



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

CASES OF PERSONS LIVING WITH DEMENTIA WHO GET LOST AND GO MISSING IN CANADA

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Public Safety
Canada

Sécurité publique
Canada



5. A fisherman living with young-onset Alzheimer's disease gets lost while biking to visit his friend

Personal information

Name: Richard Manning.

Age: 51 years old.

Gender: Man, pronouns are he/him.

Living situation: Bungalow with partner, Julia, in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Social support: Julia, Richard's partner, and Mitch, a lifelong friend.

Health: Young Onset Alzheimer's disease, hearing impairment, depression. Takes medications for memory loss, and depression.

Interests: Biking, fishing, and visiting friends.



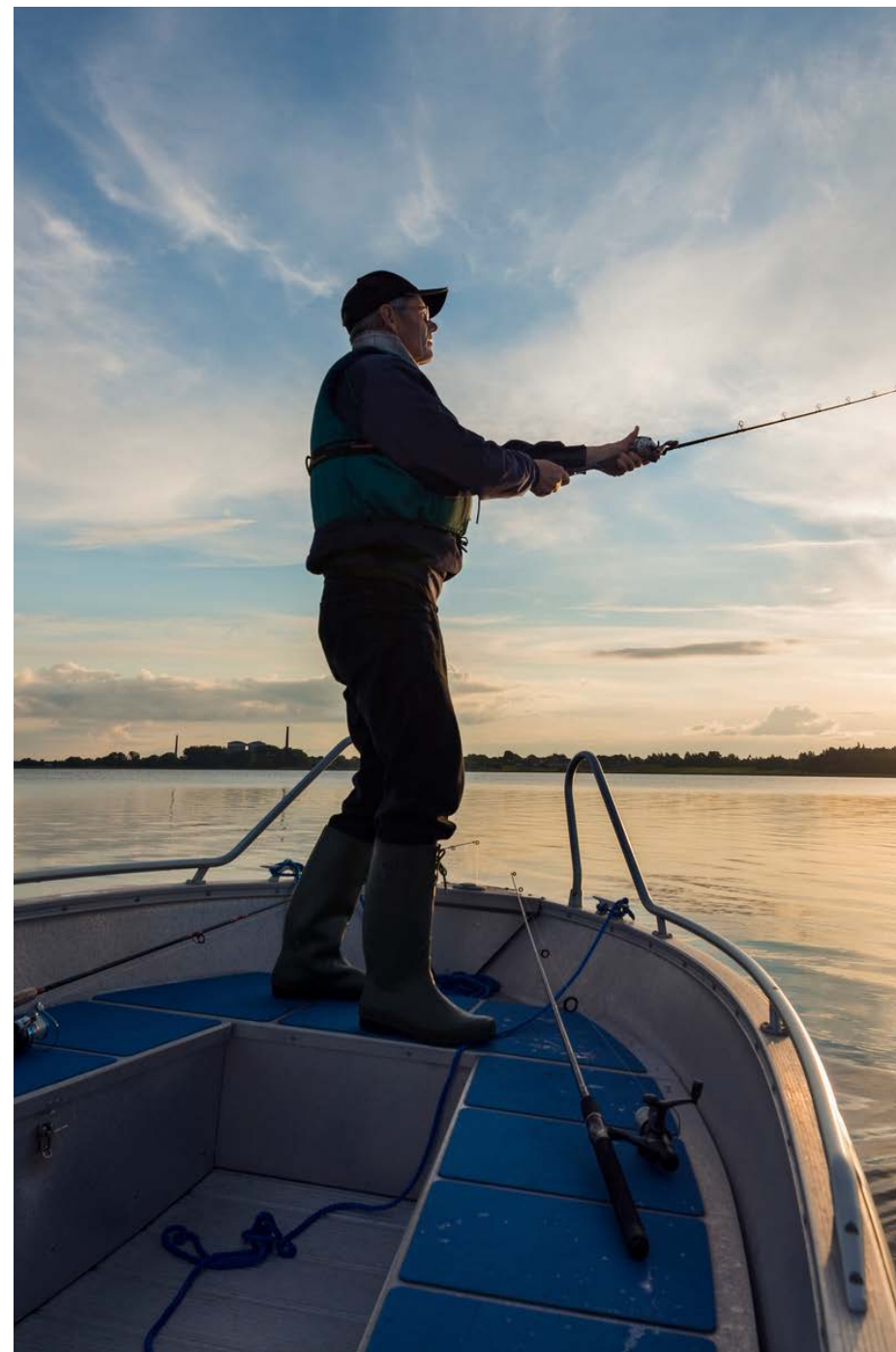
Background

Richard's life and family

Richard is a retired family doctor who has lived in the same home since he was a child. Richard enjoys the company of his partner of 10 years, Julia, and his friends. When Julia is at work, Richard uses his smartphone to stay in touch with her.

Fishing and friendship with Mitch

Every Thursday morning in the summer, Richard bikes over to his friend Mitch's house to fish at their favourite spot. He enjoys catching up with Mitch over coffee. Richard highly values Mitch's continued friendship because shortly after disclosing his dementia diagnosis to other friends, those relationships dwindled.



The day of the incident

– Getting lost

1. Biking to Mitch's home

One Thursday morning, Richard is biking to Mitch's house, a 15-minute bike ride away on a country road when he feels a sharp cramp in his leg. He stops to stretch and continues his ride.

2. Anxiety and confusion sets in

Richard feels anxious due to the noise of the passing cars and the leg cramp. He is happy that he is nearly at Mitch's home. When he arrives, he sits on the porch.

3. Richard loses track of time

Richard thinks about his former friends and is nostalgic. When he told them about his dementia diagnosis, they treated him differently, as if he could not remember anything and was unable to hold a conversation, despite being able to. Yet, dementia affects each person differently and Richard is still able to communicate with others.



The day of the incident

– Being found

1. Richard is found on a neighbour's porch

A high school student, Mitch's neighbour, is getting ready for her part-time job at a coffee shop. She looks at the clock and notes that it is 6:50 am. When she opens the front door to leave, she sees a man sitting on their porch, looking upset. The student goes inside and gets her parent.

2. Mitch's neighbours offer help

The neighbours ask Richard if he needs help and they invite him into their home. After a delay, Richard remembers he is supposed to be meeting Mitch at 6:00 am. The parent asks Richard if he has Mitch's phone number, which prompts Richard to pull out his cell phone. As Richard reaches into his pocket for the phone, the student notices a silver bracelet with a medical symbol on it; neither she nor her parent know the purpose of the bracelet.



3. Julia and Mitch are concerned

Meanwhile, Mitch calls Julia to say that Richard has not arrived. Julia drives to Mitch's home. Usually Richard texts them once he is outside Mitch's home, but it is already almost 7:00 am and their calls are going straight to voice mail. They do a preliminary search of the neighbourhood, but see no sign of him. They call the police to report Richard missing.

4. Reunited at last

The neighbour calls Mitch to explain that Richard is safe at their house. The police arrive at Mitch's home. Julia and Mitch update the police and together they drive to reunite with Richard.

5. Learning about MedicAlert®

The police thank the neighbours for their assistance and explain that they should contact 911 anytime they find a lost person. A missing person is an emergency. The police also explains they can contact the MedicAlert hotline if they encounter someone needing help who is wearing a MedicAlert bracelet.



After the incident

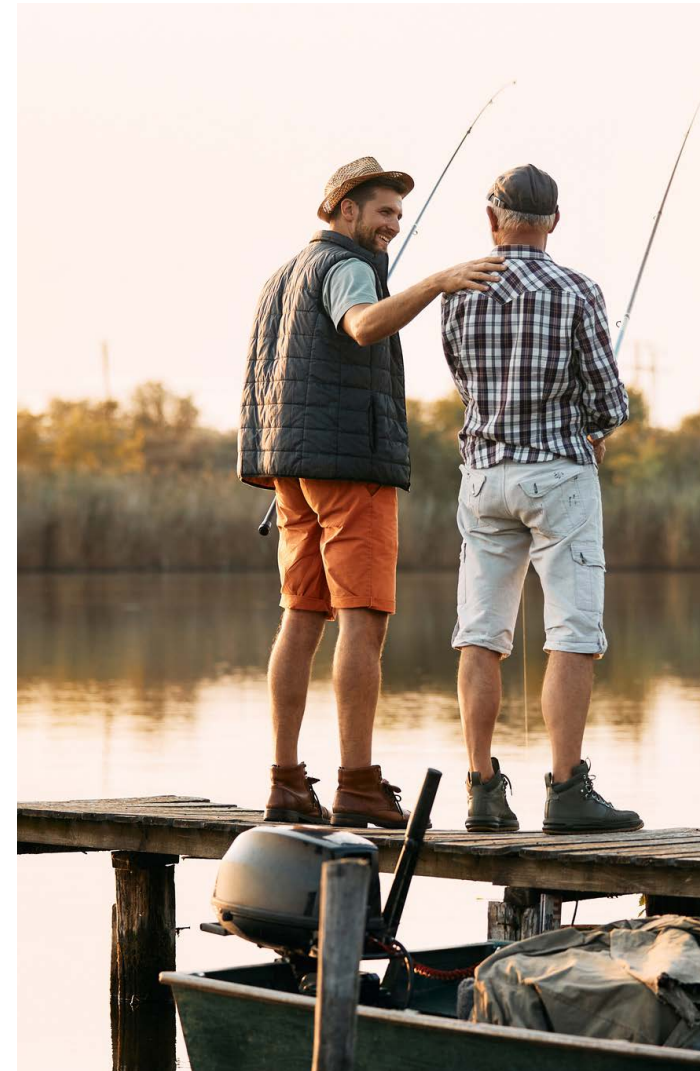
Richard feels embarrassed about getting lost. This makes him realize that he may need some help finding his way around his community. Later that day, the police officer involved calls Richard and Julia and recommends they reach out to the local Alzheimer Society, a Canada-wide organization that helps people living with dementia and their circle of support.

Resources

The Alzheimer's Society of Canada has resources related to living well with dementia. They challenge negative assumptions about what life looks like after a diagnosis of dementia. alzheimer.ca/en/help-support/im-living-dementia/living-well-dementia.

Physical activity remains a vital part of one's well-being, even after a diagnosis of dementia. Information about physical activity for persons living with dementia can be found here: dementiaexercise.com/resources-for-people-with-dementia/.

MedicAlert is a service that provides emergency medical information. The bracelet should be worn at all times so that first responders and medical personnel can access a person's emergency contacts and medical information.





Resources

Toolkit to manage the risk of getting lost and going missing for people living with dementia.

This toolkit contains strategies to help with the common concerns of people living with dementia and their care partners regarding the risks of becoming lost.

Emergency card

People living with dementia can carry an “In Case of Emergency” card. It has important information to help them if they go missing. This card was made by the [Calgary Missing Older adult Resource Network](#), see page 16.

The Herbert Protocol

Important details about the person at risk can be gathered in The Herbert Protocol. This information can help first responders when someone is missing. Keep this information at home on your fridge and give it to care partners. Click this link to access the [‘Resource Guide for Older Adults at Risk of Going Missing’](#); fill out the form on pages 15-20.

Safety and leisure activities

Balancing leisure time with safety can be challenging. [The Canadian Guideline for Safe Wandering](#) provides strategies to promote safe wandering and manage the risk of getting lost when doing leisure activities.

Driving with dementia

It can be challenging to drive a car when the driver has a hard time remembering, navigating, and attending to the environment. This [Driving and Dementia Roadmap](#) includes safety considerations related to driving with dementia.

In Case of Emergency	
Full Name	_____
Date of Birth	_____ Blood type _____
Address	_____
Cell	_____ Work _____ Home _____
Current Meds	_____
Conditions	_____
Physician	_____ Phone _____
Allergy/additional info	_____
In Case of Emergency	
Emergency Contact #1	_____
Relationship	_____ Work Phone _____
Cell Phone	_____ Work Phone _____
Emergency Contact #1	_____
Relationship	_____ Work Phone _____
Cell Phone	_____ Work Phone _____
Additional Info	_____
_____ Last updated _____	

Locator devices

Locator devices help people living with dementia share their location with family in case they are lost. They may also help the police find people should they go missing. The [Alzheimer Society of Canada](#) shares more information about the purposes of locator devices. The [University of Waterloo Aging and Innovation Research Program](#) outlines features of locator devices, including cost and battery life.

What to do if you find a missing person

A missing incident is an emergency. Call police and ask the operator or service how you can help. [A video from Dementia Network Calgary](#) outlines a missing incident involving a person living with dementia and how to help.

Links

- **Toolkit** to manage the risk of getting lost and going missing for people living with dementia, made by the University of Waterloo. <https://uwaterloo.ca/managing-risks-of-disappearance-in-persons-living-with-dementia/toolkit-0>
- **“In Case of Emergency” card** made by Calgary Missing Older Adult Resource Network. See page 14. <https://missingseniors.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Resource-guide-for-people-at-risk-of-going-missing.pdf>
- **The Herbert Protocol** described by Calgary Missing Older Adult Resource Network. See pages 15-20. <https://missingseniors.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Resource-guide-for-people-at-risk-of-going-missing.pdf>
- **The Canadian Guideline for Safe Wandering.** https://canadiansafewandering.ca/#more_information
- **The Driving and Dementia Roadmap.** <https://www.drivinganddementia.ca/>
- **Locator device overview**, as described by the Alzheimer Society of Canada. <https://alzheimer.ca/en/help-support/im-caring-person-living-dementia/ensuring-safety-security/tracking-devices>
- **Locator device features**, as described by the University of Waterloo Aging and Innovation Research Program. <https://uwaterloo.ca/aging-innovation-research-program/locator-devices>
- **What to do if you find a missing person.** Dementia Network Calgary’s video dementianetworkcalgary.ca/



For more information

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