

Wellness Articles

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Finding answers to dementia care questions

There's help for those caring for aging parents, family members, or friends with dementia or Alzheimer's. It's only a phone call away.

Dealing with a dementia diagnosis is tough for patients and families. But it's only the first step in the journey that's often fraught with questions.

Joette was getting frustrated trying to help her parents, who live in Winnipeg, find assistance and services, but she felt like she wasn't getting the right kind of help. When she called Health Link at 811, the nurse suggested she speak to a dedicated Dementia Nurse who could give her advice, guidance and help.

"I certainly didn't know I could call Health Link here about someone who was out of the province but they were able to help me," says Joette, who doesn't want her last name used. "I was very surprised; initially we didn't know this resource was even out there."

The Dementia Nurse service is available to callers of Health Link. The Dementia Advice Line aims to respond to the immediate needs of persons with dementia living in community settings or their care partners, who might need health-related advice, education, information on community resources and emotional support. With a goal of getting better access to the most appropriate information and supports, and cutting visits to emergency departments, the Dementia Advice Line has been a huge help for many families and patients.

"One of the most significant benefits of the Dementia Advice Line through Health Link is that it can connect all Albertans with dementia-related advice," says Scott Fielding, Senior Provincial Director, Seniors and Emergency Strategic Clinical Networks. "As long as the person can access a telephone, they can receive advice from a registered nurse that has advanced dementia care experience and knowledge."



“I was moving my mom from Nova Scotia to here and trying to figure out what services I’d require,” recalls Kelly, another caller to Health Link. “I called 811 and they got me in touch with the dementia care team, which was awesome. I got a call later from the team and they were amazing with how they helped me. The information they gave me was invaluable.”

If you or someone you love is living with dementia, including Alzheimer’s disease, the service is available to you:

- Call Health Link 24/7 at 811
- Staff will assess your needs and provide advice immediately for your concerns.
- When needed, you’ll be referred to a specialized dementia nurse for additional advice.

Health Link and the Dementia Nurse Service are dedicated to improving the quality of life for Albertans living with dementia, and their families.

“The service was amazing and made such a huge difference,” says Joette. “We had talked to quite a few people and different services before, and were getting frustrated. But the Health Link Dementia Nurse answered all my questions—and even anticipated what I would ask—and gave me just what I needed to know.”