



Government of Bermuda
Ministry of Youth, Social Development and Seniors
MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

by
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Minister of Youth, Social Development and Seniors

Dementia Care Services Programme Update
September 11, 2026

Mr. Speaker,

I rise today to provide this Honourable House with an update on Bermuda's Dementia Care Services Programme and the Government's continued commitment to strengthening support for persons living with dementia and those who care for them.

Mr. Speaker,

Dementia remains one of the most significant health and social care challenges facing ageing populations around the world. In Bermuda, thousands of families are impacted by dementia, often navigating the complex realities of diagnosis, caregiving, and long-term support. As our population ages, the need for coordinated, accessible, community-based dementia services continues to grow.

navigation, assessment, intervention, and support services, particularly when those services were otherwise unaffordable or inaccessible.

Mr. Speaker,

The Government initially supported the programme through a pilot partnership with NorthStar Dementia, which has since merged with Dementia Bermuda to create a unified nonprofit organization delivering dementia-specific services across the island. This merger has strengthened Bermuda's capacity to provide clinical care, caregiver support, community programming, public education, and advocacy through a single coordinated entity.

The results achieved thus far clearly demonstrate both the demand for and value of these services.

Between October 2023 and June 2025, the programme received 188 referrals, with 144 individuals meeting the eligibility requirements and receiving funded services. During this period, over 480 client contacts were completed, providing comprehensive dementia assessments, personalized care planning, caregiver education, cognitive strategies, home environment assessments, crisis prevention support, and ongoing case management.

Importantly, the data revealed several critical realities about dementia care in Bermuda.

First, many Bermudians continue to face financial barriers to accessing dementia-

Second, many individuals remain undiagnosed for extended periods. Forty-three percent of programme participants entered the service without a formal dementia diagnosis, highlighting the need for earlier assessment and intervention.

Third, caregiver stress remains a major concern. More than eighty percent of caregivers reported moderate to severe levels of stress and burden while caring for loved ones living with dementia. Most caregivers were women, many of whom were adult children or elderly spouses.

Mr. Speaker,

Despite these challenges, the programme has delivered measurable positive outcomes for Bermudian families.

Programme evaluations found that ninety-seven percent of participants reported that the services were beneficial, ninety-seven percent reported increased knowledge about dementia, ninety-four percent felt more confident implementing care strategies, and seventy-one percent reported reduced caregiver stress. One hundred percent of respondents stated they would recommend the programme and believed government support should continue.

Families also reported increased awareness of community resources, greater preparedness for future care decisions, and improved ability to support loved ones safely at home. The programme has helped many families obtain medical diagnoses, establish Enduring Powers of Attorney, and implement plans for future care needs.

As of June 2026, Dementia Bermuda was supporting 208 active clients through its In-Home Occupational Therapy Programme, including 68 new referrals during the first six months of the year. Services have reached individuals in every parish across Bermuda and continue to serve as the primary entry point into dementia support services. Eighty-two percent of clients required financial assistance to access these supports.

The organization has also expanded Cognitive Stimulation Therapy programmes, Daily Activities Programmes, and Family Caregiver Education initiatives.

During the first half of 2026:

- 208 active clients received in-home occupational therapy services;
- 24 persons participated in Cognitive Stimulation Therapy;
- 60 persons living with dementia participated in Daily Activities programmes;
- and
- 60 family caregivers participated in education and support programmes.

Thousands of programme attendances were recorded across these services. Participant feedback continues to demonstrate high levels of satisfaction, with families reporting increased confidence, greater understanding of dementia, reduced caregiver stress, and stronger connections to support networks.

Mr. Speaker,

I am also pleased to report that Dementia Bermuda completed an innovative

support earlier intervention, and reduce avoidable emergency department visits and hospital admissions.

Mr. Speaker,

September is recognized as World Alzheimer's Month, providing an important opportunity to raise awareness, promote early identification, and strengthen understanding and support for people living with dementia and their families. World Alzheimer's Day is observed annually on September 21, and we encourage organizations to use this important month to provide a range of accessible community education and support opportunities.

On September 21, Dementia Bermuda will be hosting an open house and community-based cognitive screenings and brain-health consultations, providing members of the public with an accessible opportunity to discuss concerns about their cognitive health.

The screenings will be conducted by experienced Occupational Therapists using the Montreal Cognitive Assessment, or MoCA, as a point-in-time cognitive screening tool. Importantly, the screening is not intended to provide a diagnosis, but rather to establish a baseline and identify whether further medical assessment may be appropriate. Individuals with identified concerns will be encouraged to consult their physician for further evaluation and, where indicated, referral to appropriate local services.

Mr. Speaker,

Recognizing that dementia affects not only the individual diagnosed but also the family members and loved ones who provide care, the Ministry is also collaborating with Solstice during World Alzheimer's Month to provide accessible support services for family caregivers.

This collaboration, referred to as the Caregiver Support Initiative, will provide caregivers with access to one-to-one supportive counselling sessions based on their individual needs and preferences. The initiative is intended to provide caregivers with a safe and supportive space to discuss their experiences, receive emotional support, develop practical coping strategies, and connect with others who understand the challenges associated with caring for someone living with Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia.

Supporting caregivers is an essential component of effective dementia care. By providing accessible emotional and practical support, the Caregiver Support Initiative seeks to help caregivers manage the demands of their role, strengthen their capacity to provide care, and recognize that they too require support throughout the dementia journey.

Mr. Speaker,

This work complements the Government's broader efforts to establish a comprehensive dementia care system. As Honourable Members will recall, under

Mr. Speaker,

As we look ahead, this Government remains committed to supporting practical, community-based solutions that help Bermudians age with dignity, independence, and respect.

The Government recognizes that dementia care cannot be addressed through any single service or organization. It requires collaboration across health, social care, community organizations, families, caregivers, and Government. Our continued focus will therefore be on strengthening this continuum of support so that individuals and families can access the right information, intervention, and care at the right time.

In closing, **Mr. Speaker**, I wish to acknowledge the individuals living with dementia, their families, caregivers, healthcare providers, community partners, and Dementia Bermuda staff and volunteers whose dedication continues to inform and strengthen this important work. Their experiences and contributions remain essential in helping Bermuda build a stronger and more compassionate dementia care system for present and future generations.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.