

## Alzheimer's Society and North East LHIN Enhance Daily Lives of Seniors in Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma

**August 17, 2017** -- The game "Jenga" is just one of many activities that Recreation Therapist Lisa Ritchie (left) and client Jackie Johns (right) enjoy doing together, as part of the recreational therapy program available at the Alzheimer Society of Sault Ste. Marie, located on Wellington Street. Over the past year, more than 700 seniors have taken part in this recreational therapy thanks to support provided by the North East LHIN.



Jackie is an Alzheimer's Society client and a resident of Sault Ste. Marie. She has participated in recreational therapy since April, 2017 and is glad to have regular visits to the Alzheimer's Society as part of her routine.

"It helps me get out and stay out and to be with people and to socialize," she explained. Jackie also said she would enthusiastically recommend the Alzheimer Society programs to others who are facing cognitive conditions.

"Providing the right care and services for people like Jackie is made possible through our valued partnership with the Alzheimer's Society," said Kate Fyfe, Interim CEO of the North East LHIN. "Staying active, both physically and mentally, is an important part of health care. The North East LHIN is proud to support this valuable therapeutic program."

In addition to recreational therapy, Jackie also participates in Minds in Motion -- a group exercise class, offered each Friday from September to June at the Sault Ste. Marie office -- and the monthly support group offered by the Society.

There are approximately 2,800 people diagnosed with Alzheimer's in the Algoma District. With incidences of the disease increasing in-step with the district's aging population, the Alzheimer's Society of SSM with support from the North East LHIN, has been broadening its program offerings in order to better serve its clients. Along with recreational therapy, the LHIN also provides funding support for Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) programming that the society can access.

Though these programs and others, such as cognitive assessments, are aimed at patients with Alzheimer's and similar conditions, the society also offers programming for non-patients. A volunteer visiting program has been established to provide respite to caregivers and peer support is also available for caregivers and family members.

In addition to its Sault Ste. Marie location, the Alzheimer's Society also operates satellite offices with two full-time staff in Elliot Lake and with part-time staff in Wawa.

For more information on the programs and services of the Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District Alzheimer's Society, please visit: <http://www.alzheimer.ca/en/algoma>

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