

A photograph of two elderly women smiling. The woman in the foreground is wearing a red jacket and a light blue scarf. The woman behind her is wearing a grey sweater and glasses. They are in a room with a wooden table and chairs in the background. A large blue circular graphic is on the left side of the image.

Alzheimer Society
TORONTO

TOGETHER IN
**CARE, CONNECTION,
AND COMMUNITY**

2024 – A Year in Review

We are building a more inclusive and dementia-friendly community



As we reflect on 2024, we are filled with gratitude for your steadfast commitment to the Alzheimer Society of Toronto and our mission to build a more inclusive and dementia-friendly community. This past year has been one of significant milestones, meaningful connections, and impactful programs – all made possible by your generosity and belief in the power of community, connection, and care.

This year, we expanded our outreach in our efforts to ensure no one affected by dementia feels left behind. Our Public Education team broke new ground by creating multi-lingual resources and expanding community partnerships. Through our U-First! program, we empowered healthcare professionals and caregivers with tools to provide extraordinary care. We are also proud to have introduced innovative initiatives like the Community Connections Café, a welcoming space for individuals with dementia and their care partners to connect and support brain health.

Our Music Project extended its reach into more communities and partnered with hospitals to enhance patient care with personalized music therapy. Initiatives like the Visual Storytelling Workshop and the Clay Making art series underscore our commitment to connection and inclusion through creativity.

Looking ahead to 2025, we will be embarking on the development of our next four-year Strategic Plan. We are energized by the opportunities before us. We will continue to innovate, expand, and deepen our engagement with individuals across Toronto, always guided by the principles of compassion and care.

Thank you for standing with us. As we start on the coming year, we do so with hope, determination, and the knowledge that together, we can work to ensure no one is alone on their dementia journey. We look forward to another year of shared achievements and meaningful moments.

With gratitude,

Carol Paradine
Board Chair

Dave Spedding
CEO

Alzheimer Society of Toronto

Addressing the full spectrum of lived experience

The AST Client Advisory Committee brings together caregivers and individuals living with dementia. Their lived experiences provide valuable insights and perspectives to the work of AST. This volunteer committee plays a vital role in guiding the organization's decision-making processes, ensuring a strong focus on dementia. By providing recommendations for new programs and feedback on ongoing projects, the committee helps advance dementia-focused services and initiatives.



Since our first meeting in April 2024, the Committee has come together as a dedicated and resilient group, united by our shared commitment to improving the lives of those affected by dementia. Our discussions have highlighted the importance of addressing the full spectrum of lived experiences, of both people living with dementia, from the moment of a new diagnosis through to the end-of-life journey, as well as the wide spectrum of the caregivers – young carers, working caregivers, adult children, spouses, and more. This comprehensive perspective remains central to our work, and we are focused on ensuring that people at every stage of this journey receive the attention, resources, and supports they deserve.

Much progress has been made and we are excited about the opportunities and possibilities for continued growth, collaboration, and positive change. We look forward to the work we'll continue to do together in the future.

– The Members of the
Client Advisory Committee

Empowering Communities Through Dementia Education

Alzheimer Society of Toronto public educators are at the heart of our mission to create a dementia-friendly Toronto. By providing accessible workshops and training, we've empowered businesses, institutions, and individuals to better support those affected by dementia. Our initiatives foster empathy, reduce stigma, and build a community of understanding.

Building Connections in 2024

- Finalized a three-year agreement with the Toronto School Board to bring dementia education to adult learners.
- Created resources in Hindi and Tagalog, expanding our reach to diverse communities.
- Partnered with colleges and universities to integrate fundamental dementia education, our program *Dementia Foundations*, into curricula.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

WHAT INSPIRES YOU AS AN EDUCATOR?

“The connections I make with people and the continual learning involved. Meeting participants across the city and hearing how valuable they find our sessions is incredibly rewarding.”

– Kasey Okamura, Public Education Coordinator

BY THE NUMBERS

More than
50,000

views of the
multilanguage videos

Held
515

education sessions
across Toronto

Trained more than

400

people through Dementia-Friendly Community (DFC) Trainings, working towards a dementia-friendly Toronto



U-FIRST!: TRANSFORMING CAREGIVING

U-First! is more than a training program; it's a movement to create compassionate, knowledgeable caregivers. This year, thanks to donor support, we made it even more accessible by offering this training to healthcare professionals free of charge and supporting organizations with costs to allow staff to attend. By reducing barriers to participation, we wanted to make sure that healthcare professionals, especially from traditionally underserved communities, gained specialized training; individuals living with dementia will benefit from greater compassion, understanding and better overall care.

BY THE NUMBERS

Graduated

1,550

healthcare professionals
through U-First!

875

individuals benefitted from the
subsidized access

Providing a Lifeline for Individuals Living with Dementia

At the Alzheimer Society of Toronto, we believe everyone living with the impacts of dementia deserves exceptional care. Currently one in three adults in Ontario has a close family member living with dementia and they expect and deserve to have the resources, therapies and support to ensure their loved one has the best quality of life.

Our workshops, support groups, and one-on-one counselling sessions offer compassionate, judgment-free support.

Building Connections in 2024

- Due to an increase in demand, our Early Stages Support Group, a safe space for recently diagnosed individuals, now has sessions available three times per week.
- Through discussions with our clients about their support needs, we introduced the Community Connections Café—a warm and inviting space designed to foster social wellness, where individuals with dementia and their care partners can connect and socialize.



2,500

individuals attended one of our support groups in 2024



2,900

new individuals were introduced to AST's programs and services with the help of our Intake team in 2024

“Back in February, I was lost and mentally broken. My father needed care, but I didn’t know who to turn to. Your support was a lifesaver for my family. I am forever grateful to the Alzheimer Society of Toronto.”

— Care Partner



MUSIC PROJECT: THE POWER OF PERSONALIZED MUSIC

Personalized music has the power to transform lives, connecting individuals to their memories and the soundtrack of their past. Participants from across Ontario received a package including an MP3 player filled with music tailored to each person's unique tastes and memories. Sharing music that is meaningful can also promote a sense of connectedness and can be a bridge between persons with dementia and family members and care partners.

Creating Connection Through Music in 2024

- Partnered with hospitals across Ontario to supply music players with curated playlists for emergency units, to help calm individuals with dementia in care, expanding the project's impact.
- Provided over 1,000 tailored music players across Ontario, 502 distributed in Toronto.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: WHY MUSIC MATTERS?

“Music is my passion! As a vocalist, I understand the power of music for both the listener and the artist. Personalized music can bring people living with dementia ‘back to life’ and strengthen connections with care partners. I am grateful to be part of this transformation.”

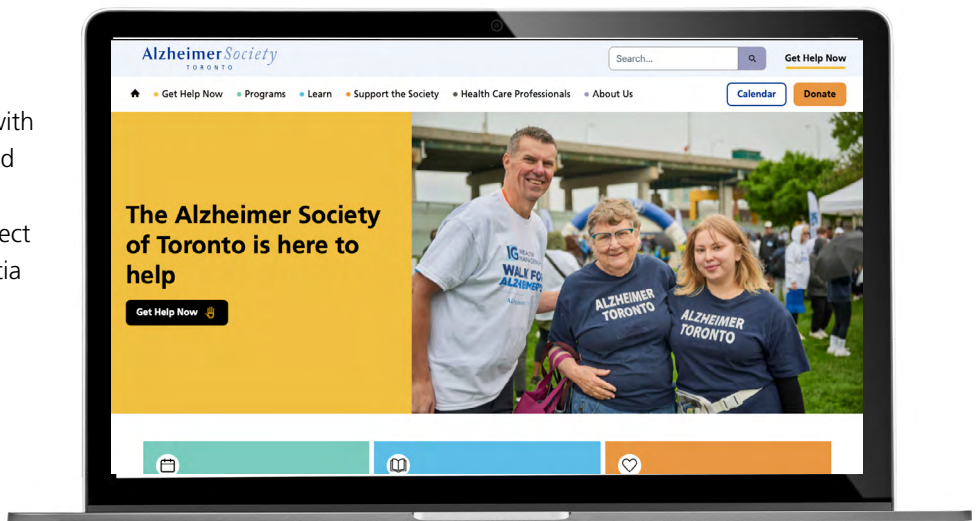
— *Melisa Robinson, Music Project Coordinator*

Our New Website is Live!

We were thrilled to launch the newly redesigned website, built in collaboration with staff and clients, and with clients' needs as the priority.

Our new site is easier to navigate, dementia-friendly, and designed to provide a smoother, more accessible experience. We've used thoughtful colours and clear layouts to help with wayfinding, making it simpler than ever to find what you're looking for. One of our priorities was to ensure that the images on our site reflect those who have lived experience with dementia and represent all the faces of those on the dementia journey.

With improved navigation, dementia-friendly design and a simplified way to contact us, we have removed barriers for those living with dementia and their loved ones to get the help they need, when they need it. **alz.to**



Promoting Well-Being Through Creativity and Joyful Moments

Our Active Living Program brings joy and connection to those impacted by dementia through engaging activities that promote well-being and social inclusion. The programs, led by talented facilitators and offered free of charge, inspire curiosity, expression, and social bonds, helping individuals living with dementia stay active, engaged, and supported on their journey.

Joyful Moments in 2024

- Launched innovative programs like our Clay Series, a hands-on creative program that provided participants a therapeutic and highly rewarding experience, “Pride in our Memories,” an arts program for the LGBTQ2S+ community, and the Golden Threads Choir, which explores the joy of making music, fostering connection and creativity.
- Introduced a virtual reality program and the “Joking Aside” improv workshops, both of which were very popular additions.
- Offered a Visual Storytelling program that empowered participants to narrate their unique life stories through the lens of photography. Every photograph became a powerful narrative, encapsulating entire journeys and revealing layers of personal history and emotion that might otherwise remain unspoken.

BY THE NUMBERS

284

Active Living sessions held in 2024

4,220

participants at Active Living programs in 2024

STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

“Our favourite part of working for AST is working with each other and our community. We strive to build creative and authentic relationships as a way to bring people together. We care deeply about holding meaningful spaces for all of us to be who we are today, without judgement. And we both love weaving together the best musical playlist to dance to, and sparking moments of joy!”

— Kristin Bartlett and Tracey Adams-Thibaudeau, Active Living Coordinators





MID-SCARBOROUGH HUB: EXPANDING ACCESSIBILITY FOR DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

The Alzheimer Society of Toronto continues to expand outreach into the Scarborough community through our programming at the Mid-Scarborough Hub. The Hub allows AST and related health services to be more significantly embedded within the community, increase accessibility to services for our clients, and offer an inclusive space that is safe and welcoming for everyone.

Building Inclusive Connections in 2024

- Partnered with an Enhanced Language Training program for internationally trained healthcare professionals, boosting diverse, local community, volunteer participation for programs like the Young Onset Adult Day Program.
- Expanded programs like our dementia education workshops and East-End Friends to meet a growing need and introduced the second Community Connections Café location, a vibrant space for care and connection.

Driving Change for a Better Future

SHAPING TOMORROW FOR THOSE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA: PROVINCIAL ADVOCACY IN 2024

This past year marked a pivotal moment in provincial advocacy efforts, driven by the introduction of groundbreaking legislation aimed at transforming dementia care in Ontario. The Alzheimer Society of Ontario proudly collaborated with MPPs Natalia Kusendova-Bashta and Laura Smith to champion Bill 121, the Improving Dementia Care in Ontario Act.

This critical legislation requires the province's Minister of Health to present a comprehensive dementia strategy – a long-overdue framework to address the challenges faced by people living with dementia and their care partners. The Bill successfully passed Third Reading and received Royal Assent in December 2024, signaling a significant step forward in addressing care needs and workforce training.

This legislative advancement, supported by the Alzheimer Society and our allies, underscores the power of collaboration in creating meaningful change.

In October 2024, AST CEO, Dave Spedding, joined leaders from Alzheimer Societies across Ontario to meet with MPPs and advocate for increased funding and enhanced programs for dementia care. These productive discussions emphasized the importance of addressing the needs of individuals and families affected by dementia. We extend our heartfelt thanks to MPPs

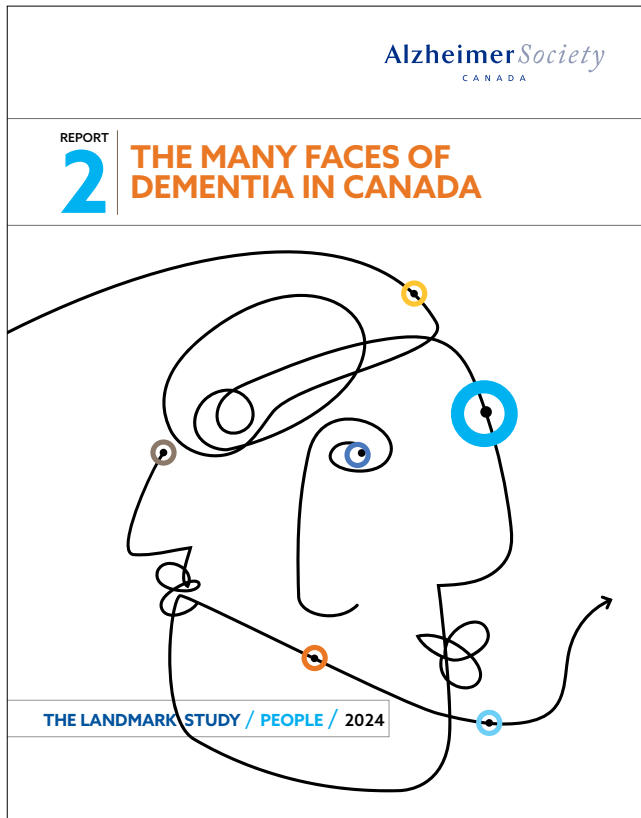


MPP Andrea Hazell attends the AST Caregiver event at the Scarborough Hub

Christine Hogarth, Brian Saunderson, Jill Andrew, Stephanie Bowman, Adil Shamji, and Andrea Hazell for their time, insights, and steadfast support. Their efforts are vital in ensuring more people across Ontario are aware of and can access the resources provided by the Alzheimer Society of Toronto.

THE MANY FACES OF DEMENTIA IN CANADA

It's up to us to ensure no one is left behind.



In January 2024, the Alzheimer Society of Canada released volume 2 of the *Landmark Study: The Many Faces of Dementia in Canada*.

Dementia is a major public health problem both here in Toronto and across the country, affecting millions of people.

The Many Faces of Dementia in Canada is one of the only studies in existence that seeks to understand the unique needs and experiences of diverse communities. Understanding these unique experiences is a key step in improving the quality of life for people with dementia and their caregivers.

With an increased focus on dementia research, we can improve knowledge, advocate for more diverse and culturally sensitive care, and push for change.

FOUR SURPRISING FACTS ABOUT DEMENTIA



+187%

Anticipated growth in the number of people in Canada living with dementia over the next 30 years



x3

By 2050, the number of people living with dementia in Ontario is projected to TRIPLE



stress from racism

Studies show that colonization and stress from racism can affect brain health. Addressing these factors is important in preventing or delaying onset of dementia



2:1

Women are doubly affected (almost 2:1 dementia cases and more than 50% of caregivers)

A Year of Record-Breaking Impact

IG PRIVATE WEALTH MANAGEMENT UNFORGETTABLE EVENING GALA



On the evening of November 6th, 2024, generous friends, philanthropists and business leaders joined together to raise funds to benefit those living with dementia and their care partners. Hosted by Gavin Crawford, producer and host of the hit podcast, *Let's Not Be Kidding*, the IG Private Wealth Management Unforgettable Evening was a fantastic event.

We are incredibly grateful for the overwhelming support shown at the Gala. We'd like to acknowledge and thank our sponsors: our Title Sponsor, IG Private Wealth Management; Program Sponsor BMO; and Cocktail Sponsor Richardson Wealth. Your commitment to philanthropy and leadership is truly appreciated – we could not do this important work without you.

Thanks to the generosity of all our sponsors, attendees and donors, more than

\$320,000

was raised to benefit individuals impacted by dementia.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

AST is proud to partner with many community fundraising events. In 2024, we were particularly honoured to be the beneficiary of the Moose & Goose dinner and Quest Audio Visual's "Quest for Awareness" fundraising event. We are grateful for all our community fundraising partners; you truly exemplify what creating a dementia friendly community is all about.



PRIVATE WEALTH MANAGEMENT
AN UNFORGETTABLE EVENING
A GALA IN SUPPORT OF
Alzheimer Society
TORONTO

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Thanks to you, last year we made history

In 2024, the IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's cemented its place as Canada's biggest fundraiser for Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. With communities across the country joining the cause, an unprecedented \$6.8 million was raised, marking an incredible year in the history of the Walk.

In Toronto, despite the less-than-optimal weather, nothing could dampen the spirits of those who joined us on Saturday, May 25 at Historic Fort York. To our amazing walkers, donors, volunteers, sponsors, AST Board members and staff, we couldn't have done it without you. It was incredible to see all our stakeholders together at one location this year. We would like to specifically acknowledge our partners at IG Wealth Management, especially President and CEO Damon Murchison, National Vice-President Vas Pachapurkar, and the rest of the Toronto IG team who joined us on the day. IG Wealth Management's national support enables Walk for Alzheimer's to happen across Canada.

As well, thank you to our Toronto sponsors: Toronto Memory Program; Amica Senior Lifestyles; Chartwell Retirement Residences; Elder Care Transitions; Home Concierge; Integracare; Toronto Dementia Research Alliance; Verve Senior Living; and Dye & Durham Limited.

FAST FACTS



1,130
walkers



420
volunteers

Raised \$400,000



SPOTLIGHT ON A LEGACY WALKER

Celebrating a Life Well Lived: Dr. David Shaul

On September 9, 2024, days short of his 100th birthday, the Alzheimer Society of Toronto learned of the passing of Dr. David Lloyd Shaul, an incredible supporter and ally.

Dr. Shaul began to support the Alzheimer Society of Toronto 10 years ago to honour the memory of his dear friend, Fern Cohen. He believed in the work the Society does in providing support for people living with dementia, their caregivers, friends and families. Fern was living with Alzheimer's which gradually progressed and eventually worsened. Since her passing, Dr. Shaul participated in the Walk to honour and remember her.

Over the past decade, he raised an incredible \$280,000 to support individuals living with dementia. And as recently as this past May, Dr. Shaul, was both the Top Fundraiser and led the top Retirement Home Team, The Dunfield Retirement Residence, where he resided. We are incredibly fortunate to have known Dr. Shaul and will miss his warm smile and enthusiasm at our Walk this coming May. Thank you for all you have done.



LOOKING AHEAD: BUILDING A STRONGER, MORE INCLUSIVE FUTURE

As we enter 2025, our vision remains resolute: to create a world where everyone affected by dementia receives the care and support they deserve. By expanding programs, deepening our engagement with diverse communities, and fostering innovation, we are building a stronger, more inclusive future.

Thank you for your trust in us and for being part of this journey. Together, we are transforming lives through community, connection, and care.





Alzheimer
Society
T O R O N T O

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We are delighted to share this 2024 Year in Review with you. If you are interested in reviewing our Statement of Operations or our Donor Listing please reference our Impact Report, found here:

www.alz.to/impactreport2024