



A Dementia Strategy for Canada: Together We Aspire

First Annual Report to Parliament June 2019

A Dementia Strategy for Canada: Together We Aspire provides the basis for this first annual report to Parliament, from the Minister of Health, as required by the *National Strategy for Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias Act* (the Act). Canada's first national dementia strategy is the result of many years of hard work and the dedication of stakeholders across the country. Canadians should be proud of the milestones reached along the way, and inspired by the journey that has led to this first report to Parliament.

The development of the strategy involved extensive consultations and created a collaborative energy among key experts who share a passion for addressing dementia issues, challenges and opportunities. Major milestones included a national dementia conference in May 2018, which was followed by the release of [*National Dementia Conference: Inspiring and Informing a National Dementia Strategy for Canada – Conference Report*](#) (August 2018). As well, a Ministerial Advisory Board on Dementia was created in 2018 and has met five times since being established. Efforts to engage on the strategy have included evidence gathering and consultations with key stakeholders and partners, including people living with dementia, caregivers, health professionals, advocacy groups, provincial and territorial governments and dementia researchers.

In November 2017, a federal Interdepartmental Committee on Dementia was established to inform, engage and gather input from across federal government organizations whose initiatives are relevant to dementia. The Committee ensures that the federal contribution to the strategy takes a whole-of-government approach. The Act calls on the Government to address the challenges of dementia in collaboration with provinces and territories. As a result, the Public Health Agency of Canada established the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Coordinating Committee on Dementia in December 2017. The Committee meets monthly and provides a forum to share best practices and discuss issues related to dementia. Broad engagement captured diverse perspectives and, along with evidence-informed analysis and information, helped to shape the strategy. A summary of what was learned during engagement can be found within the [*What We Heard Report: Informing a Dementia Strategy for Canada*](#) (April 2019).

A Dementia Strategy for Canada: Together We Aspire, released in June 2019, is intended to be ambitious with a broad scope of action to allow priorities to evolve over time. It will complement and build upon activities led by the Government of Canada and other governments, as well as by many organizations working on dementia-related issues. The Strategy provides a vision of a Canada in which all people living with dementia and caregivers are valued and supported, quality of life is optimized, and dementia is prevented, well understood, and effectively treated.

FIVE CROSS-CUTTING PRINCIPLES SET OUT VALUES TO GUIDE ACTION ON DEMENTIA IN CANADA:

- QUALITY OF LIFE
- HUMAN RIGHTS
- DIVERSITY
- EVIDENCE-INFORMED
- RESULTS-FOCUSED

THREE NATIONAL OBJECTIVES WERE DEVELOPED FOR THE STRATEGY TO REALIZE ITS VISION:

- PREVENT DEMENTIA
- ADVANCE THERAPIES AND FIND A CURE
- IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA AND CAREGIVERS

FIVE PILLARS OF THE STRATEGY IDENTIFY ELEMENTS NECESSARY TO ADVANCE STRATEGY OBJECTIVES:

- COLLABORATION
- RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
- SURVEILLANCE AND DATA
- INFORMATION RESOURCES
- SKILLED WORKFORCE

Over the coming years, work to advance the Strategy's national objectives will include concrete actions and performance indicators to monitor progress and inform adjustment as needed. Annual Reports to Parliament will capture this work.

Budget 2019 funding (\$50 million over 5 years) will support implementation of Canada's first national dementia strategy. This funding will be focused on increasing awareness of the healthy living decisions and other actions Canadians can take to reduce their risk of developing dementia, and to make our communities more supportive of people living with dementia by increasing understanding and reducing stigma. The Dementia Community Investment (\$20 million over five years and \$4 million per year, ongoing) was established through Budget 2018 to support community-based projects that address the challenges of dementia and optimize the wellbeing of people living with dementia, their family and caregivers.

There is still significant work ahead as we work collaboratively with partners and stakeholders to make the Strategy as successful as possible. The Government of Canada will continue to identify areas for collaboration with federal, provincial and territorial governments and key dementia stakeholders.