



# Alzheimer Society

## Waterloo Wellington



**SAFE PATHWAYS**  
*Supporting dementia in the justice system*

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*PROVINCIAL HSJCC 2015 CONFERENCE*  
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- Funding was received from the Safer and Vital Communities grant through the Ministry of Safety and Correctional Services

### Project Partners

○ Alzheimer Society Waterloo Wellington	○ Guelph Police Service
○ Seniors at Risk – Wellington	○ Specialized Geriatric Services
○ Victim Services	○ St. Joseph's Health Centre Guelph
○ Crown Attorney Office	○ Duty Counsel
○ Community Response Behavior Team	○ Guelph General Hospital
○ Here 24/7 Crisis Services	○ Care partner of person living with dementia



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## Agenda

- Background
  - Dementia
  - Video
  - Crimes and Seniors
  - Domestic Violence
  - Mandated Laws
- Purpose
- Method
- Outcomes
  - Education & Awareness
  - Coordinated Response Process
  - Support in the Judicial System
- Activity and Discussion
- Next Steps



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## Background - Dementia

- Symptoms of dementia include memory loss and impaired judgment, thinking or reasoning and changes in personality and behaviour.
- Persons with dementia, like all individuals, respond to their environment but may not be able to control their response, and as a result, may respond in a way that is socially inappropriate or even criminally offensive.
- These behaviors can lead to incidents that are processed through the criminal justice system.



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## Video

VIDEO

 APPROACHING ALZHEIMER'S  
First Responder Training

alzheimer's  association®


 HOME Course Topics ▾


 Abuse & Neglect


You and your partner are on a call for a domestic disturbance. Based on past experience at this address, you suspect the man has dementia. How will you respond?

Call time: 9 minutes ⌚

START ▶

 Briefing  
Progress: 0%

 Wandering  
Progress: 0%

 Abuse & Neglect  
Progress: 100% COMPLETE

<https://www.alz.org/care/alzheimers-first-responder.asp>



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## Background – Crimes and Seniors

- **Victims of crime:** Scams, thefts, neglect and abuse.
- **Perpetrators of crime:** Thefts, violence and abusers.
- **Family violence:** At a rate of 61 victims of family violence per 100,000 population, seniors aged 65 and older had the lowest rates of family-violence (Statistics Canada, 2011).
- Most often, grown children were responsible for family violence against seniors, **followed by spouses.**



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## Background - Domestic Violence

- Domestic violence is any use of physical or sexual force, actual or threatened, in an intimate relationship, including emotional/psychological abuse or harassing behaviour.
- Intimate relationships include those between the opposite-sex and same-sex partners.
- These relationships vary in duration and legal formality, and include current and former dating, common-law and married couples.



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## Background - Mandated Laws

- Policing standards domestic violence occurrences Section 15:  
...in all domestic violence occurrences **an officer is to lay a charge where there are reasonable grounds to do so**  
including:
  - a) where a person has breached a condition of bail, parole, probation or a peace bond;
  - b) for an offence committed under the Criminal Code, including obstruction of justice (i.e., dissuading the victim from testifying); or.....





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## Background – Mandated Laws

### Example Guelph Police Service: LE-027

- 4.13. Police officers **shall** lay charges in all domestic incidents where there are reasonable grounds to do so, including:
- where a person has breached a condition of bail, parole, probation or a peace bond;
- for any offence committed under the Criminal Code, including obstruction of justice (i.e., dissuading the victim from testifying); or....



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## Purpose - Safe Pathways

- As the prevalence of dementia grows with the aging population, we might expect to see an increase in incidents involving dementia.
- We need to develop strategies to deal with these types of incidents.
- Guelph Police Service and Wellington OPP have been meeting since 2003 with the Wellington Seniors at Risk Consultation Team to discuss incidents where persons with dementia and other mental health issues have faced criminalization.



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## Purpose - Safe Pathways

- To develop a collaborative community approach to support and guide individuals with dementia and their care partners away from and/or through the Guelph and Wellington County Judicial System while maintaining dignity and respect.
- Objectives
  - to raise awareness of risk factors and supports
  - to reduce the likelihood that persons with dementia will enter the criminal justice system
  - to explore ways to divert cases from the judicial system when possible



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## Purpose - Safe Pathways

### Target Groups:

- Persons living with dementia experiencing behavioural disturbance, with a focus on those who have frontal lobe dementia and their care partners (families and friends)
- Professionals (e.g., community agencies, police, the Crown)
- The general public



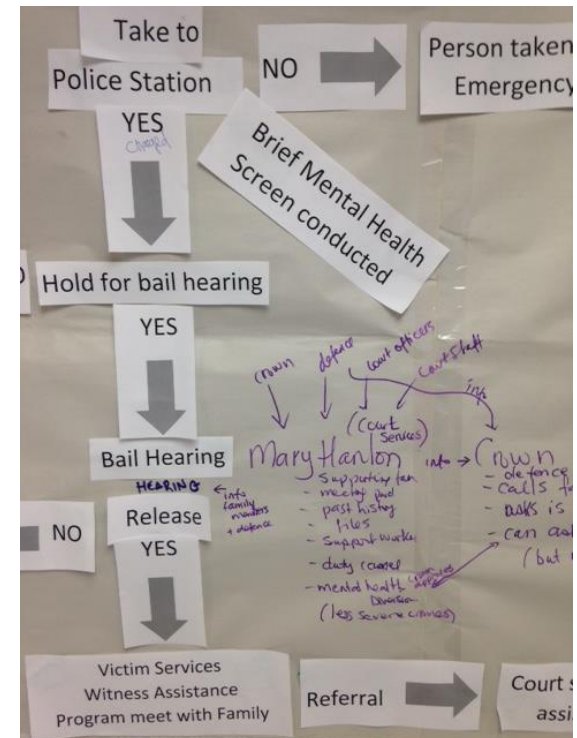
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## Safe Pathways - Method

- Recruited key stakeholders
- Conducted meetings and created working groups
- Conducted an environmental scan
  - Literature
  - Promising best practices
- Conducted interviews with care partners
- Created process and service provider maps
- Presented Safe Pathways at a healthcare provider conference.





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## Safe Pathways - Outcomes

1. An education and awareness initiative for police services, caregivers, health care providers, and the community.
2. A coordinated response and process to assist persons with dementia and their care partners who are experiencing behaviours that may result in a criminal offence.
3. A process for supporting persons with dementia and their care partners already in the justice system.



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## 1. Education & Awareness

- an education and awareness initiative for police services, care partners, health care providers, and the community

○ <b>Presentations</b>	○ <b>Education brochure package &amp; Safety Plan</b>
○ <b>Video</b>	○ <b>Media and marketing campaign</b>
○ <b>Website</b>	○ <b>Online training modules</b>



**Outcomes** – Awareness, prevention and support for persons with dementia and their care partners



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## 2. Coordinated Response

- a coordinated response to assist persons with dementia and their care partners who are experiencing behaviours that may result in a criminal offence.
  - Prevention case conference
  - Crisis case conference

**Outcomes:** a response team that can be contacted (via one phone number) either prior to an incident or after an incident has occurred. They will work as a team to assess and provide support.





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## 3. Process for Support in Judicial System

- Partnering with a Seniors Crimes Coordinator (Guelph Police Service), Crown Attorney, Duty Counsel, Victim Services, and CMHA Court Support and Seniors at Risk
  - dementia friendly holding areas (quiet room)
  - Alternatives re: arrest procedures for persons with dementia
  - Training on dementia for police/justice workers
  - Supporting care partners
  - Vulnerable Person's Registry



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## Activity & Discussion

### Cases studies

1. What did you learn from this case study?
2. What worked well?
3. What problems did you identify in the case study?
4. What could have been done differently?
5. How could we better support persons with dementia and their care partner?



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## Safe Pathways - Next Steps

- Interim housing for persons living with dementia to keep them and family safe
- Guide of healthcare / court support services available to help navigate the systems
- Marketing awareness campaign
- Track incidents related to dementia



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## Connect with us to learn more about Project Safe Pathways

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