Hello everyone,

Happy Spring and Summer! It’s hard to believe that winter has gone and we are back into beautiful weather again. I have been on sabbatical for the last six months, and it’s hard to believe that time has come and gone so quickly! I had the opportunity to spend some time in Europe while on sabbatical, and met wonderful people and found out about exciting initiatives happening there. On the pages of this newsletter, I’ve profiled some of the wonderful initiatives that I was able to learn more about in England, Scotland, and the Netherlands.

We have launched our new website: www.northwestdementianetwork.ca I hope you have had a chance to check it out. If you have information about events that you would like us to post, please let us know and we would be happy to do so. Be sure to read on about our half-day workshop and annual general meeting, Award of Excellence, Speaker Series, and highlights in dementia care. Stay tuned for further updates!

If you have news or a story you would like to profile in an issue of the NWDN newsletter, please email ewiersma@lakeheadu.ca. We will be publishing our newsletters in the fall/winter and the spring/summer, and would love to highlight innovative practices, education and research, as well as dedicated people in the area of dementia care and advocacy.

Happy Summer!

Elaine Wiersma
Chair
North West Dementia Network

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Dementia-Friendly Communities... Are We Ready? And North West Dementia Network Annual General Meeting Monday October 6, 2014, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Dementia-Friendly Communities

In 2012, Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom issued a challenge to communities in England, Northern Ireland, and Wales to become more dementia friendly (http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/dementia2012). Since then, the Alzheimer’s Society of the UK has risen to the challenge in supporting communities to become more dementia-friendly. The movement is growing in the UK, Europe, the United States, and across the world. We have much to learn from what other countries are doing. For example, in the UK, the Alzheimer’s Society has commissioned a report outlining what makes communities dementia-friendly based on what people living with dementia and care partners told them. You can find this report, and more helpful information here: http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?documentID=2283

But what is a dementia-friendly community? What does this mean and what does it look like? There is no specific consensus yet on what a dementia friendly community looks like. The UK has developed a 10-point vision, found in their report above, while Minnesota has developed a 5-point vision (http://www.actonalz.org/). We have a unique opportunity here in northwestern Ontario at the beginning of this global movement to define this for ourselves. While there may be differences in what a dementia-friendly community means to different people, there is most certainly one common vision: communities where people living with dementia are included as full citizens, can live without stigma, are supported, and can have a good quality of life. Perhaps this is a lofty goal. But if we aim for the moon, perhaps we’ll reach the stars.

We invite you to come to our annual meeting on Monday October 6, 2014 from 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Our theme this year is “Dementia-Friendly Communities”. We will be having an open forum to discuss what a dementia-friendly community means here in northwestern Ontario. In addition, we’ll be introducing our North West Dementia Working Group, presenting the findings of the Dementia Journey Mapping project, electing our new executive committee, and determining some key action items for the next two years.

We hope to see you there!
Resources and Interesting Tidbits

Did you know that we have started a campaigning group? We are so proud to announce the start of the North West Dementia Working Group, a group for people living with dementia and care partners aimed at creating communities where people living with dementia and care partners are treated with respect and dignity, and where their rights are respected. If you are interested in joining our group or learning more, please contact Elaine Wiersma at ewiersma@lakeheadu.ca or by phone at 807-766-7250. Together, we can make a difference!

Have you heard about the Dementia Village, De Hogeweyk, in the Netherlands? De Hogeweyk is a model dementia village for people living with later dementia. The model of the facility is to provide people living with dementia the opportunities to live life as they always have. Doors are not locked, residents live in small home areas, and amenities such as a general store, restaurant, workshop, music room, and gardens are available to residents. To watch a short CNN documentary on De Hogeweyk, please go to this website: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwiOBlyWpko. I had the privilege of visiting this amazing facility while we were in Europe this spring, and it truly is amazing.

Are you on the email list of the Alzheimer Knowledge Exchange? The Alzheimer Knowledge Exchange brings together existing knowledge so it can be built upon to create new ways of doing things, and impact practice. There is a wealth of helpful knowledge on their website, and they host webinars on a regular basis about important issues in dementia care. See www.akeresourcecentre.org.

Last, I’d like to mention Dementia Alliance International. This is an international advocacy group for and by people living with dementia. For more information, see www.dementiaallianceinternational.org. In particular, check out Maggie Weidmark from Canada who shares her experiences living with dementia at the Alzheimer Disease International conference 2014 http://www.dementiaallianceinternational.org/sharing-experience-dementia-maggie-weidmark/.

~By Elaine Wiersma
Promising Practices

Do you know about the Seniors Health Knowledge Network (SHKN)
http://seniorshealthknowledgenetwork.com/

A Network of Networks The Seniors Health Knowledge Network makes connections: we link people, resources and ideas together to benefit the health of the aging population. Our mission is to make a positive impact on seniors’ health by encouraging advancements in research, education, practice and policy.

Why join the Seniors Health Knowledge Network?
By becoming a member of the Seniors Health Knowledge Network, you will gain access to like-minded people, the latest research, learning tools, resources and information on seniors health care and well-being in Ontario. It’s free to join.

Membership has Incredible Benefits
- Debate hot topics or have your clinical questions answered in our online forums
- Free registration to our new webinar series and other education opportunities
- Email updates on cutting-edge research and best practices implications
- Chance to collaborate and network with other health care professionals and organizations

Making Connections is a webinar series focused on improving seniors’ health and healthcare in Ontario through knowledge translation and exchange. The target audiences are clinicians, caregivers, researchers, policymakers and healthcare leaders. SHKN Communities of Practice (CoPs) will host webinars on hot topics that are relevant to the target audiences and will help inform best practice in seniors’ healthcare.

Visit their YouTube channel to watch the recordings of our Making Connections series webinars, plus other video features. Join the Seniors Health Knowledge Network!

Promising Partnerships

Caregiver Connections is a support system for seniors, and their family and friends who assist in their care. The cornerstone of the program is the Caregiver Support Group that is offered monthly across Northwestern Ontario. Each session has a different focus relating to caregiving, and how to enhance care for seniors. Sessions often involve guest speakers from local health and support agencies. Open discussion and brainstorming among members is always welcomed and encouraged. The focus of each monthly session is chosen based on the needs and request of attendees.

The Caregiver Connections Support Group was originally developed and offered by St. Joseph’s Care Group in Thunder Bay. It is led by nurses with specialized training in geriatrics and hospice/palliative care. The Ontario Telemedicine Network broadcasts the support group across our region using Telemedicine services. In Dryden, this service is offered in conjunction with Dryden Regional Health Centre’s Telemedicine Department and Patricia Gardens.

[Submitted by Lisa Petersen]
NORTH WEST DEMENTIA NETWORK ACTIVITIES

DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES... ARE WE READY?
Monday October 6, 2014, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
The Georgian Room
The Heritage, St. Joseph’s Care Group
63 Carrie Street, Thunder Bay
Or by OTN
(Suggested donation of $5-10 to cover the costs of refreshments for those attending in person)

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

The North West Dementia Network wants to recognize excellence, innovation, and commitment in dementia care and advocacy in the city of Thunder Bay and the rest of the North West district. Persons eligible include individuals (such as advocates, care partners, people living with dementia), health and social service professionals, advocates, leadership, volunteers, and students. Criteria and nomination forms are available on the website www.northwestdementianetwork.ca or you can email Elaine Wiersma at ewiersma@lakeheadu.ca for more information. The successful nominee(s) will receive their awards at the AGM in September, along with a profile write-up in the next edition of the newsletter and on the website.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Are you interested in being a part of our executive committee? Currently, our executive committee is coming to the end of their 2-year terms. If you would like to put your name forward for a two-year term, please contact Elaine Wiersma at ewiersma@lakeheadu.ca or by phone at 766-7250.
CONTACT INFORMATION

Elaine Wiersma  (CERAH, Lakehead University)  ewiersma@lakeheadu.ca  807-766-7250
Lynn Moffatt (Alzheimer Society of Kenora-Rainy River)  lynn@alzheimerkrr.com  807-465-1516
Susan Fairservice (North Shore Family Health Team)  susanfairservice@yahoo.ca
Lisa Petersen (Manor House Adult Day Program)  petersel@tbh.net
Lori Russell (Canadian Mental Health Association)  l russell@cmhaff.ca
Susan Veltri (TBRHSC)  veltris@tbh.net
Ruth Wilford (CERAH, Lakehead University)  rwilford@lakeheadu.ca
Joan Williams  (Hospice Northwest)  williamsj@tbaytel.net

NORTH WEST DEMENTIA NETWORK

c/o Centre for Education and Research on Aging & Health
Lakehead University
955 Oliver Road
Thunder Bay, ON
P7B 5E1

www.northwestdementianetwork.ca