

Soci t  Alzheimer Society

WINDSOR - ESSEX COUNTY

INTRODUCING FIRST LINK TO HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS **A program to help you care for your patients and families affected by** **Alzheimer's disease and related dementias**

What is First Link[®]?

First Link is a program that connects individuals and families affected by dementia to opportunities for learning, community services and support throughout the course of the disease.

A First Link referral will save you valuable time and energy. It's simple – just fax a referral form and First Link will take it from there

- First Link will provide one to one support to your patients and families
- First Link will provide education about what to expect through the progression of the dementia and how to cope
- First Link makes sure individuals are connected to the appropriate resources in the community

Once the First Link is made, you will notice:

- **Fewer and less intense crises** impacting your patients and families
- Patients and families will be **more knowledgeable and prepared** with enhanced coping skills

Research tells us...

- The average delay in diagnosis from onset of first symptom is 2.5 to 3 years. The delay in seeking diagnosis is attributable to the lack of family recognition and/or family hesitance to seek help, as well as a lack of professional recognition.
- Only 23% of individuals with dementia are currently receiving medications used to alleviate symptoms of dementia.
- Over 50% of dementia cases are diagnosed beyond the mild stage. Earlier diagnosis facilitates earlier treatment with anti-dementia drugs and early family education and support. These interventions have all been shown to improve the situation for clients and caregivers and enables individuals to stay at home longer.

If you need referral pads or forms, or if you would like more information about the First Link program, phone Janice Laforest, First Link Coordinator at 519-974-2220 ext. 231.

First Link – We are here to help.



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