Canada's new dementia strategy needs commitment to be successful

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Canada's new national dementia strategy can be successful with

sustained political will, adequate funding, measurable targets and a commitment from all Canadians to achieve its goals, argues an editorial in *CMAJ (Canadian Medical Association Journal)*.

The 5-year, $50-million strategy is aligned with international strategies and comes at a critical time.

"The effect of dementia on Canadians is staggering," writes Dr. Nathan Stall, Associate Editor, CMAJ, with coauthors. "While there are currently more than 564 000 Canadians living with dementia with estimated annual total health care system and out-of-pocket costs of $10.4 billion, these figures are projected to at least double by 2031 as Canadians continue to age."

Canada needs to learn from its provinces and other countries to overcome challenges to success. Political will beyond the initial announcement is essential, as is adequate funding—especially for research, where there is a substantial gap.

It is also important to deflate the stigma of ageism and dementia-related discrimination, which particularly affect women, who make up two-thirds of all those with dementia and most caregivers.

More information: *Canadian Medical Association Journal* (2019). www.cmaj.ca/lookup/doi/10.1503/cmaj.190929

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