



From Support to Scale

Strengthening partnerships and expanding our reach for people impacted by dementia

Annual Report

2024-2025

The
**Dementia
Society**
Ottawa and Renfrew County



La
**Société de la
démence**
Ottawa et comté de Renfrew

Reflections From Our Board Chair & CEO

A Year of Growth, Connection and Community

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on the last twelve months, we are filled with pride and gratitude for the people, partners, and community who make our work possible. Together, we strengthened our support for caregivers and people living with dementia, making a critical difference for thousands of families in communities across the region.

We expanded our social and recreational programs, including innovative offerings like the Daisy Café on the Go in Renfrew County, creating safe spaces that offer meaningful connection. We also grew our dementia care coaching services, reaching people earlier in their diagnosis and helping them build confidence and support right from the start of their journey.

Behind the scenes, we improved how people access our services. By enhancing our intake processes, we are now connecting with individuals faster, addressing concerns sooner, and ensuring those with the most urgent needs receive timely one-on-one support.

One of the year's highlights was our Walk for Dementia which continues to be an incredibly joyful reunion of clients, supporters, staff, and volunteers. Together, we surpassed our ambitious target, raising \$260,000 to help more people and families across our region.

We strengthened our evidence-based decision-making, using data and client feedback to better understand service trends, identify gaps, and guide future growth, particularly as we work to reach more diverse and underserved communities. This work aligns with the launch of our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism initiatives, supported by learning and reflections from our staff, clients and wider community partners.

We are especially mindful of the extraordinary contributions of caregivers, many of whom provide care far beyond national averages, and we are honoured to support them with this meaningful, responsive programming.

Looking to the year ahead, we will continue to listen carefully to the voices of caregivers, to strengthen advocacy for people living with dementia, and to increase awareness so that everyone who needs dementia support knows where to turn - free of charge, and with no referral required.

Thank you for your trust and support. Together, we are building a more compassionate, inclusive community for everyone impacted by dementia so that no one faces dementia alone.

With deepest appreciation,



Margaret Egan
Board Chair



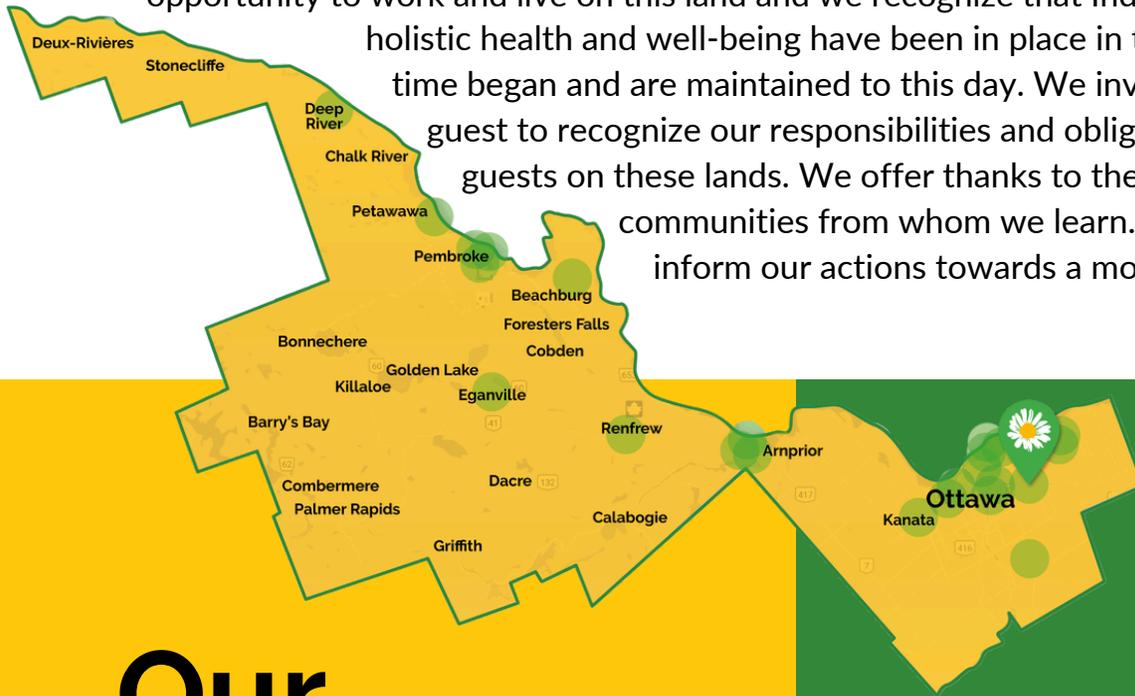
Monique Doolittle-Romas
Chief Executive Officer



Land Acknowledgment

The Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County gratefully acknowledges the Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island. We gather in the unceded traditional territory of the Algonquin as the original custodians of this land. We are grateful for the opportunity to work and live on this land and we recognize that Indigenous practices of

holistic health and well-being have been in place in this territory since time began and are maintained to this day. We invite everyone who is a guest to recognize our responsibilities and obligations to be good guests on these lands. We offer thanks to the elders and communities from whom we learn. May this wisdom inform our actions towards a more just future.



Our Vision

Here, no one faces dementia alone.TM

Our community is one where people impacted by dementia are valued, supported, and included.

We continue to evolve our services with more support, programs, and education more people facing all types of dementia to enhance their quality of life and care throughout their long and often difficult journey.

Our Mission

We provide compassionate support, tailored care coaching, and practical education for everyone impacted by dementia while building a dementia inclusive community.

What is Dementia?

Dementia is an umbrella term that describes a set of symptoms affecting brain function. It's a chronic condition that gets more severe over time and is often characterized by:

It's a chronic condition that gets more severe over time and is often characterized by:

A decline in:

- Memory
- Planning
- Language
- Judgement

Physical changes like:

- Loss of coordination
- Loss of bladder control
- Weak and stiff muscles
- Trouble standing, sitting or walking

And changes in mood and behaviour.



When do Persons Living with Dementia, Caregivers, and Families Need Help?



- At the point of first diagnosis and points of change.
- When psychological and behavioral symptoms occur.
- When functioning is declining.
- At any point in a person's journey.



How We Help

All services are free and available in English and French.



Education

- Dementia awareness and prevention
- Care strategies for people living with dementia
- Planning for living with dementia

Coaching

- 1:1 Dementia Care Coaching
- Peer Support Groups
- Pre-Diagnosis-End-of-life
- Tailored care plans for people living with dementia
- Practical assistance and emotional support

Engagement

- Social connections to reduce isolation
- Support Groups
- Social and recreational programs
- Meaningful participation and enjoyment

Health System Improvement

- For people living with dementia
- Problem solving for caregiver challenges
- Transitions of care
- Gap filling



2024-2025 Highlights

As more people are impacted by dementia, as more people are diagnosed, and as more of us live longer in the community, more and different supports are needed by people living with dementia and by those who care for them. In addition to serving thousands of people through our core programs and services, the Dementia Society continued to seek ways to meet the changing needs of our community across the continuum of the dementia journey.

In 2024-25, we delivered core services while also working towards an increased community presence, increased awareness and increased advocacy around dementia, as well as building partnerships locally, provincially and nationally.

2024-2025 Services Highlights

- Through our Dementia Link programming, Dementia Care Coaches provided direct support to 3833 individuals.
- We saw an 8% increase in professional referrals, and over 600 self-referrals, speaking to increased awareness of services and resources for families who need support.
- The Dementia Society's 2024 Client Survey revealed that 92.4% of respondents reported gaining the knowledge and guidance to better care for someone living with dementia—an increase of 21.4% from 2023.
- Our online presence was significant, with social media growth of 1.5% over last year and over 192,000 media impressions.
- Over **\$845,000** raised thanks to the generosity of our committed donors and sponsors.

Looking forward, we know the need for services and support for families and dementia caregivers is growing. In Ottawa and Renfrew County, 24,000 people are currently living with dementia. Our dementia population is expected to grow to slightly less than 60,000 by the year 2050. The Dementia Society needs to reach all of them.



From Support to Scale

Highlights from 2024-2025

Over the past year (2024-2025), our commitment to public education and dementia awareness has grown stronger, reaching more members of our community through meaningful and impactful programming. Committed to expanding our reach and awareness, we are building the foundation needed to support the dramatic projected increase in the prevalence of dementia in our community.

Rare Dementia Support Canada

In early 2025, the Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County (DSORC) was invited to support Rare Dementia Support Canada (RDS Canada), a national virtual support community and centre for research and education funded by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research. DSORC contributes to this initiative by supporting a **francophone community-led group**, ensuring that lived experience informs recommendations for more inclusive dementia supports. This collaboration strengthens national research efforts and helps advance **equitable, culturally responsive services** for individuals and families living with rare dementia.

Canadian Air Transport Security Authority

Following advocacy from a DSORC caregiver highlighting barriers faced by individuals living with hidden disabilities during air travel, the Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County (DSORC) was invited to support the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA) in the development and implementation of its new **Accessibility Plan**. With guidance from a dedicated Dementia Care Coach, DSORC contributed expertise to help strengthen **dignity-centred, inclusive, and barrier-free travel practices**. This collaboration ensures that the lived experiences of people living with dementia and their caregivers inform national accessibility policies, advancing equitable participation and independence for all travellers.

The Champlain Dementia Network

The Champlain Dementia Network (CDN) is a collaborative regional network that equips healthcare providers with resources to support people living with dementia and their families to live well with dignity and resilience. With more than **60 partner organizations**, the Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County (DSORC) provides leadership, administration, advocacy, and coordination for the network. By supporting strategic planning, working groups, and knowledge sharing, DSORC helps strengthen system-wide capacity, foster collaboration, and advance integrated, evidence-based dementia care across the region.

Dementia Care Coaching in Hospitals

According to the Government of Canada, “seniors with dementia wait longer in emergency departments, are more likely to be admitted and more prone to harm.”¹ In an effort to address this and to intervene at a critical point of need, the Dementia Society has been working directly with Ottawa-area hospitals. This initiative is a means to connect with some of the most fragile individuals in our community in need of dementia supports, facilitate their transition to home, and help to support continued and safe community living.

Alzheimer’s Awareness Month, January 2025: Broadening Understanding of Dementia

At the Dementia Society, we believe that brain-health and dementia awareness go beyond Alzheimer’s Disease. We endeavoured to expand our audience’s understanding by sharing dementia information broadly during Alzheimer’s Awareness month where we highlighted **different stigmas of dementia** - public stigma, courtesy stigma, self stigma, affiliate stigma and structural stigma.

Ontario Centres for Learning, Research & Innovation in Long-Term Care at Bruyère Health

The Dementia Society co-developed and will lead an education session for the **Family & Care Partner Series** – Let’s Talk About Dementia in collaboration with Bruyère Health. Focused on advanced dementia, the session equips caregivers to maintain meaningful connections, support comfort and dignity, understand physical and behavioural changes, manage emotional impacts, communicate with care teams, and access available resources. DSORC’s **expertise** ensures **caregivers are empowered** with practical, evidence-based tools to enhance quality of life.

Ontario Health Team Partnerships

DSORC’s **partnerships and collaboration** with four key Ontario Health Teams (reflective of our catchment area) has continued throughout the year:

- Ottawa Ontario Health Team - Équipe Santé Ontario d’Ottawa (OOHT-ESOO)
- Ottawa West Four Rivers Ontario Health Team (OWFR)
- Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team (OVOHT)
- Équipe Santé Ontario Archipel (Archipel)

Ottawa Untold Video

DSORC was selected as the winner of **Ottawa Untold**, a community storytelling initiative by Simple Story. The organization donated a fully produced video highlighting DSORC’s work supporting individuals and families affected by dementia. Launched in May 2025, the video shares caregiver stories, raising awareness of the challenges faced by the 24,000 people living with dementia in the region and demonstrating how DSORC provides guidance, connection, and support for caregivers navigating complex care journeys.

Ottawa Public Health

From June to September 2024, the Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County (DSORC) contributed to a series of consultations led by Ottawa Public Health (OPH) to share insights on the experiences of older adults in the city. DSORC provided expertise on best practices for safety, inclusion, and accessibility, helping inform the **Older Adult Plan 2025–2030**. In March 2025, OPH shared its findings, reflecting community input and outlining next steps to strengthen supports and services for older adults across Ottawa.

Jason Blaine Charitable Fund

DSORC received a \$5,000 grant from the Jason Blaine Charitable Fund to support **Daisy Café in the Counties**. The 12-week program in **Arnprior, Pembroke, and Deep River** connected caregivers and people living with dementia, fostering peer support, reducing isolation, and strengthening community partnerships across Renfrew County.

Recognition of Dementia Learning Hub

DSORC's Dementia Learning Hub received national recognition with the publication of its poster abstract in the **June 2024 issue of the Canadian Geriatrics Journal**. Following DSORC's presentation at the **Canadian Conference on Dementia** in November 2023, the abstract highlighted the organization's innovative, person-centered digital education model. This peer-reviewed recognition places DSORC alongside leading Canadian dementia experts and institutions, validating the Learning Hub as a trusted, evidence-based resource supporting individuals, caregivers, and professionals across this region, and beyond.

Read on to learn more about these initiatives and how they underscore the Dementia Society's commitment to partnership, growth and awareness.



“My Dementia experience was excellent. My experience with the support group was so helpful. I learned a lot from other members in the group as well.”

More Reach ● ● ●

Untold Ottawa Video Project

In 2024, as part of their annual “give-back” program, Simple Story video partnered with The Dementia Society to produce a live-action video at no cost. The goal was to help more families in Ottawa and Renfrew County find free, local support when they need it most.

The video was built from real moments with caregivers and staff, and shaped into a clear, hopeful story that’s easy to share across web, social, events, and fundraising. The video’s simple message of support and connection dovetails with our mission to ensure that, in Ottawa and Renfrew County, no one faces dementia alone.

With 24,000 people currently diagnosed with dementia in our region, a number expected to more than double by 2050, we strive to share how we support caregivers throughout their journey. By featuring caregiver stories, we illustrate how we help them navigate difficult times and decisions.



More Awareness

Regional Leadership, Growing National Awareness

The Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County (DSORC) works to increase awareness of dementia, promote best practices in care, and ensure caregivers and community partners are informed, supported, and connected.

During Alzheimer's Awareness Month in January 2025, DSORC invited the community to deepen its understanding of dementia and brain health through education and engagement. The focus was expanding awareness of lifestyle choices that may help reduce dementia risk, aligning with emerging research that suggests up to 40% of dementias may be preventable.

DSORC hosted an educational webinar exploring the links between concussions, body trauma, and dementia, featuring national experts Dr. Carmela Tartaglia (UHN Memory Clinic) and Tim Fleiszer (Concussion Legacy Foundation Canada). The session provided practical, actionable guidance to support brain health while reinforcing that DSORC is here when support is needed.

DSORC continued to strengthen its digital presence this year through online resources, social media, and newsletters; expanding access to evidence-based information for caregivers, professionals, and the public.

DSORC also demonstrated leadership at both regional and national levels through participation in networks such as the Champlain Dementia Network, supporting over 60 partner organizations through collaboration, knowledge sharing, and system-level advocacy.

Together, these efforts elevated public awareness and amplified the voices of those with lived experience, positioning DSORC as a trusted leader in dementia care.

More Partnerships ● ● ●

Community Support Services (CSS) Advisor Pilot Project Ottawa Hospital – Civic Campus

The Community Support Services (CSS) Advisor Pilot Project at The Ottawa Hospital (TOH) – Civic Campus demonstrates the impact of embedding community-based expertise directly within hospital emergency care. Designed to support older adults and caregivers, the CSS Advisor role strengthens timely access to community services, supports safe transitions home, and helps reduce avoidable strain on the emergency department.

Launched in December 2023 through a collaboration within the Ottawa Ontario Health Team – Équipe Santé Ontario “Home First Working Group,” the CSS Advisor serves as a dedicated resource for patients, caregivers, and healthcare professionals. By increasing awareness of available supports and streamlining referral pathways, the role bridges critical gaps between hospital care and community services.

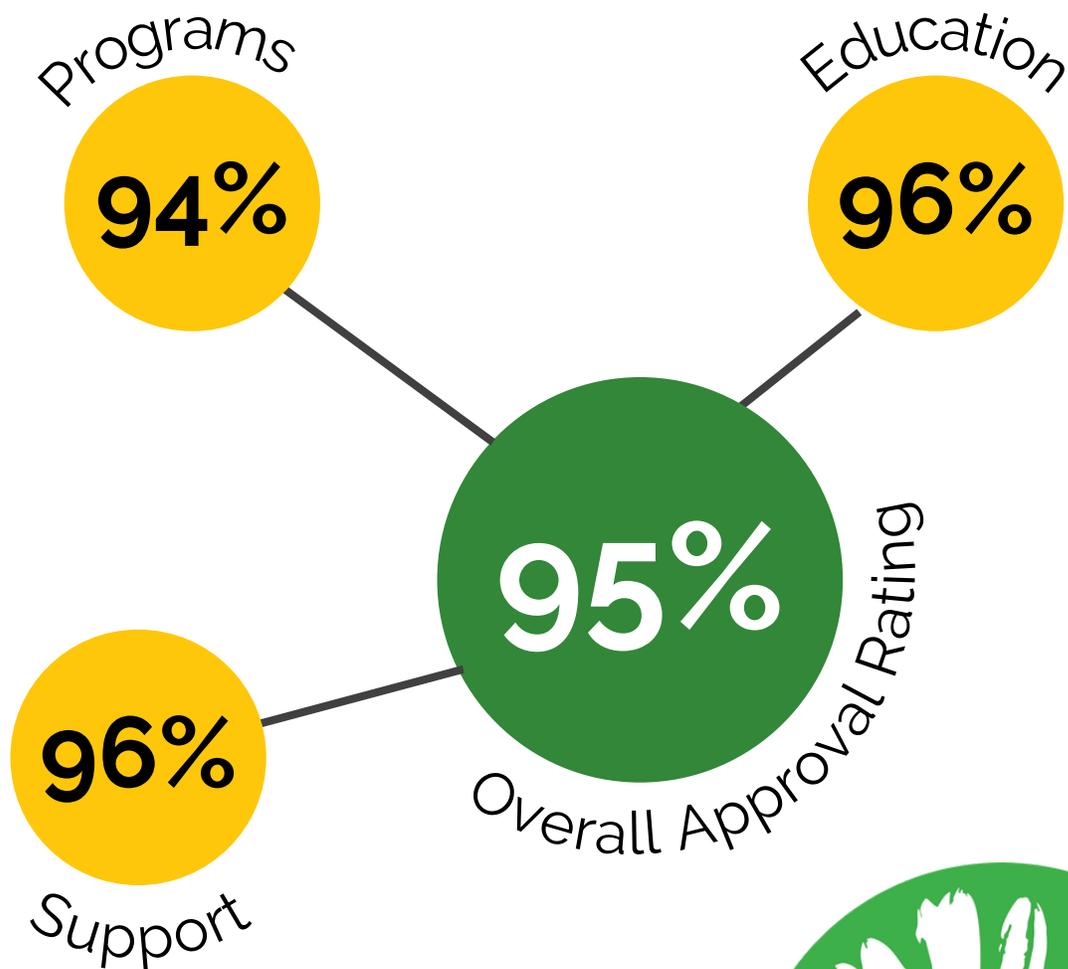
Over the course of the pilot:

- **253** unique individuals were supported through **732** documented touchpoints
- **557** direct referrals and **175** indirect referrals were completed
- Referral pathways were streamlined through AccessCSS and EPIC, improving efficiency and coordination.

The pilot highlights the value of hospital–community partnerships in improving patient outcomes, supporting caregivers, and enabling older adults to live safely at home.

With temporary funding secured through March 2026, the CSS Advisor initiative is well positioned to demonstrate scalability and long-term value as a model for integrated, person-centred care across the region.





What do our clients think of The Dementia Society?

The 2024–2025 client survey gathered feedback from thousands of Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County program users. Consistent with previous years, respondents rated core service pillars very favourably, while also identifying emerging learning needs and opportunities to enhance service delivery. Overall feedback was overwhelmingly positive, reflecting DSORC’s commitment to excellence and compassion in support and care.

Our Volunteers

As a local charitable organization providing services in Ottawa and Renfrew County, our volunteers are the foundation for our impact. We would not be able to help as many people as we do without them providing their time and expertise to support The Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County's mission and vision. We are thankful for the efforts of our volunteers every day.

Dementia Society volunteers empower us to help better the lives of the people and families that are impacted by dementia.



289
volunteers

4156
hours



Our Board of Directors

- Margaret N. Egan, Chair
- Tom Caldwell, Vice-Chair
- Louise Laramée, Secretary
- Paul Morton, Treasurer
- Anne Hennessey
- Veronica Engelberts
- Marilyn Fevrier
- Joseph Power
- Megan Wright
- Hillel Finestone

Fund Development ● ● ●

While the Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County does receive partial funding from the provincial government, and project funding from other institutional funding sources, individual donations and corporate sponsorships provide about half of the funds required to extend our individual and group support and education services, and social-recreational programs.

Thank you!

Thank you to the thousands of donors and supporters who generously contributed to our fundraising success in 2024-2025. Together we raised over \$845,000 - directly benefitting people impacted by dementia—in all its forms—right here, in Ottawa & Renfrew County.

The following are just some of the initiatives organized by the Dementia Society and members of our community in support of our mission in 2024-25

Walk for Dementia: A 30-year Community Fundraising Tradition

The 2024 Walk for Dementia united individuals, families, donors, sponsors, and community members in a meaningful day of connection and support. The event strengthened access to dementia programs and services across our region, helping shift the experience of dementia from isolation to one of community, compassion, and connection.

Our brain boost sponsors play an especially pivotal role in helping us spread the word to build a more compassionate, inclusive, and dementia-friendly community, one donation at a time.

44
teams

300+
walkers

1100+
donors

\$265K+
raised

Thank you to our Walk for Dementia 2024 Sponsors!





#GIVINGTUESDAY

Giving Tuesday 2024 - Amplifying Impact

Giving Tuesday has emerged as a powerful global annual giving event. In 2024, our digital campaign shared Geraldine's heartfelt story of finding support from the Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County.

The impact of our combined End of Year campaigns (Giving Tuesday and Holiday campaign) was amplified further by the incredible generosity of major donors, Margaret & Dave Thomas and Margaret Egan, who matched Campaign donations dollar for dollar. As a result, our 2024 End of Year Campaign was the most successful of its kind in DSORC's history, generating **\$109,400** for caregivers and people living with dementia!

The Dementia Society thanks our many anonymous donors for their generosity, and Geraldine for generously sharing her story.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all participants, donors, and volunteers who made these initiatives possible, and for their support to ensure that here in Ottawa and Renfrew County, no one faces dementia alone.™

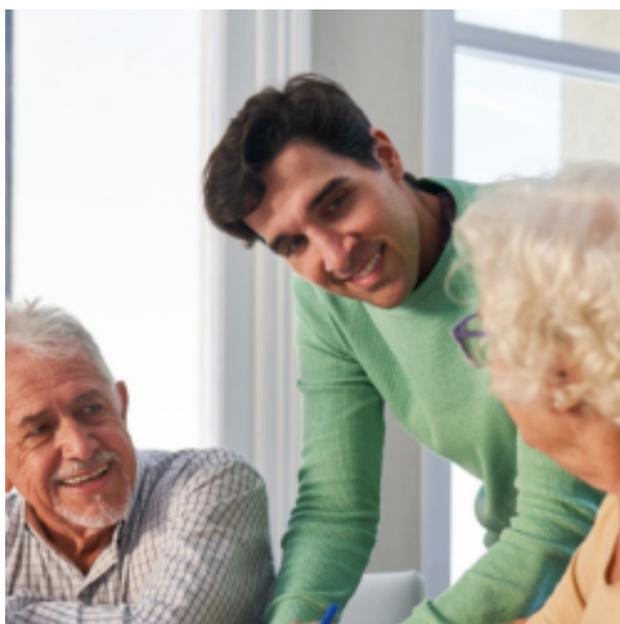
Featured Local Funder: Jason Blaine Charitable Fund

Following a successful application to the Jason Blaine Charitable Fund, DSORC received a \$5,000 grant to support **Daisy Café in the Counties**, a 12-week program delivered in Arnprior, Pembroke, and Deep River. The weekly sessions connected caregivers and people living with dementia in the early to moderate stages, reducing isolation and strengthening peer connection. Participants reported positive impacts from sharing familiar activities in their own communities, while caregivers benefited from regular access to dementia care coaches and practical supports. The initiative also strengthened partnerships with local community organizations and businesses across Renfrew County. Thank you Jason Blaine Charitable Fund!

Revenue ● ● ●

Revenue	2025	2024
Government annual funding (note 8)	1,270,999	1,205,293
Other funding (note 10)	746,158	311,372
Donations	513,677	396,823
Fundraising	405,274	291,854
Government one-time funding	234,790	303,176
Other	42,746	12,195
Investment income	41,883	138,113
Restricted donations for other programs	18,923	23,910
Bequests	439	228,516
	3,274,888	2,911,256

2025 Condensed Statement of Revenue, March 31, 2025.



Looking Forward

Strategic Plan 2025–2028: Strengthening Impact and Reach

As the number of people living with dementia continues to grow, the Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County (DSORC) is strengthening its focus to meet rising demand with clarity, sustainability, and impact. The 2025–2028 Strategic Plan provides a practical road map to guide the organization’s priorities over the next three years, ensuring programs and services continue to respond to the needs of caregivers and people living with dementia across Ottawa and Renfrew County.

Developed in partnership with The Practical Strategist, the plan was informed by staff and Board engagement, a review of internal data, and an analysis of the current operating environment. The Strategic Plan is anchored by four interconnected objectives.

Increasing awareness of the Dementia Society will elevate public and institutional understanding of DSORC’s impact and establish the organization as a trusted regional leader in dementia care. By amplifying client voices and participating in key sector conversations, DSORC will strengthen its role within the broader health and community services system.

Strengthening organizational capacity and sustainability focuses on diversifying revenue sources, stewarding donor relationships, and fostering an informed, engaged workplace culture. Investing in staff, volunteers, and governance ensures DSORC remains resilient and positioned for long-term growth.

Supporting caregivers and people living with dementia remains central to the organization’s mission. DSORC will continue to deliver high-quality, evidence-based programs while scaling services to meet increasing demand and supporting clients to age well at home and live with dignity across all care settings.

Improving the client journey—together emphasizes equitable access, continuous feedback, and collaboration. By strengthening partnerships and working alongside community and health system stakeholders, DSORC will help shape coordinated, person-centred dementia care.

Progress will be measured through clear key performance indicators focused on awareness, sustainability, service reach, client satisfaction, and collaboration. Together, these priorities position DSORC to expand its impact while remaining responsive, inclusive, and community-centred.

Thank You ! Merci!

To Our Community Partners and Funders

The Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County is deeply grateful to our community partner organizations for their support and programming spaces, and to our funders. Without their confidence and support, so many initiatives to advance our mission could not have been undertaken.





The Dementia Society of Ottawa and Renfrew County

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The
**Dementia
Society**
Ottawa and Renfrew County



La
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