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Alzheimer Society of Ontario applauds Government of Ontario's investment in a provincial dementia strategy

TORONTO, April 27, 2017 /CNW/ - The Alzheimer Society of Ontario commends Premier Kathleen Wynne, Minister Charles Sousa and Minister Eric Hoskins for their commitment to invest more than \$100 million over three years towards the implementation of a dementia strategy in Ontario as announced in today's Provincial Budget.

"A fully-funded and comprehensive dementia strategy will help ensure people living with dementia, their care partners and their families have access to the resources and services they need to live as well, and for as long as possible at home and in the community," says Chris Dennis, CEO at the Alzheimer Society of Ontario.

Over the past two years, the Alzheimer Society has worked closely with the provincial government and other stakeholders, and has engaged thousands of Ontarians who have provided input into and demonstrated support for a province-wide strategy.

More than \$100 million over three years has been allocated for the Ontario Dementia Strategy – to support people with dementia and those who care for them through better coordinated and enhanced services. This will include funding to expand province-wide access to community programs and other investments to enhance access to care, information and support from as early as possible once a diagnosis is made. The strategy will help people living with dementia and their care partners find and access the most appropriate care and supports and improve training and education in dementia care for personal support workers, physicians, nurses and other front-line workers. An additional \$20 million for respite care was also announced in the provincial budget.

"The Ontario government has finally given people living with Alzheimer's and other dementias and their caregivers hope for a better way of life," says Karen Harrington, who spent five challenging years caring for her husband Grant Crosbie before he succumbed to an aggressive form of Alzheimer's. Harrington participated in provincial consultations on a dementia strategy and along with thousands of other Ontario families, advocated for the need for a well-resourced provincial strategy.

By 2020, 250,000 Ontarians are expected to have dementia, a number that will be fueled by an aging population, creating greater economic and social challenges for families, communities and society more broadly.

"Ultimately, ongoing commitment to an Ontario-wide strategy will minimize the impact of the disease and create a more coordinated and integrated system of care," says Dennis.

The Alzheimer Society looks forward to continuing to work with its partners in government and the health-care system to help guide and deliver the implementation of the Ontario Dementia Strategy.

SOURCE Alzheimer Society of Canada

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