

Services to Seniors Coalition – North Shore

Co-Chairs

- Trish Alsop, *North Shore Neighbourhood House, and John Braithwaite Community Centre*
- Margaret Coates, *Lionsview Seniors' Planning Society*

About the Coalition

The **Lionsview Seniors' Planning Society** is the host agency for the Services to Seniors Coalition – North Shore. The Coalition has been operating since 1992 and is the planning table for issues facing seniors and services to seniors on the North Shore. The 50+ participating organizations and individuals represent a wide spectrum of service providers. We come together as the Coalition to network, plan services and supports strategically and set priorities and target resources for collaborative action.

Contact the Coalition

C/o Lionsview Seniors' Planning Society
1733 Lions Gate Lane
North Vancouver
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Meeting Notes

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

12:00 pm to 1:30 pm

Hosted by Capilano Community Services Society

1. **Welcome – Trish Alsop**
2. **Land Acknowledgement**

At Lionsview, we recognize with gratitude that our work takes place on the unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples, the St'at'imc, Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), and səliwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh). We honour their histories, cultures, and ongoing leadership, and we remain committed to building community in ways that respect and uplift these lands and their caretakers.

3. **Attendees:**

Lionsview Seniors Planning Society: Margaret Coates, Lindsay Macklin, Wallis Dixon, Barry Goodwin, Don Peters

Coalition member: Adele Wilson

Hollyburn Community Services Society: Veronica Traille, Destiny Doherty, Mary Sorrenti, Vamika Mendiratta, Lindsey

North Shore Neighborhood House: Lea Howard, Trish Alsop

North Shore Community Resources: Anne-Marie Jamin, Judy Stott, Kathy Jarvis

City of North Vancouver Library: Rakhshanda Ansari

City of North Vancouver: Lisa Wambaa

Alzheimer's Society: Jill Wychopen, Amelia Gillies

Parkgate: Alex Fograscher

Family Service: Robin Rivers

Capilano Community Services: Austin Neaves

West Vancouver Seniors Activity Centre: Jen Jeffrey

CFUW: Fiona, Margaret

WESN: Andrea Wadman

Next meeting: April 21, 2026, at 12:00 pm (Location TBD)

4. Presentations

- a. **Presenters:** Amelia Gillies, Jill Wychopen

First Link – Dementia Support Program

First Link supports individuals living with dementia and their caregivers throughout the journey by providing ongoing support, education, and connections to resources.

Services include:

- **Support:** One-on-one phone support (including Dementia Helpline: 1-800-936-6033) and support groups (early-stage, caregiver, and specialized groups such as LGBTQ2+ and frontotemporal dementia).
- **Education:** In-person workshops for the public on understanding dementia, including types such as Alzheimer's (60–70%), vascular (10–20%), frontotemporal (10%), Lewy Body (5%), Parkinson's-related, and other rarer forms.
- **Social programs and referrals** to community services.

Access: Self-referral or referral from healthcare providers or community organizations.

Dementia Education Highlights

Dementia presents differently for each individual, but common signs and symptoms include:

- Memory loss and difficulty with familiar tasks
- Changes in attention (e.g., overstimulation, difficulty following conversations or storylines)
- Communication challenges and difficulty with abstract thinking
- Altered judgment and disorientation in time or place
- Vision and perception changes affecting depth and understanding
- Loss of initiative, withdrawal from activities, and reduced insight
- Physical changes related to perception (e.g., difficulty with contrast or glare)

Additional notes:

- Participants may require support to attend and engage in programs
- Denial or lack of insight is a recognized symptom
- Caregiving dynamics may lead to increased social isolation for both partners
- Community education is available on topics such as dementia and driving

Diagnosis and Risk Factors

There is no single test for dementia; diagnosis involves a process of elimination, including medical history, physical exams, lab work, and cognitive testing.

- Private blood testing (LifeLabs) is available (\$300–\$400) to detect Alzheimer’s-related proteins for those showing symptoms
- Emerging treatments (e.g., through UBC) require testing and may have significant side effects

Risk factors include: age (65+), genetics, higher prevalence in females, high blood pressure, untreated hearing loss, lower education levels, socioeconomic factors, and diabetes.

Resources and Programs

Available supports include:

- On-demand videos and weekly webinars (Wednesdays at 2:00 PM)
- *Minds in Motion* (Silver Harbour & West Vancouver Seniors Centre) for individuals with dementia and their care partners
- Website, newsletter, and service navigation support

b. Coalition Plan Discussion

Volunteerism: The group discussed challenges with volunteer recruitment and retention, and the potential for a more coordinated North Shore approach.

- **NSCR (Volunteer North Shore):**
 - Matches volunteers with approximately 70 organizations
 - Hosts an annual volunteer fair
 - Limited capacity for large-scale appreciation events
 - Interest in collaborating on expanded appreciation efforts and research support

Program Awareness: Participants noted ongoing challenges in promoting programs and services.

Potential solutions include:

- A centralized, up-to-date website for seniors’ services (building on NSCR’s asset map)
 - Would require dedicated funding and coordination
 - United Way has expressed interest
- Increased use of existing channels such as the *North Shore Now* weekly newsletter

5. Announcements

Hollyburn Services: Launching a **Hidden Housing Solutions – Roommate Registry** for adults 55+:

- Matches homeowners and home seekers to reduce isolation and improve affordability
- Includes facilitated matching, a 60-day trial period, and ongoing mediation support
- Outreach through community organizations, libraries, recreation centres, and media

- Currently focused on seniors matching with seniors, with potential for future flexibility

Canadian Federation of University Women: A national organization (est. 1919, ~6,000 members) focused on social connection, education, and advocacy.

- Hosting a community forum on Age-Friendly Communities featuring Dr. Mei Feng (urban aging specialist)

NSCR: Seniors Directory is now available