

# Making Your Home More Dementia-Friendly

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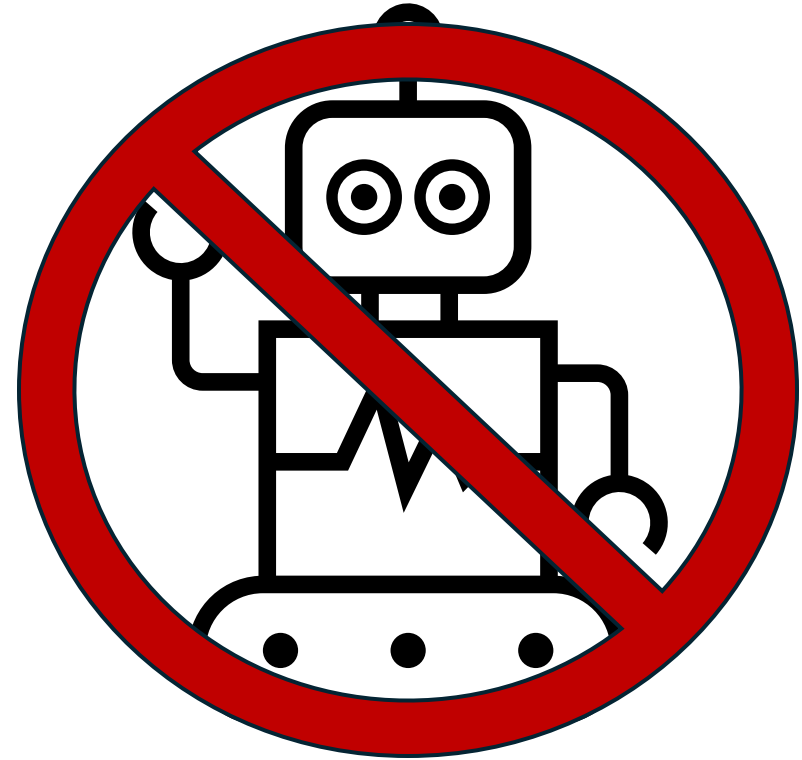
**Nicole McDonald**

**Dementia-Friendly Communities Senior Manager**

**Alzheimer Society of Manitoba**



# No Recording





**DEMENTIA**

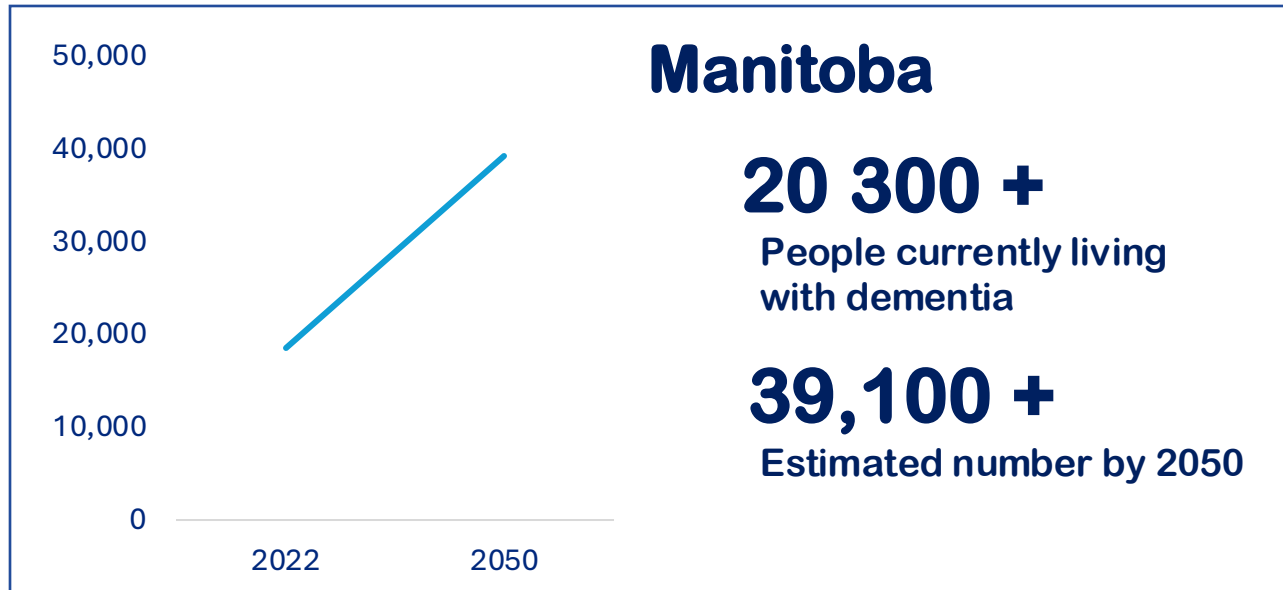
**ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE**

**LEWY BODY DEMENTIA**

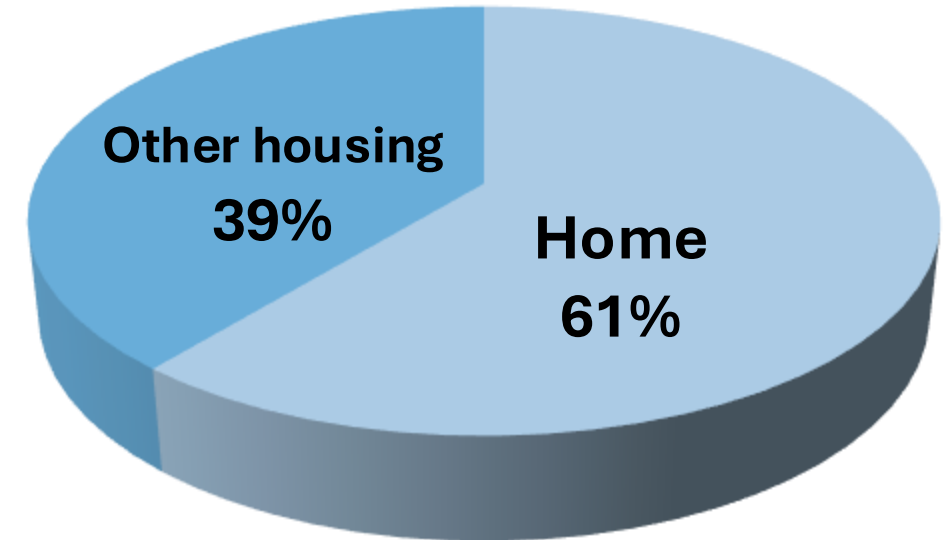
**VASCULAR DEMENTIA**

**FRONTO-TEMPORAL DEMENTIA**

# Dementia by the Numbers



## Place of Residence



**62%**

Manitobans have a family member or friend with dementia

**9** New Diagnoses Per Day

# Notable Changes

- Visual
  - Reduced visual field
  - Peripheral vision loss/binocular vision
- 3D changes
- Perception changes
  - Need more light
  - Misinterpret sensory information
    - Shiny floors, dark rugs, patterned carpets
    - Shadows



# Notable Changes

- **Agnosia:** Inability to recognize objects
- **Apraxia:** Difficulty with purposeful movement
- **Aphasia:** Communication challenges
  - 1 in 4 words or substitute/miss words



# Dementia-Friendly?

## A Dementia-Friendly Community or Space:

- Considers and addresses the impact of the physical and social environment
- Helps to support people living with dementia to navigate their surroundings as dementia progresses
- Reduces anxiety, stigma, and frustration
- Focuses on including people and accessibility standards

We're not talking about moving mountains. We're talking about ***small adjustments*** that can make a big difference.

# Pillars of Dementia-Friendly

- 1. Physical Environment**
- 2. Social Environment**
- 3. Meaningful Engagement**



# **The Physical Environment**

# Physical Environment

## Consider:

- Lighting
- Signage
- Sound
- Surfaces and clutter
- Furniture and layout (rearranging)



# Notice the Difference?



# Notice the Difference?



# Notice the Difference?



# Notice the Difference?



# Notice the Difference?





# **The Social Environment**

# Social Environment

- A dementia-friendly social environment starts with a shift in thinking
- A person living with dementia is more than their diagnosis
- Everyone has a role to play in making them feel supported, valued, and independent
- Person-centered language



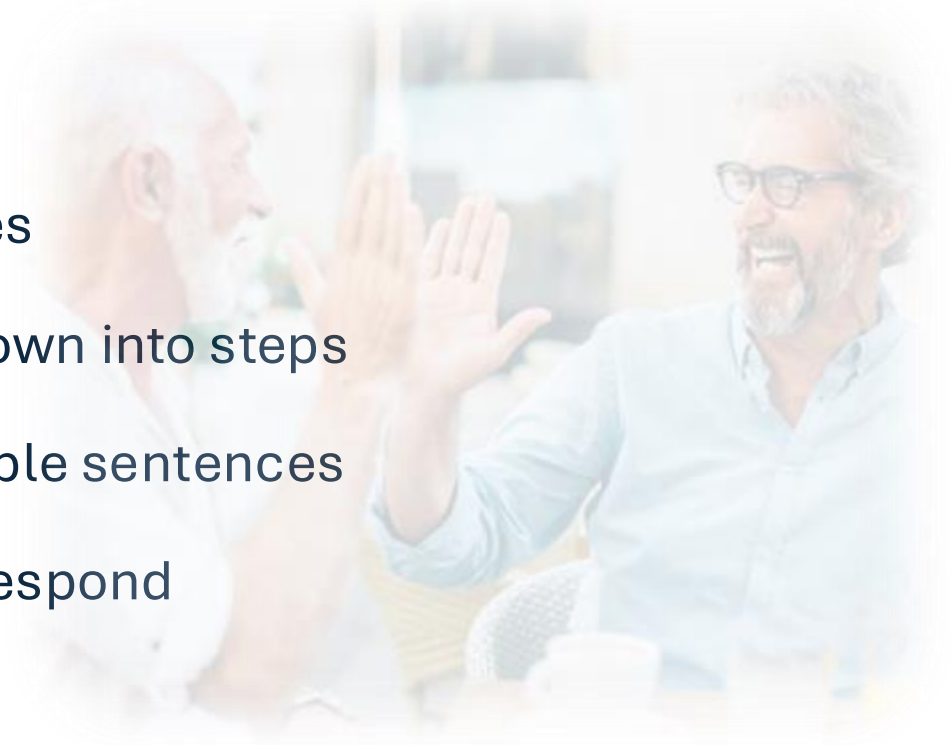
# Social Environment

- Avoid using dementia and memory-related jokes
- Lead with empathy and patience
- Approach from the front
- Remove hat and sunglasses
- Introduce yourself and use their first name
- Talk slowly, clearly, and at an appropriate volume
- Answer questions like it's the first time



# Social Environment

- Ask closed ended questions
- Ask if and how you can help
- Avoid using slang and metaphors
- Connect, don't correct
- Slow down
- Stick to routines
- Break things down into steps
- Use short, simple sentences
- Allow time to respond



A circular photograph showing three elderly individuals sitting around a table, engaged in a card game. The man in the center is laughing and clapping his hands, while the woman on the right is also laughing. The woman on the left is holding a hand of cards. The table is covered with playing cards. The background shows a large window with a view of greenery and a wooden cabinet with various items on it.

# Meaningful Engagement

# What is Meaningful Engagement?

- Keeps the person's skills and interests in mind
- Considers the time of day
- Considers assistance needed
  - Self-directed vs assisted
- Remains aware of physical limitations
- Focuses on enjoyment over achievement



# Encouraging Participation

- Daily tasks can be activities
- Simplify, breakdown into smaller steps
- Allow plenty of time
- Assemble supplies within reach, ahead of time
- Support verbal communication with visuals and gestures
- Reduce distractions



# Adapting to Abilities

## Physical Abilities

- Movement
- Safety
- Motor Skills
- Tolerance

## Exercise

Gentle Chair Fitness  
Walks – shorter more frequent, planning for rest  
Modified Option

## Hobbies

Gardening – simplify  
Fix-it Activities  
Knitting

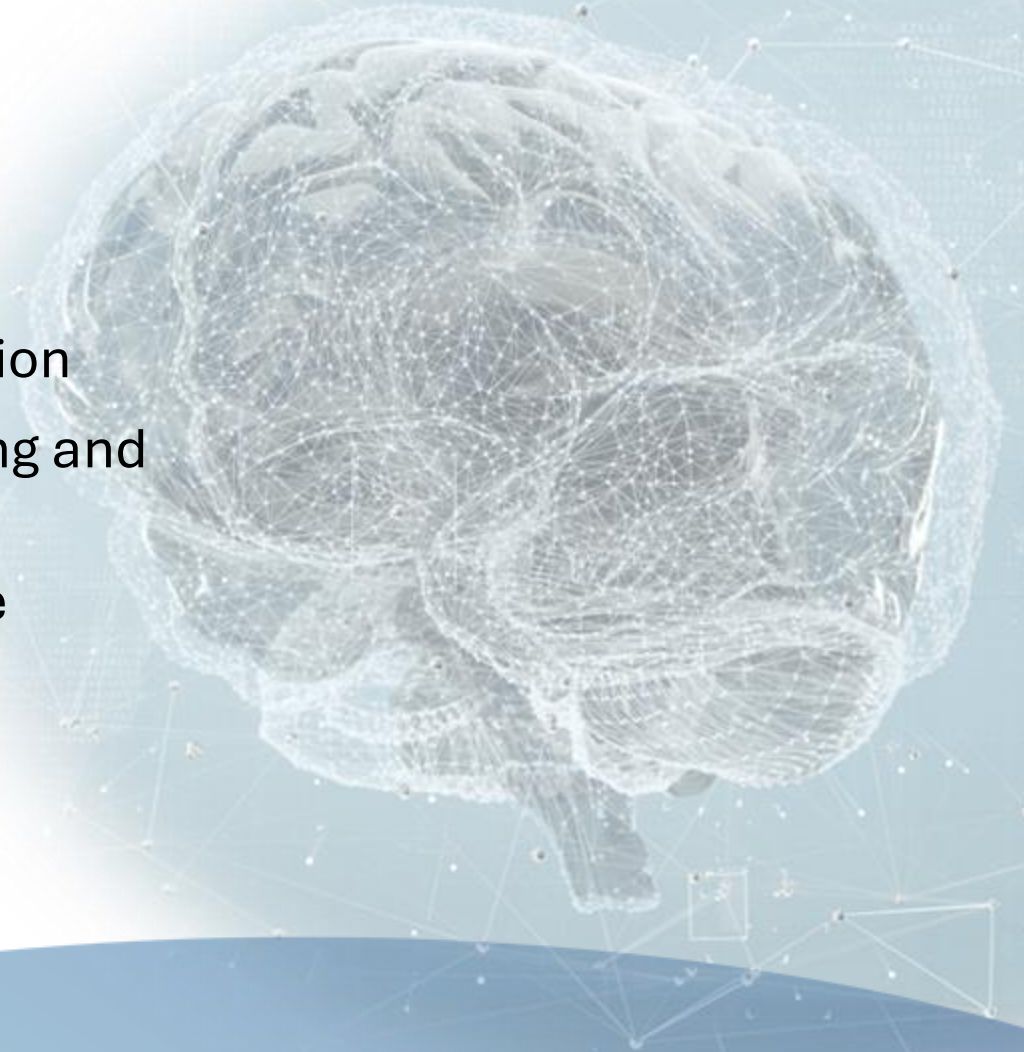
## Daily Activities

Cooking  
Hygiene  
Folding Laundry

# Adapting Activities

## Cognitive Abilities

- Following direction
- Visual changes
- Communication
- Brain-body connection
- Initiating, sequencing and completing tasks
- Levels of assistance



# Adapting Activities to Abilities

## Cognitive Support

### Verbal

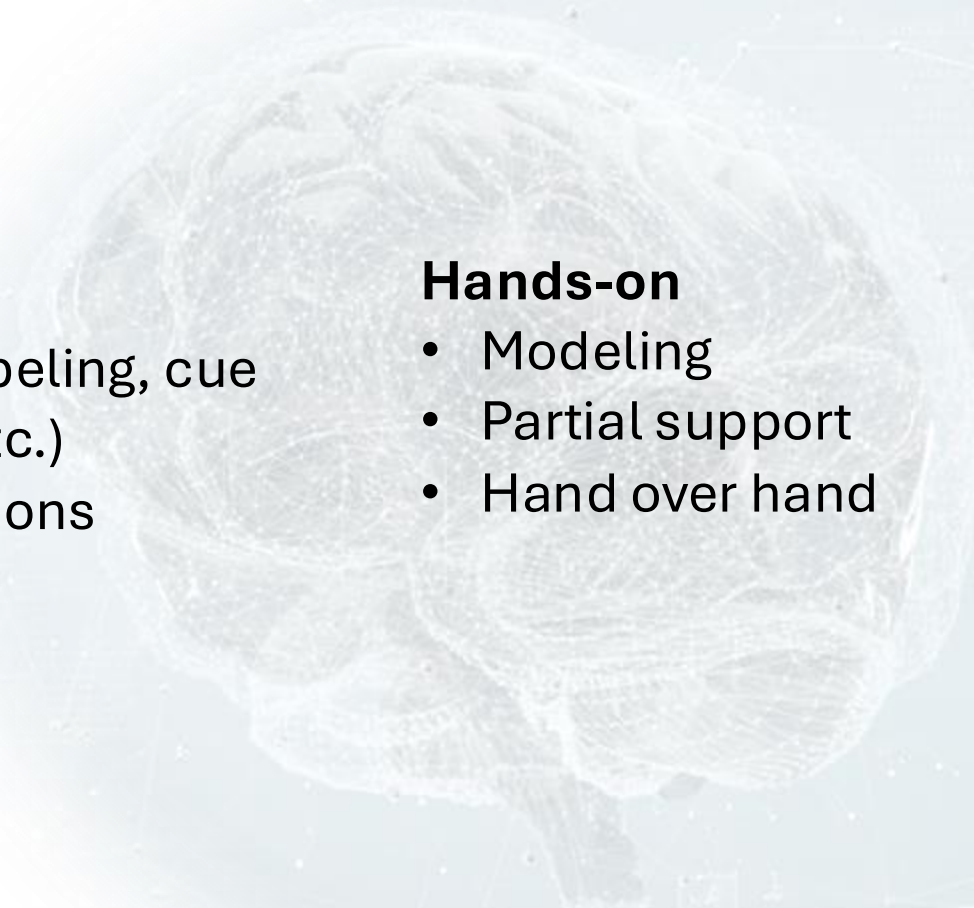
- Simple one-step instructions
- Repeat as needed (like it's the first time)
- Visual Field

### Environmental

- Visual Cues (Labeling, cue cards, videos, etc.)
- Reduce distractions

### Hands-on

- Modeling
- Partial support
- Hand over hand



# Activity Ideas

## Physical Activities

- Gardening
- Walking
- Online exercise video
- Parking further from the front doors
- Bean bag toss
- Sweeping the house
- Raking leaves
- Bocce ball
- Ladder golf

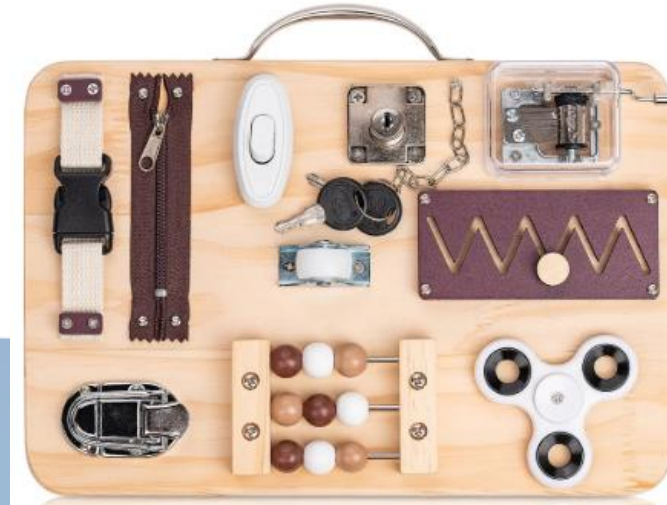
## Social & Cognitive Activities

- All About Me game
- Words in Words
- Scattegories
- Jigsaw puzzles
- Relish activities
- Aqua paint
- Shake Loose a Memory
- Hidden picture puzzles

# Tools & Resources



# Tools & Resources



# Current Community

## Partner Programs

**Minds in Motion**

**Fun!-  
Damentals  
of Table  
Tennis**

**The Living  
Well  
Program**

**Vivace  
Voices  
Choir**

**Dalnavert  
Museum  
Dementia-  
Friendly  
Tours**

**Tales Along  
the Trail**

**Tune-Up  
Café**

# Lived Experience



**Madeleine points out that it's not easy looking after a partner who has dementia. "People can't even imagine what this is about," she says. But the program helps; she loves the good vibes and positive feelings that everyone shows when participating in Art to Inspire. "You need a lot of that when you're going through something like this."**

**- Care Partner, Art to Inspire Participant**



**"It's so nice to get out and experience these fun activities together. It's a welcoming and warm environment where we can just enjoy each others' company and leave our worries at the door."**

**- Community Partner Program Participants**

# Programs & Services

## First Link® Client Support

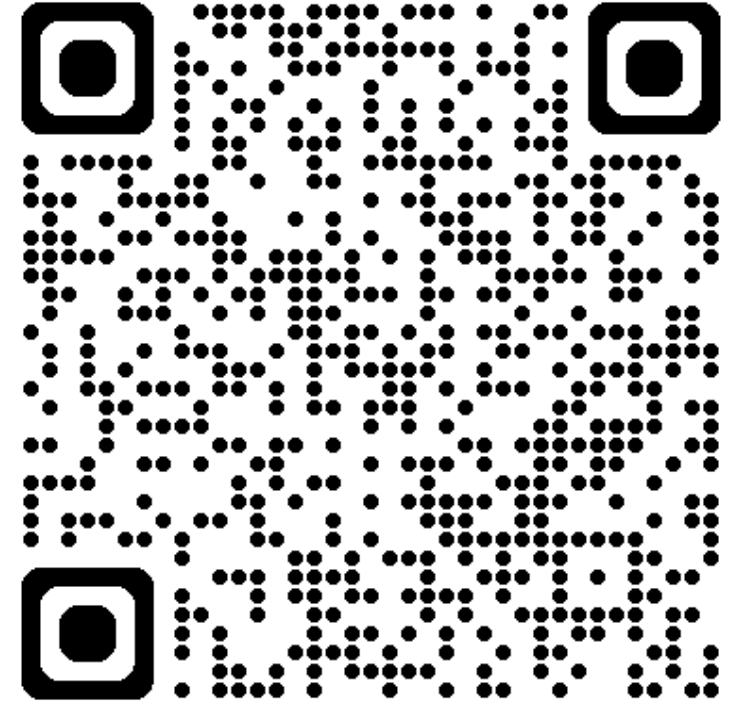
- One to One Support
  - In-person, by phone, email, or virtual
- Support Groups
  - For Care Partners and People Living with Dementia

## Education

- Families, Professionals and General Public

## Community Programs

- Minds in Motion®
- Dementia-Friendly Community Partner Programs
- Public Awareness



# Dementia-Friendly Communities Team

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