

Alzheimer Society

YORK REGION

Caregiver Support & Education / D.A.Y. Centres / Support Groups / Resource Centre / Research Support

August 9, 2019

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CLERK'S DEPT.

Dear Ms. McEwan,

On Saturday, Sept. 21, the Alzheimer Society of York Region (AS York) celebrates World Alzheimer's Day, a time to acknowledge the more than 15,000 York Region residents - and 564,000 Canadians - currently living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias (ADOD). Those numbers are only going to increase, more than doubling by 2031. While age is the No. 1 risk factor of developing ADOD, it is not a normal sign of aging.

Considered a family disease, ADOD not only affects those diagnosed, but family and friends. For every person diagnosed with ADOD, another 10 to 12 people are directly impacted. Caregivers, particularly as the illness progresses, provide around-the-clock care and spend 75 per cent more hours helping family members living with ADOD than other chronic illnesses. Caregiver burnout is a threat to many York Region residents.

On World Alzheimer's Day, AS York is hoping to raise awareness of ADOD and change the stigma of a diagnosis by proclaiming Sept. 21 as Dementia Friendly Day for World Alzheimer's Day. AS York, along with other chapters across Ontario, are creating a sea of blue and white at landmarks and public spaces across the province. In Niagara Falls, for example, the falls will be lit blue and white for 15 minutes and the Gateway to the City of Markham will also be lit.

In addition, we are looking for the City of Vaughan to proclaim Sept. 21 Dementia Friendly Day for World Alzheimer's Day. Dementia-friendly communities are ones where neighbours, business people and government representatives in buildings and public spaces understand what ADOD is and that people living with the disease are more than their diagnosis.

By lighting up a Vaughan landmark in blue and white and proclaiming Sept. 21 as Dementia Friendly Day for World Alzheimer's Day, the City of Vaughan is demonstrating that people living with the disease are important, valued and contributing members of the community.

On behalf of AS York, we thank the City of Vaughan for helping raise awareness about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias and help change the stigma.

Sincerely,



Loren Freid
CEO, Alzheimer Society of York Region
905-726-3477, ext. 223; lfried@alzheimer-york.com



2-240 Edward Street, Aurora, ON L4G 3S9
Tel: 905-726-3477 / 1-888-414-5550 / Fax: 905-726-1917 / www.alzheimer-york.com

Charitable Registration # 10670 5429 RR0001

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