

Special Edition



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Welcome

...to the special Dementia Strategy edition of the GHS bulletin! This bulletin is being issued in support of the efforts of the Alzheimer Society of Ontario to have a dementia strategy included in the 2017 Ontario budget. The ASO's actionfordementia.ca campaign is described below. We are also highlighting some of our group's own work in support of the development of dementia strategies in two Ontario regions: The South West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and the Waterloo-Wellington LHIN. For more frequent updates on our work, follow us on Twitter [@GHS_UW](https://twitter.com/GHS_UW) or like the [Geriatric Health Systems Research Group - UW Facebook page](#). If you would like to be included in our email distribution of the bulletin or would like further information on the material presented, please complete our Contact Us form located on our website. If you no longer wish to receive emails from the GHS group or be included on the bulletin distribution list, please contact us at information.ghs@uwaterloo.ca directly.

Ontario Dementia Strategy! Time for Action!

As an individual interested in our work at Geriatric Health Systems Research Group, we want to share an opportunity for you to influence the Ontario government's implementation of a new dementia strategy. Minister Eric Hoskins is finalizing the strategy but its impact will need funds to have it really make a difference.

The Alzheimer Society of Ontario developed a social media campaign to encourage people to answer a ministry survey on the strategy. 80% of the 4,079 survey respondents were reached through the website actionfordementia.ca.

In the New Year, the Alzheimer Society is undertaking a campaign to have the strategy included in the 2017 Budget. Minister Sousa included it in the Fall Economic Statement but there are many competing endeavours come Budget-time. We can build strength in numbers! We need to show the Ontario government just how many people want full funding for the strategy in the 2017 Budget.

If each one of us signs up at www.actionfordementia.ca and encourages a friend to do the same, we can build our numbers to ensure a fully funded dementia strategy in 2017.

We hope you will join our efforts in the coming months to support person-centered care focused on the best quality of life here in Ontario.

We need **your** help

Sign up today



Whole Person, Whole Journey

In 2015, the GHS research group was asked by both the South West¹ and Waterloo-Wellington² LHINs to undertake research and consultation in support of dementia strategy development in these two regions. These efforts coincided with the Master's thesis research of Jessie Ashbourne, who was investigating the health care system experiences of persons with dementia and their caregivers³.

Our work included consideration of available epidemiological and health service utilization data, a review of existing Canadian and international dementia strategies, and extensive stakeholder consultation.

- Our group interviewed 12 persons with dementia, 28 caregivers, and 48 health care providers and policy-makers.
- We reviewed dementia strategies from 16 countries and six Canadian provinces⁴.
- In the South West, our work was informed by a community advisory group of 50 community and health system representatives.
- A priority-setting survey in the South West was completed by 12 persons with dementia and caregivers, and 52 health care providers, administrators and policy-makers.
- Ten members of the Waterloo-Wellington Dementia Advisory group (five persons with dementia; five caregivers) provided input and advice on the ranking of identified priorities.
- In Waterloo-Wellington, strategy development was the focus of the region's annual "Passport Day" event (February 10, 2015) attended by over 180 service providers, administrators, researchers, older adults, caregivers, and others. Our group helped to coordinate Passport Day and input from this group was integrated into our report.

As shown in the accompanying figure, our strategy work identified the principles of "Whole Person" and "Whole Journey" to support a holistic, person-centred perspective on the experience of dementia and on a broad and integrated health system and community response. Engagement of persons with dementia and caregivers was key to the development of dementia strategies for the South West and Waterloo-Wellington LHINs.

Their continuing engagement will be key to future efforts to build dementia-friendly communities and to improve the quality of care and quality of life of persons with dementia and their partners in care.

The GHS group is proud of our contributions to two regional strategies, and hope that our work will be helpful for other regional, provincial and national dementia strategy efforts. We agree with the Alzheimer Society of Ontario that it is "Time for Action!" on an Ontario Dementia Strategy, and encourage you to participate in their [actionfordementia](#) campaign.



¹ Geriatric Health Systems Research Group (2015). *Whole Person, Whole Journey: Picturing a dementia friendly tomorrow, today. A dementia strategy for the South West Local Health Integration Network*. Waterloo, ON: University of Waterloo.

² Geriatric Health Systems Research Group (2015). *Informing the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network Dementia Strategy*. Waterloo, ON: University of Waterloo.

³ Ashbourne, J. (2015). *Understanding Care Transitions from the Perspectives of Persons with Dementia and their Caregivers: A Grounded Theory*. School of Public Health and Health Systems, University of Waterloo.

⁴ Edick, C., Holland, N., Ashbourne, J., Elliott, J., & Stolee, P. (2017). A review of Canadian and international dementia strategies. *Healthcare Management Forum*, 30, 32-39.