

Alzheimer Society
TORONTO

CLIENT HANDBOOK
Our Commitment to You



A Note from our CEO

At the Alzheimer Society of Toronto (AST), we strive to make sure that no one has to feel alone in their journey living with dementia. We offer programs, education, counselling, healthcare navigation, social outings, and so much more for those individuals living with dementia and their families and care partners. The Alzheimer Society of Toronto has been providing free programs and services in the Greater Toronto Area since 1981. Late in 2022, AST partnered with the Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities to establish the Scarborough Hub to help address dementia in the community. We continue to expand our services across the city to ensure that everyone who needs support services is able to access them close to home.

Since the beginning, our goal has stayed the same: We are committed to alleviating the personal and social consequences of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias and to promoting research.

Within this booklet, you will find information that outlines your rights as a client, as well as what to do in the event of any issues that may arise.

Please take some time to review this information.

If you have any questions, please call our office at **416-322-6560**.

We highly value your satisfaction, and we are truly grateful for the privilege of assisting you on this journey.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dave Spedding'. The signature is stylized and written over a light blue circular background.

Dave Spedding

Chief Executive Officer Alzheimer
Society of Toronto 416-847-8897

www.alz.to

Table of Contents

1.	Mission, Vision and Values	Page 3
2.	Where We Work	Page 4
3.	How to Find Us	Page 6
4.	Client Bill of Rights & Responsibilities	Page 7
5.	Canadian Charter of Rights for People with Dementia	Page 10
6.	Privacy Policy	Page 11
7.	Use of Email	Page 16
8.	AODA Customer Service Policy	Page 17
9.	Notice of Temporary Disruption	Page 18
10.	Training for Staff	Page 19
11.	Complaints Policy	Page 20



Our Vision:

A world without Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.



Our Mission:

To alleviate the personal and social consequences of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias and to promote research.

Our Values:

Collaboration

We work together, and with partners, to fulfill our mission and achieve our goals which is to ensure Canadians receive personal and responsive services throughout their dementia journey.

Accountability

We measure our performance and follow a process of continuous improvement. We are wholly accountable for our actions and must account to our stakeholders for our use of the financial and human resources available to us.

Respect

We set for ourselves the highest standards of honesty, trustworthiness and professional integrity in all aspects of our organization and carry out our work with the utmost respect for the dignity and the rights of the people we serve.

Excellence

We strive to engage stakeholders in meaningful ways. To inform, listen and be attentive to those we work with: People living with dementia, families, community partners, donors, volunteers and staff members.

The Alzheimer Society of Toronto (AST) is recognized as a leading resource in the Greater Toronto Area for people living with dementia and their care partners. AST aspires to be a leader in the development of best practices in dementia care. We pride ourselves on forward-thinking and inclusive practices. For these reasons, you will notice the term “caregiver” used interchangeably with “care partner” throughout AST’s communications, with a gradual move towards “care partner”. We feel that care partner reflects a more inclusive approach to caregiving by situating the person who is providing the care as an equal partner alongside the person who is receiving care.

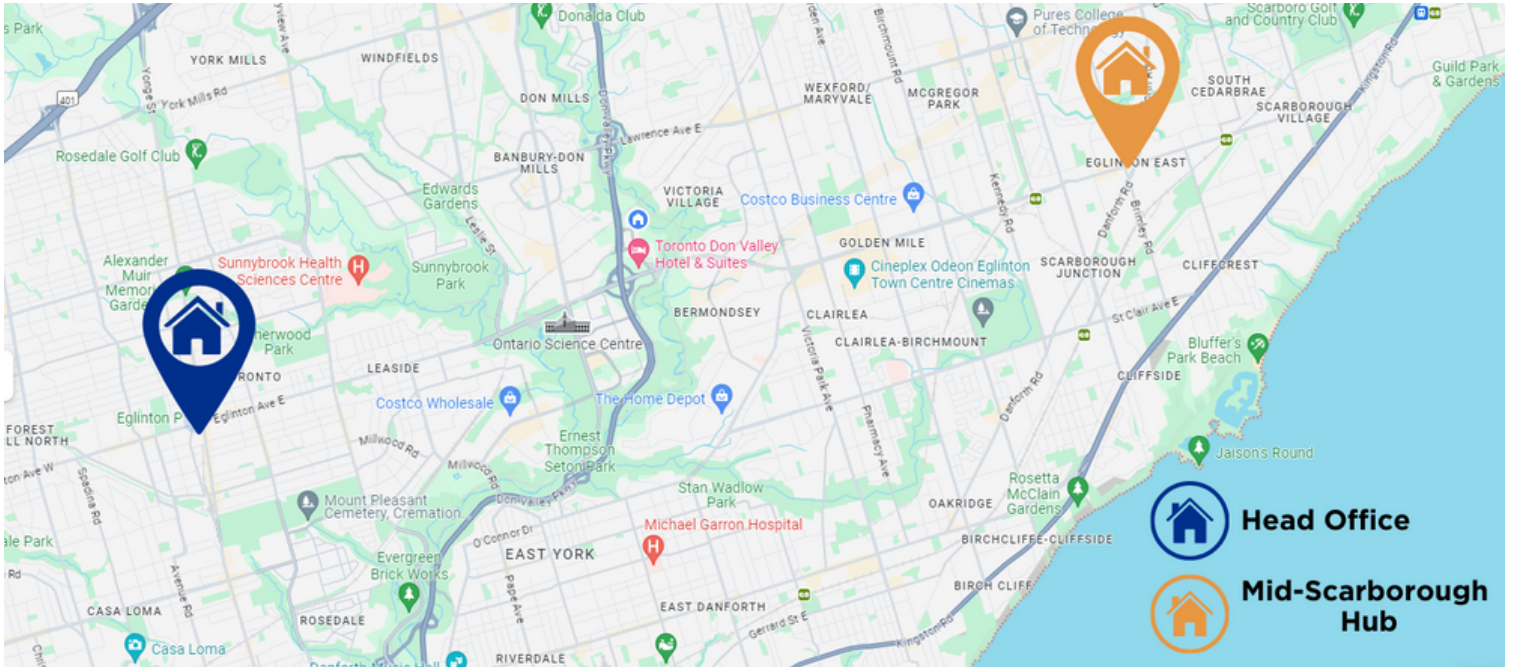
AST offers a variety of programs and services, which include:

- Counselling Services
- Care Navigation
- Support Groups
- Active Living – Meaningful social engagement programs for people living with dementia and care partners
- Young Onset Adult Day Program
- Caregiver Project
- Fundraising and Events
- Education sessions for the general public, people living with dementia and their care partners, and organizations
- Professional Training Programs
- Alzheimer Society Music Project
- Volunteer peer-led support groups
- Inter-professional collaboration and building community partnerships
- Online Programming (educational webinars, and Active Living programs)

Interpretation services may be available upon request.

A comprehensive listing of all our programs and services can be found on our website: www.alz.to

We serve anyone living in the “M” postal code area. Clients are seen at either of our two office locations, although our events and services are provided at various locations across the city. These alternate locations include: community centres, libraries, and healthcare organizations.



We support anyone affected by memory loss or dementia. This includes people living with dementia, their care partners or anyone looking for information. We also support health care providers, and other community agencies.

We are committed to servicing the needs of our clients and our community.



How to Find Our Office

FROM THE SUBWAY/BUS STATION

- Exit the Eglinton Subway station at Yonge and Eglinton (this is the main entrance) and cross the street towards the Yonge & Eglinton Centre on the North West corner.
- Once you have crossed the street turn left and walk towards the south entrance of the building, past Sephora.
- Enter the building through the doors that say 20 Eglinton Tower above.
- Once you are inside, please enter the 20 Eglinton office tower between the bank and the Metro.
- On the touch panel beside the security desk press 16 and take the designated elevator to the 16th floor. It will tell you A, B, C or D.
- You made it! Come right into our office. If the door is not open, please use the phone to dial “0” to reach reception

Parking

You can access parking in the building from Orchard View Blvd just North of Eglinton Ave.

[Yonge Eglinton Centre Parking Rates & Validation](#) options or
[Explore Green P](#)

Client Bill of Rights & Responsibilities

The Client Bill of Rights has been adapted from Connecting Care Act, 2019, to assert and promote the dignity and worth of all people who use our services. The Client Bill of Rights is intended to emphasize the rights of clients rather than organizational convenience. Policies at the Society should be consistent with the Client Bill of Rights.

The Board of Directors of the Society endorses the Client Bill of Rights and, in so doing, creates expectations that all Society personnel will respect and uphold the Client Bill of Rights; will promote awareness and understanding of the Client Bill of Rights; and will interpret the Client Bill of Rights as broadly and generously as is consistent with its responsibility to clients collectively. Every client has the right to be provided with a written copy of, and assistance in understanding, the Client Bill of Rights.



As a Client, you have:

RIGHTS

- The right to receive services in a respectful manner and to be free from physical, sexual, mental, emotional, verbal, and financial abuse by the provider.
- The right to receive services in a manner that respects your dignity and privacy and that promotes autonomy and participation in decision-making.
- The right to receive services in a manner that recognizes the client's individuality and that is sensitive to and responds to the client's needs and preferences, including preferences based on ethnic, spiritual, linguistic, familial, and cultural factors.
- The right to receive services free from discrimination on any ground of discrimination prohibited by the Human Rights Code or the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- The right to receive services in a culturally safe manner for those who identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuk.
- The right to clear and accessible information about their services.
- The right to designate a person to be present with them during assessments.
- The right to participate in and/or designate a person in the assessment of their needs, development of their care plan, reassessment of their needs and revision of their care plan.
- The right to receive assistance in co-ordinating their services from the health service provider or Ontario Health Team.
- The right to raise concerns or recommend changes in connection with the service provided to them and in connection with policies and decisions that affect their interests, without fear of interference, coercion, discrimination or reprisal.

- The right to be informed of the laws, rules and policies affecting the operation of the provider of the home and community care service, including this Client Bill of Rights, and to be informed, in writing, of the procedures for initiating complaints about The provider.
- The right to give or refuse consent to the provision of service.
- The right to receive services in a culturally safe and person-centered manner.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- To understand that verbal or physical abuse of staff, students and volunteers, and visitors will not be tolerated.
- To be respectful of other clients, visitors, and staff.
- To take part in your care plan to the best of your ability.
- To understand that the needs of other clients may sometimes be more urgent than your own.
- To be honest about your personal health information.
- To keep track of and look after your personal property and valuables.



Canadian Charter of Rights for People with Dementia

As a person with dementia, I have the same human rights as every Canadian as outlined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The following charter:

- Makes sure people with dementia know their rights,
- Empowers people with dementia to ensure their rights are protected and respected, and
- Makes sure that people and organizations that support people with dementia know these rights.

As a person with dementia, the following rights are especially important to me. I have the right:

- 1 To be free from discrimination of any kind.
- 2 To benefit from all of Canada's civic and legal rights.
- 3 To participate in developing and implementing policies that affect my life.
- 4 To access support so that I can live as independently as possible and be as engaged as possible in my community. This helps me:
 - Meet my physical, cognitive, social, and spiritual needs,
 - Get involved in community and civic opportunities, and
 - Access opportunities for lifelong learning.
- 5 To get the information and support I need to participate as fully as possible in decisions that affect me, including care decisions from the point of diagnosis to palliative and end-of-life care.
- 6 To expect that professionals involved in my care are:
 - Trained in both dementia and human rights.
 - Held accountable for protecting my human rights including my right to get the support and information I need to make decisions that are right for me.
 - Treating me with respect and dignity.
 - Offering me equal access to appropriate treatment options as I develop health conditions other than my dementia.
- 7 To access effective complaint and appeal procedures when my rights are not protected or respected.

It will take the effort of every Canadian to protect and respect the rights of people with dementia so that we are seen as valuable and vital community members.

Privacy Policy

We are committed to promoting privacy and protecting the confidentiality of the health information we hold about you.

YOUR HEALTH RECORD

Your health record includes information relevant to your health including your date of birth, contact information, health history, family health history, details of your physical and mental health, record of your visits, the care and support you received during those visits, results from tests and procedures, and information from other health care providers.

Your record is our property, but the information belongs to you.

With limited exceptions, you have the right to access the health information we hold about you, whether in the health record or elsewhere.

You can request a copy of your record. If you wish to view the original record, one of our staff members must be present. If you need a copy of your health record, please contact our Privacy Officer or ask a Society personnel who will explain the process. In rare situations, you may be denied access to some or all of your record (with any such denial being in accordance with applicable law).

We try to keep your record accurate and up-to-date. Please let us know if you disagree with what is recorded, and in most cases we will be able to make the change or otherwise we will ask you to write a statement of disagreement and we will attach that statement to your record.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Everyone at AST is bound by confidentiality. We have to protect your information from loss or theft and make sure no one looks at it or does something with your information if they are not involved with your care or allowed as part of their job. If there is a privacy breach, we will tell you (and we are required by law to tell you).

Our Practices

We collect, use and disclose (meaning share) your health information to:

- Treat and care for you
- Provide services to you
- Provide appointment or preventative care reminders to you and/or send client surveys to you
- Update you of upcoming events, activities and programs
- Coordinate your care with your other health care providers including through shared electronic health information systems such as Ontario Health Teams, Ontario Laboratory Information Systems (OLIS), HealthLinks, Connecting Ontario, AlayaCare, and local, regional and provincial programs
- Deliver and evaluate our programs
- Plan, administer and manage our internal operations
- Be paid or process, monitor, verify or reimburse claims for payment
- Conduct risk management, error management and quality improvement activities
- Educate our staff and students
- Seek your consent (or consent of a substitute decision-maker) where appropriate
- Respond to or initiate proceedings
- Conduct research (subject to certain rules)
- Compile statistics



- Allow for the analysis, administration and management of the health system
- Comply with legal and regulatory requirements
- Fulfill other purposes permitted or required by law

Our collection, use and disclosure (sharing) of your personal health information is done in accordance with Ontario law.

YOUR CHOICES AND WHO DECIDES

You have a right to make choices and control how your health information is collected, used, and disclosed, subject to some limits.

You may make your own decisions if you are “capable”. Your health care provider will decide if you are capable based on a test the law sets out. You may be capable of making some information privacy decisions and not others. If you are not capable, you will have a substitute decision-maker who will make your information decisions for you. Who can act as a substitute decision-maker and what they have to do is also set out in law.

We assume that when you come to have health care from us, you have given us your permission (your consent) to use your information, unless you tell us otherwise. We may also collect, use and share your health information in order to talk with other health care providers about your care unless you tell us you do not want us to do so.

You have the right to ask that we not share some or all of your health records with one or more of our team members or ask us not to share your health record with one or more of your external healthcare providers (such as a specialist). This is known as asking for a “lockbox”. If you would like to know more, please ask us for a copy of our “Client Lockbox Information Brochure: How to Restrict Access to your Health Record”. If you request restrictions on the use of and disclosure of your health record, a member of our team will explain your choices and the potential repercussions for those options.

There are other cases where we are not allowed to assume we have your permission to share information. We may need permission to communicate with any family members or friends with whom you would like us to share information about your health (unless someone is your substitute decision-maker). For example, we will also need your permission to give your health information to your insurance company. If you have questions, we can explain this to you.

When we require and ask for your permission, you may choose to say no. If you say yes, you may change your mind at any time. Once you say no, we will no longer share your information unless you say so. Your choice to say no may be subject to some limits.

There are cases where we may collect, use or share your health information without your permission, as permitted or required by law. For example, we do not require your permission to use your information for billing, risk management or error management, and quality improvement purposes. We also do not need your permission to share your health information to keep you or someone else safe. This is to eliminate or reduce a significant risk of serious bodily harm; or to meet reporting obligations under other laws such as for the health protection of communicable diseases, child safety or safe driving.



For Privacy Inquiries or Complaints

If you would like a copy of our Privacy Policy, please check our website or ask us for a copy.

We encourage you to contact us with any questions or concerns you might have about our privacy practices. You can reach our Privacy Officer at:

Privacy Officer

Alzheimer Society of Toronto
20 Eglinton Avenue West, Suite 1600
Email: privacy@alzon.ca
Phone: 416-322-6560

If, after contacting us, you feel that your concerns have not been addressed to your satisfaction, you have the right to complain to the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario. The Commissioner can be reached at:

Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario
2 Bloor Street East, Suite 1400
Toronto, Ontario M4W 1A8
1-800-387-0073
or visit the IPC website via www.ipc.on.ca



Use of Email

The Alzheimer Society of Toronto welcomes the use of virtual technology to support clients in managing their care. Should you wish to email our staff, please understand that there are risks related to privacy and timeliness of response. Email can be used to make or confirm appointments, or to notify you of a delay or a need to reschedule. AST cannot guarantee the privacy of emails, and therefore staff are not permitted to include any of your personal information in the email. Furthermore, staff will only respond to an email during work hours.

By providing us with your consent, you agree that:

- Email is not to be used for medical emergencies or other time-sensitive matters
- Emails you send or receive may be copied into your client record at AST
- We may forward emails internally or externally to other members of your care team, if necessary, to optimize your care
- Email communication is not an appropriate substitute for in person or telephone consultations. You are responsible for following up with AST staff for support
- We will be informed of any changes to your email address and/or changes on how you wish to communicate with us via email

When you provide your email address, your consent to using email is implied unless you notify us otherwise (as per our privacy policy). Your consent can be changed or revoked at any time.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Customer Service Policy

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the AODA) is a provincial law that implements and enforces accessibility standards in order to achieve equity for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises.

Alzheimer Society of Toronto is committed to providing respectful care that focuses on the unique needs of the individual. Providing equitable care that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities is priority, and we are committed to removing all barriers that prevent people with disabilities from fully participating within our facilities, programs and services.

Assistive Devices

People with disabilities may provide their own assistive devices for the purposes of obtaining, using and benefiting from AST services.

Communication

AST will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

Service Animals

AST welcomes people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public. If a service animal is excluded by law from the premises, AST will ensure that alternate means are available to enable the person with a disability to access our programs and services.

Support Persons

The Alzheimer Society of Toronto welcomes people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. In the event that a fee is charged in relation to a support person's attendance at a Society sponsored event, advance notice of the fee will be provided.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

AST will make reasonable efforts to provide notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in our facilities and services where we have control over such facilities or services. This notice will include information about the reasons for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. AST will provide notice by posting information in visible places on our premises or on our website, or by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.



Training for Staff

AST provides training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public, and all those who are involved in the development and approval of customer service policies, practices and procedures. Training includes the following:

- An overview of the AODA and the requirements of the standard
- AST's plan related to the customer service standard
- Best practices used when interacting and communicating with people with various types of disabilities
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing AST services
- Best practices used when interacting with people with disabilities who use an assistive device, service animal or support person

Staff and volunteers will be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.



Feedback – Compliments & Complaints Policy

The Alzheimer Society of Toronto (AST) recognizes the importance of the role our clients, donors, and the public play in our work. While we strive for excellence in the pursuit of our mission, we recognize there may be instances where we have an opportunity for improvement. To ensure you receive the highest level of service, we have developed this policy and procedure to address and escalate any complaints you may have about AST or that may arise in your interactions with AST.

AST is committed to excellence in all aspects of its work. A complaint about AST is welcome if it is communicated respectfully. AST is focused on a complaints review process that is:

1. fair and impartial
2. transparent in process and method
3. respectful to all involved
4. timely and efficient while balancing an appropriate allocation of resources

Responses and action shall be proportionate to complaints raised. Complaints shall be escalated as appropriate. Outcomes and resolutions shall be communicated clearly to complainants.

This policy is available to all external AST stakeholders including donors, clients, and members of the public, who want to communicate with and register a complaint about the Society.

The complaints process is available to address dissatisfaction about the services, actions, lack of action, or interactions with AST staff and/or volunteers.

Any individual may bring a complaint forward either by phone or in writing.

Phone: 416-322-6560

Mail: Alzheimer Society of Toronto, 1600-20 Eglinton Ave W
Toronto ON M4R 1K8

Email: info@alz.to

A complainant should include as much detail as possible about the issue or problem as well as a contact number and/or address where a response should be directed if they feel comfortable doing so. Where a complaint is of a confidential or sensitive nature, this should be noted in the subject line of the correspondence and your complaint will be immediately directed to the most senior leader of AST .

All complaints will be reviewed in a timely manner and escalated to the appropriate department or staff person for a response and action, if necessary. Complainants should expect to receive a response regarding their complaint within 5-10 business days, if not sooner. Where a complaint cannot be resolved within that time frame, AST will notify the complainant of the steps being taken and the anticipated timeframe for resolution.

A response may not be provided in circumstances where a complaint has no direct connection to AST; where a complaint is illegible; where a complaint has clearly been sent as part of bulk mailing or email; or where a complaint is abusive or harassing in nature. In case of an anonymous complaint, no response will be provided however, AST will review the complaint to improve its services.

All complaints will be recorded on a complaint tracking worksheet, including a description of the complaint, who handled it, actions taken to resolve the complaint and the timeframe for resolution.

Where the complaint cannot be immediately resolved, the name and contact information of the complainant may be recorded to ensure proper follow-up. AST is dedicated to maintaining the highest standards of confidentiality with respect to all information provided to us.

