

**AMA Survey Highlights –  
People Living with Dementia  
Seniors Health  
Strategic Clinical Network**

**Date:** September 28, 2015

**From:** Dr. Duncan Robertson  
Senior Medical Director; Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network

**RE:** Response Highlights to AMA Survey  
'Assessing Gaps in Care of People Living with Dementia' (PLWD)

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Working closely with the Alberta Medical Association (AMA), the Seniors' Health Strategic Clinical Network developed and distributed a survey to solicit family physician perspectives on gaps in care of people living with dementia. Distributed via the AMA eNewsletter to 4035 primary care physicians, the survey was conducted from June 23 – July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The below are some key highlights from the 275 survey responses:

- 61 % of survey respondents felt that the outlined themes were inclusive, 39 % felt that gaps in the themes existed. The six existing themes outlined include:
  - Primary health care (PHC) is the foundation for recognition, diagnosis & management of PLWD
  - Focused diagnostic services are required to support PHC
  - Formal referral linkages to specialized services are necessary to support PHC
  - Physician compensation structures need review
  - Information and technology innovations are key in supporting PLWD in PHC
  - Driving cessation – evidenced based guideline for safe driving is required

Physicians expressed ideas that additional themes need to be considered:

- Support for Caregivers/Family Advocates
  - Rural Settings – unique needs
  - Home Care and Home Care Supports
  - Development of formal linkages to other community supports
  - PHC and crisis or urgent interventions in the community
- 24 % of family physicians who responded estimated that presently 10% or more of their current practice involves assessment of persons with cognitive concerns or care of people living with dementia.
  - 38 % of family physicians responding to the survey felt that they did not have the necessary training or skills in the area of recognizing and providing care to people living with dementia.

A more detailed survey response analysis is available through the Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network; please feel free to contact Dr. Duncan Robertson at [Duncan.Robertson@ahs.ca](mailto:Duncan.Robertson@ahs.ca) or Charlene Knudsen, SH SCN Practice Lead – Dementia Strategy at [Charlene.Knudsen@ahs.ca](mailto:Charlene.Knudsen@ahs.ca) for further information.