

Lessons from Abroad for Canada's National Dementia Strategy: Actions for Implementation

Description

Lessons from Abroad for Canada's National Dementia Strategy: Actions for Implementation

Saskia N Sivananthan; Alexandra Whate; Larry W. Chambers; Kedron Raju; Alixe Ménard

ABSTRACT

Dementia affects approximately 50 million people worldwide, a number projected to double every 20 years. In Canada, close to 730,000 individuals live with dementia, a figure expected to reach 1.7 million by 2050. Alzheimer's disease accounts for about 70% of dementia cases globally. Dementia is marked by a progressive decline in cognitive functions, decision-making, and daily activities, ultimately leading to complete dependence on caregivers. As a leading cause of disability and mortality, dementia presents a major public health challenge. Canada's National Dementia Strategy (NDS) aims to improve prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and supports. However, its success relies on sustained funding and collaboration across healthcare sectors. Challenges in implementation include inconsistent provincial adoption, limited funding beyond 2024, and insufficient measurable outcomes. To address these gaps, an international analysis of 37 dementia strategies was conducted, with an in-depth evaluation of 11 nations. Lessons from global best practices highlight the need for stronger governance, measurable goals, and coordinated efforts to improve dementia care in Canada.

Authors credentials and affiliations:

Saskia N Sivananthan (ssivananthan@brainwellinstitute.org)^{1,2}, PhD; Alexandra Whate (awhate@brainwellinstitute.org)^{1,3}, PhD; *Larry W. Chambers (chambers@mcmaster.ca)^{1,4,5,6,7}, PhD; Kedron Raju (kedron.raju10@gmail.com)^{1,8}, BSc(c); Alixe Ménard (amena069@uOttawa.ca)^{1,9}, PhD(c)

1. The Brainwell Institute, Toronto, Ontario
2. McGill University, Montreal, Quebec
3. University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario
4. Bruyere Research Institute, Ottawa, Ontario
5. McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario
6. Faculty of Health, York University, Ontario
7. ICES, Toronto, Ontario
8. University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia
9. Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario

Corresponding Author: Larry W. Chambers, PhD, FACE, FFPH (Hon) (UK), FCAHS, Director, Research and Scholarship, Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine, Niagara Regional Campus. Professor Emeritus, Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact, Faculty of Health Sciences, McMaster University, e-mail: chambers@mcmaster.ca.

Disclosure: The authors have no funding disclosures or conflicts of interest to declare.

Status: Peer reviewed. **Submitted:** APR 2025 | **Published:** MAY 2025

Citation: Sivananthan, Saskia N et al (2025). Lessons from Abroad for Canada's National Dementia Strategy: Actions for Implementation. *Canadian Health Policy*, MAY 2025.

<https://doi.org/10.54194/XLJN1015>. canadianhealthpolicy.com.