

Ontario Dementia Network

Background

At their meeting in November 2008, the dementia networks in Ontario agreed that there was merit in establishing a provincial dementia network. A working group was set up to move this concept forward and as a result, the Ontario Dementia Network was established and held its first meeting in May 2009.

Mandate and Goals

The mandate of the Ontario Dementia Network is to provide leadership to the regional dementia networks in Ontario in the development of a comprehensive and well developed system of service delivery, education, and public policy in the field of dementia. Its goals are to provide this leadership in the dissemination of knowledge and in the promotion of best practices between and among networks; in the establishment of relationships with and among dementia networks and relevant government offices and provincial organizations; and in the guidance of the development and enhancement of regional dementia networks

Membership

The ODN membership comprises a representative (the chair or co-chair or designate) from each Regional Dementia Network; a representative of the Alzheimer Knowledge Exchange; a representative of Alzheimer Society of Ontario; and a representative of the Regional Geriatric Programs of Ontario.

Representation from other related organizations are also being sought – e.g. the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care; the Ontario College of Family Physicians; the collaborative of the Local Health Integration Networks.

At the first ODN meeting, Kathy Wright and Dr. Bill Dalziel, Co-chairs of the Champlain Dementia Network, were appointed to co-chair the Ontario Dementia Network.

ODN work plan

The ODN has identified several priorities for its first year of operation including the following:

1. to conduct a survey of dementia networks in Ontario to identify their best practices, their current initiatives, their current funding situation, and their challenges in the months/years ahead

2. based on the data collected in #1 above, to identify gaps and opportunities in the existing networks and assist in responding to these
3. to contact local networks in areas where regional networks have still not evolved and if receptive, work with them to come together as a regional network
4. to prepare a submission for potential funding sources (e.g. the MOHLTC, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, and pharmaceuticals) for core and project specific funding for the ODN and for regional dementia networks (LHIN-based)
5. to develop strategies for knowledge dissemination and awareness promotion with relevant organizations such as the AKE and SHRTN
6. to assist existing regional dementia networks to secure ongoing funding/resources

To date, the Alzheimer Knowledge Exchange has been providing support to assist the Network in getting started.

Frequency of meetings

The Network will meet at least quarterly. Ideally it would be desirable that at least two of these four meetings will be face-to-face; however, this will depend on the availability of funds.

The next meeting (through conference call) is scheduled for September 15, 2009.

June 2009