

Coping with dementia

BY AKOS HOFFER, OTTAWA CITIZEN DECEMBER 16, 2013 10:03 AM

Re: [Canada urged to develop national dementia strategy, Dec. 11.](#)

During the recent G8 Dementia Summit, Canada was singled out as the only participating country without a national dementia strategy. The Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre has a unique perspective on dementia care.

While we strongly support calls for a national strategy, Ottawa residents should be aware of the great strides taken to develop an integrated dementia strategy tailored to our region.

Approximately 60 per cent of our 450 long-term residents are coping with the effects of dementia. Early diagnosis remains a key element to help manage the condition both initially and as it progresses.

We have invested in programs to provide support for seniors with dementia and their caregivers in the community or in our new specially-designed apartments. Having long recognized the coming challenge, we have included the development of a Centre of Excellence in Dementia Care in our long-term strategy.

The network of support in the region continues to strengthen. The Champlain Local Health Integration Network recently adopted and is funding the Integrated Model of Dementia Care, which is a regional strategy developed in partnership with the Alzheimer Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County, the Champlain Dementia Network, Champlain Community Care Access Centre, Perley Rideau, and other key providers such as Bruyère Continuing Care.

With the Integrated Model, we now have a roadmap to develop a system of support that is targeted to the changing needs of persons with dementia and their caregivers.

It is gratifying to see dementia gradually becoming a public health priority.

Akos Hoffer,

CEO, The Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre

Co-Chair of the Champlain

Dementia Network

© Copyright (c) The Ottawa Citizen