

## The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan Celebrates Saskatchewan Library Week

During Saskatchewan Library Week, we are recognizing libraries and the many contributions they make to communities across the province through individuals like you!

We know libraries play an important role in building healthier communities by helping keep people connected, providing opportunities for lifelong learning, and ensuring access to information. We know how valuable this role is because improving connection, inclusion and understanding is important to us, too.

That's why we are so appreciative of the continued support libraries demonstrate for initiatives like our ABC's of Dementia awareness campaign and Dementia Friendly Communities efforts. During the past 3 years, we have connected with contacts at public libraries across the province and completed ABC's of Dementia presentations at many of these locations, too. This year, we were eager to deepen these conversations by sharing more about Dementia Friendly Libraries at the 2020 SLA Conference in Regina.

While these in-person event opportunities were interrupted, we are still proud of how resilience has allowed learning opportunities and dementia friendly conversations to continue in new ways this year. Did you know:

- The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan recognized National Day of Older Persons on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 by sharing a virtual conversation with community members and library contacts during a **Kitchen Table Talk hosted by the Regina Public Library**.
- Since March 2020, **77 people from 30 different Saskatchewan locations in the Southeast, Palliser, Chinook, Parkland, Regina, Saskatoon, Wheatland, Wapiti, and Prince Albert Regional Library** areas have learned more about dementia and the changes in abilities, behaviour, and communication it can cause through **live, Zoom-based, ABC's of Dementia presentation offerings**. Library patrons are welcome to join in these learning opportunities and library contacts are encouraged to inquire about virtual offerings for Branch or Regional Library staff.
- The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan continues to participate in the **national Dementia Friendly Canada project** with the aim of creating additional online learning resources about dementia friendly considerations for the Canadian workforce – of which, libraries and recreation facilities are identified as key sectors to engage.

Currently, the provincial **Dementia Friendly Toolkit – Library Edition** remains available for library contacts who wish to learn more about ways to improve accessibility, support, and inclusion of people affected by dementia in their communities. Your copy is attached, and we invite you to engage in conversation about how efforts to become more dementia friendly may be applied in your library setting. Many valuable tips and practical ideas (like the **examples of Communication Strategies for staff or signage design and placement considerations**) can be implemented immediately, contributing to better understanding and awareness even while distancing restrictions in the physical environment are in place.

Libraries are important community partners for us to continue to connect with, because people with dementia want to continue to be connected. We hope to continue to work together in the future to build understanding about dementia and empower people and places to become more dementia friendly, too.