

## OLDER AND WISER: Seniors health expo to explore dementia care

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Chartwell Churchill House Retirement Residence's Nurjehan Kanji, Kay Dixon, Leo O'Neill and Veronica Scott invite community members to the North Shore Seniors' Health Expo, Saturday, Sept. 10 at West Vancouver Community Centre and Seniors' Activity Centre. photo Kevin Hill, North Shore News

A diagnosis of dementia can come as a shock to the person with the disorder and also to their friends and family.

Dementia, as described by the Alzheimer Society of British Columbia, is an overall term for a set of symptoms that are caused by disorders affecting the brain.

Dementia affects all of us in some way. It affects our community, caregivers and people who live with some form of the disorder.

The first North Shore Seniors' Health Expo is a great opportunity to explore the issues around dementia and how individuals and the community as a whole can address these issues. The expo will be held at the West Vancouver Community Centre and Seniors' Activity Centre on Saturday, Sept. 10, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The event, presented by Amica Mature Life Styles and the District of West Vancouver, is the kick off to the Tri-Municipal Dementia Friendly Strategy to help educate people on the North Shore about how to be more supportive of seniors with dementia and their caregivers.

The expo, which is sponsored by the North Shore News, Davies Home Healthcare, Maison Seniors Living, TD Wealth, Nurse Next Door and Lonsdale Event Rentals, will have four interest areas: cognitive, physical, social and financial health.

The expo will feature exhibits, innovative speakers, researchers, food and music. Come and be entertained, educated, informed and amazed.

At the start of the day, guests can listen to expert speakers on dementia. Keynote speaker Dr. Heather Palmer will open with a talk on how you can maintain and improve brain functioning as you age.

“Cognitive aging tends to be stigmatized, with less awareness and understanding. ... This need not be the case,” she says.

Palmer’s session is intended to help empower people to improve their cognitive well-being thus bringing purpose and meaning to the every day.

Continuing the cognitive part of the expo, speakers will talk about the pillars of active aging and caring for you while caring for someone with dementia.

A panel will talk about how we as a community can support a dementia-friendly community. The panel will feature a person with dementia, a caregiver and a social planner who assisted New Westminster in creating a Dementia Friendly Community. Representatives of Vancouver Coastal Health will suggest resources and those from the Alzheimer Society of B.C. will share how they support residents, caregivers and the community.

Speakers have been lined up to talk about the physical, social and financial well-being of seniors. You will find informative talks on fall prevention, adaptive living, eating for health, financial and end-of-life planning, downsizing and active living.

The 40 exhibitors will showcase a host of services and products, including home care solutions, care facilities, wellness centres, and travel, handyman, funeral, downsizing and seniors’ services.

A not-for-profit table will feature valuable information about the many groups on the North Shore involved in the seniors community. At the table you can collect a swag bag full of freebies.

Free transportation, organized by Silver Harbour Seniors’ Activity Centre and West Vancouver Seniors’ Activity Centre, will be available. For information on the pick-up and drop-off locations, phone the front desk at West Vancouver Seniors’ Activity Centre at 604-925-7280.

While the expo will focus on dementia, with the wide variety of offerings from speakers, exhibitors and the added bonus of food and music, there will truly be something for everyone.

*Margaret Coates is the co-ordinator of Lionsview Seniors’ Planning Society. She has lived on the North Shore for 47 years and has worked with and for seniors for 20 of those. Ideas for future columns are welcome. Email: [lions\\_view@telus.net](mailto:lions_view@telus.net) ([mailto:lions\\_view@telus.net](mailto:lions_view@telus.net)). Info: [lionsviewseniorsplanning.com](http://lionsviewseniorsplanning.com) (<http://lionsviewseniorsplanning.com>).*

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