

Building Compassionate Communities

Building Compassionate Communities, Westlock

Aspen PCN and Partners

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The Westlock & District Dementia Working Group endeavours to provide community-wide education, support and events (when restrictions allow) that will support vulnerable seniors and, in particular, those living with dementia and their caregivers by providing opportunities to learn about supporting those in our community who are affected by dementia.

Building Compassionate Communities is vital in helping people live well with dementia and remain a part of their community. Too many people affected by dementia feel society fails to understand the condition they live with, its impact or how to interact with them. Our strategy to share information and education in our community is an innovative way to approach the project.

A dementia-friendly and compassionate community is where people with dementia are understood, respected and supported and people are aware of and understand dementia, so that people with dementia can continue to live in the way they want to and in the community they choose. For many people with dementia, a diagnosis has a significant impact on social relationships, with many people experiencing family and friends no longer wanting to spend time with the person because of their diagnosis. We are creating opportunities for others to gain a better understanding of dementia by supporting meaningful engagement on every day occurrences such as grocery shopping or riding the bus. Engaging youth to support those affected by dementia in the community and in turn the senior can offer skills, stories and companionship to the youth.

Our goal is to build a compassionate community that takes action to foster quality of life for people living with dementia and their care partners by decreasing stigma, increasing opportunities for meaningful social interaction, and offering support in addressing the changing needs of people living with dementia.

Project Objectives:

1. To be supportive in our efforts throughout the duration of the contract with the focus of making Westlock a seniors/dementia friendly and compassionate community.
2. To provide access to sensory kits that are meant to engage or to provide comfort during a stressful time for people living with dementia.



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3. To enhance community partnerships while providing dementia awareness sessions in a collaborative effort.
4. Allow the opportunity for intergenerational exposure and understanding to those persons living with dementia.
5. Promote volunteers to support caregivers through activities, engagement, education and respite.
6. Create opportunities for socially engaging activities focusing on those participants who are socially isolated, vulnerable, and at risk due to caregiving or dementia to participate without barriers.

The building compassionate community approach is designed to support healthy aging in community, to support those living with dementia, and to provide opportunity for intergenerational relationship building. The project will:

- a) Increase awareness and stigma associate with dementia
- b) Increase community partnerships and stakeholder engagement
- c) Provide sensory kits to people living with dementia and agencies for distribution
- d) Promote volunteerism among seniors and other generations
- e) Engage seniors in the community through the mentor of others
- f) Support the social participation and inclusion of seniors with others