

***“What in the World is going on with Dementia” Conference provided useful information displaying many of the resources in York Region and King City to work with dementia:***

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018, Memory Lane Home Living Inc. (a not for profit dementia initiative) in collaboration with King Township and Seneca College, King Campus, Social Service Worker Gerontology Program hosted a conference on Dementia.

The conference attendance was at capacity which is an indicator many are interested in the subject matter. The attendees included health care professionals and students, church care ministry, caregivers, government officials and the public interested in learning more about dementia.

Professor Caroline Grammer from the Seneca Social Worker Gerontology Program was our first keynote speaker. Professor Grammer spoke on how to live well with dementia noting the urgency of this topic as every 3 seconds someone is diagnosed with dementia. One of the most important elements in living well with dementia is to *be your own advocate* in institutional settings (long term care and residential homes) and pay attention to the medication your loved ones are on. For example, antipsychotic medications are clearly not a medication to be used with dementia related responsive behaviors as they can make things worse. Antipsychotic medications were intended to be used for certain dementias where one experiences hallucinations. Dr. Grammer believes that for our *attitude towards dementia to change, we need to change the long term care.*

Our second keynote speaker Don Fenn, CEO of Caregiver Omnimedia Inc. advised us that the primary factor that shape the health of all Canadians are not medical treatments or lifestyle choices but rather the living conditions they experience. He had a wealth of information regarding home modifications, tax credits, etc.

We had all levels of government represented at this conference. The conference opened with our local Mayor Pelligrini. MPP Stephen Lecce spoke as well, representing the provincial level of government. Representatives for Deb Schultz were in attendance (Deb Schultz was in Ottawa). The audience was encouraged to bring concerns to all three levels of government. According to “4 My Canada”,

one letter or phone call to your government official is said to represent the voice of 10,000 constituents.

Another set of five speakers provided shorter presentations on various topics. Caregiver burnout was a relevant topic since 40% of caregivers are over the age of 60 years and need to take care of themselves. Southlake Regional Health Centre is providing a 6-week class called “Powerful Tools for Caregivers”; It focuses on the caregiver’s ability to make decisions. Access more information on this by calling call 905.895.4521 ext 6489.

York regional police presented information relating to Project Lifesaver and Vulnerable Person Registry introducing the use of technology on this journey. Contact Community Partnerships @York Regional Police: phone 905.830.0303 ext.6815 or email [5911@yrp.ca](mailto:5911@yrp.ca) for more information.

Sharon McCleave, a Professor at Seneca King Campus, demonstrated music therapy on a harp, promoting the benefit of live music.

The Alzheimer’s Society of York Region spoke of *Dementia Friendly Communities*. With the increase of dementia, we need the world to be a more welcoming place to those on this journey. In Europe bank tellers and store clerks are often the first to receive dementia training. It is when those with dementia are out of their familiar environments that they need guidance and support. The Alzheimer’s Society offers a very helpful course called Gentle Persuasive Approach (GPA).

Memory Lane Home Living, director Luba Rascheff (MDiv, Harvard University) spoke on one of the most overlooked care components of all-*spirituality*. The Alzheimer’s Association has 129 sitting over 18 pages of research the emphasize one’s spirituality on the dementia journey provides better coping skills that persist well into dementia. Residents in long term care are less agitated and wandering is reduced when *procedural emotional religious activity therapy* (PERAT) is utilized. True person-centred care will explore one’s religious background to find an emotional connection.

### ***Additional Resources/Exhibitors from the Conference:***

The conference included useful resources and initiatives that are available in the community to help live well with dementia and memory loss.

The King Township at the Trisan Centre in Schomberg, offers a *Brain Fit* course, a form of cognitive stimulation therapy. The King township library demonstrated pre-recorded music of previous decades, conveniently on an iPod. Given the importance of music on the dementia journey, caregivers might check this music tool out at the King City Library. This is a great resource to use for walking and long car rides; It might also be helpful those who might be bed ridden due to a fall. <http://www.king.ca>

The central local health integrated network (LHIN) It has a great online resource to look at events and resources in your area: <http://www.centralhealthline.ca/>.

CHATS in Aurora is community service that offers an array of services from day programs, help in the home, transportation services and “meals delivered to the house”. Please contact their Aurora office at 1-877-452-4287.

<https://www.chats.on.ca/>

Caregiver Matters is an online site providing education and support for family caregivers who are dealing with the declining health and death of a parent or family member. Check it out at <https://caregivingmatters.ca/>.

Jade Self Development Coaching is an organization that provides support and assists caregivers through situational losses. Find out more at <http://www.eleanorsilverberg.com>.

The Integrated Partnership for Seniors (TIPS) is a collaborative group of organizations that provide services and support programs for seniors in our community. This is an excellent resource for those living in York Region. Review more at <http://www.tips4seniors.ca>.

1to1 Therapy Services provide rehabilitation services in York Region was founded as an interdisciplinary team providing services through government contracts to the long term care and homecare. They offer many relevant services for the dementia

journey such as speech therapy, diet issues as they might relate to dehydration, and physiotherapy. Explore their website at <https://1to1therapy.ca>.

Aurora Speech Clinic helps our loved ones who have speech problems in their dementia journey to receive the help they need at an affordable shared cost with others on the same journey. Caregivers are invited to sit in such sessions. For more information call speech pathologist Sarah Watson @ 905.503.4321.

Four Seasons Naturopathic Wellness Clinic has a special interest in dementia and naturopathic remedies which are gentler on the body. For example, studies have shown that women with dementia are 30% more likely to develop bladder infections than women without cognitive challenges. Infection of any sort in seniors can cause delirium. Delirium can complicate the dementia. Regular use of antibiotics to combat infection is hard on anyone's system. Contact Dr. Rahim through his website <https://familynaturopath.ca/>.

Thompson Funeral Home in Aurora and Egan Funeral Home in Bolton provide prearranged funerals. In the dementia journey prearranging funerals can give the caregivers a peace of mind and their loved ones the opportunity to know their wishes are being met. To explore prearranged funeral home options at Thompson Funeral Home in Aurora go to <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/en-ca/funeral-homes/aurora-on/thompson-funeral-home/3162>, and for Egan Funeral Home in Bolton go to: <https://www.eganfuneralhome.com/>.

To recognize World Alzheimer's Day, we felt it was important to include a Charitable Organization called the Enoch Society for Care of the Aging. Their mission is to bring holistic care (physical, psychological and spiritual care) to the marginalized elderly in GTA & in China. They organize service trips to rural regions of China annually, aiming for professional knowledge exchanges and spiritual care delivery and mobilization. With global aging the world dementia population is approximately 45 million. China has the largest dementia population at 9 million persons. For more information please go to their website at [www.enochsociety.org](http://www.enochsociety.org).

And finally, we need to mention our organization that promotes alternative solutions to dementia. Memory Lane Home Living Inc. is a not profit organization that chooses to look at dementia care differently. We have programs for caregiver and loved ones because we see the importance of providing activities that get both the caregiver and their loved ones out into the community together, connecting with others on this journey. Memory Lane Home Living in collaboration with churches and

volunteers in the Richmond Hill area, host a *Lunch and Music, Memories and Motion* program on Wednesdays. On Fridays we host a *Lunch and Hymn Sing*. Memory Lane Home Living also hosts conferences such as the “*What in the World is going on with Dementia*” and “*Living Well with Dementia in York Region*”. The purpose of these conferences is to educate the caregivers and community at large. We organize speakers that are knowledgeable in various areas of dementia. Knowledge is power, and our goal is to empower those on the journey and enlighten the community on how they can help.

Finally, Memory Lane Home Living Inc. has a house in Richmond Hill that is on the cusp of changing how we care for dementia. It is a cooperative housing model out of Germany that has shown successful results over the past 20 years. The residents and families in Germany are more content with this living model. The measurable results of a 3-year study in Germany demonstrated that the *residents in these small home environments needed less medication and had less hospital visits than those in institutional settings*. The government in Germany sees this as a viable alternative to institutional living. There are 3500 of these homes throughout Germany that are not “locked down”. As a matter of fact, only 20% of Germany’s long-term care are locked buildings, as apposed to most of the long-term care in Canada. In summary the mission of Memory Lane Home Living Inc *is to promote living well with dementia. We feel strongly that this is achievable.*