: Further Areas to Improve Quality. However, CCA strongly encourages the Alzheimer Society of Toronto to continue to improve upon the areas identified.

B. COMMUNITY-BASED SUPPORT AND SOCIAL SERVICES MODULE

MAN Standards Required: 19
MAN Standards Achieved: 19
MAN Standards Must be met to achieve module: 0
LP Standards Total: 12
LP Standards Achieved: 12

By Component	MANDATORY STANDARDS						LEADING PRACTICE STANDARDS								
	Requirements		Results at Preliminary Stage		Results After Response Assessed		Requirements			Results at Preliminary Stage			Results After Response Assessed		
	M-Total	M-Must be met	M-Achieved	M-To be met for accreditation	M-Achieve	M-To be met for accreditation	LP-Total	LP-Must be met to achieve Component	LP-Must be met to achieve Module	LP-Achieved	LP-To be met to achieve Component	LP-To be met to achieve Module	LP-Achieved	LP-To be met to achieve Component	LP-To be met to achieve Module
Program and Service Framework	1	1	1	0	1	——	2	1	——	2	0	——	2	0	——
Delivery of Quality Programs and Services	4	4	4	0	4	——	5	3	——	5	0	——	5	0	——
Service Safety	5	5	4	1	5	——	0	0	——	0	0	——	0	0	——
Program-Specific and Service-Specific Standards	7	7	6	1	7	——	4	2	——	4	0	——	4	0	——
Services for Children or Youth	2	2	2	0	2	——	1	1	——	1	0	——	1	0	——
Totals for Module	**19**	**19**	**17**	**2**	**19**	**0**	**12**	**__**	**10**	**12**	**__**	**0**	**12**	**__**	**0**

Detailed Results for the Community-Based Support and Social Services Module

i. Strengths in this Module

Program & Service Framework: The organization's ability to respond to its clients is based on passion and commitment to the work, the skill of listening carefully to clients and caregivers using a variety of means, and the development of strategies that are based on a philosophy that demonstrates respect and protects dignity. The clear expertise and often lived experience in dealing with dementia result in programs and services that are truly responsive to people's needs. The work of Alzheimer Society of Toronto promotes independence, autonomy and social inclusion articulated in the organization's philosophy statement and brought to reality in the various types of programs that it provides. This includes online, in-person and over the telephone programing, home visits where provided, as well as workshops and education programs.

Delivery of Quality Programs and Services: Alzheimer Society of Toronto has embraced the use of Client File Audits and used these to improve both record-keeping and service delivery. Collaboration is a hallmark of Alzheimer Society of Toronto's work with clients and caregivers with staff clearly reaching out within the organization and, just as importantly, reaching out to other service providers and professionals to provide supports that are tailored to client needs and that promote continuity of service. Clients are supported in developing the skills and confidence to advocate on their own behalf and are supported by staff who advocate for them when necessary.

ii. Further Areas to Improve Quality in this Module

The organization is commended for its achievement of all Leading Practice Standards in this module.

There is one instance where the organization met a Leading Practice Standard but did not meet every indicator. The organization may wish to consider this unmet indicator as an area of further development.

Standard CSS-PSS-6: *Group program records are maintained to support the quality of services.*
> **Indicator CSS-PSS-6.2:** *Written policies and procedures define: Circumstances under which group program participant records are kept - Minimum information required in the participant record - Time frame for recording and updating participant records - Information to be entered in the client information management system, if any.*
> - The review team could not find a policy addressing the time frame for recording and updating participant records and the minimum information required. CCA encourages Alzheimer Society of Toronto to include those items in the policy on group record requirements.

The CCA review team offers the following additional comment by way of encouraging the Alzheimer Society of Toronto in its continued growth and pursuit of quality.

Standard CSS-PSS-4: *Group programs support autonomy, social inclusion, education and wellness.*
> **Indicator CSS-PSS-4.2:** *The organization's approach to group programming is articulated in writing and shared with participants.*

- The organization may benefit from reviewing its public written description of group programming in order to include all programs available, the approach adopted, the role staff play, and the role participants play.

No immediate action is required for accreditation in the above section: Further Areas to Improve Quality. However, CCA strongly encourages the Alzheimer Society of Toronto to continue to improve upon the areas identified.

SECTION 4: CONCLUSION

The CCA review team appreciates the work undertaken by the Alzheimer Society of Toronto to prepare for its review, especially during these turbulent times. The organization is also commended for its achievement of not only all the Mandatory Standards in the Organizational and Community-Based Support and Social Services Modules, but also 37 out of 39 Leading Practice Standards collectively totalling 376 out of 383 indicators (98.17%).

This review was done virtually due to the ongoing pandemic. The review team found everyone to be very warm and welcoming, and even from a distance, the enthusiasm and passion of the staff for their clients came through clearly.

The organization's commitment to a client-centred approach was evident. The review team was impressed by the dedication and drive of staff to meet clients' needs. Other strengths noted were: the recruitment and orientation of new Board members; the Board's strong advocacy initiatives; the strong commitment to workplace health and safety, including the proactive Health & Safety committee activities; the impressive strategic plan process; the excellent opportunities for client feedback and the actions taken from it; the creative ways of removing barriers to accessing services; the positive work environment; the staff's morale and resilience; the excellent programs and services that are truly responsive to people's needs; as well as the strong client file audit practices which keep improving service delivery.

CCA commends the organization's commitment to quality and continuous improvement and encourages the Alzheimer Society of Toronto to address the areas noted for further improvement. These areas will further the organization's ability to employ evidence for better decision-making.

Congratulations on achieving your accreditation. We are very pleased to accredit you for a four-year term.