



Government of Bermuda
Ministry of Youth, Social Development and Seniors

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

by

The Hon. Tinée Furbert, JP, MP

Dementia Navigation and Support Program Funding

Wednesday, 11th March, 2026

Mr. Speaker,

I rise today, before this honourable House to provide an update on the Dementia Navigation and Support Program Funding, highlighting the importance of ensuring accessible dementia care support services and account for Ministry spending in this area.

I cannot share enough, **Mr. Speaker**, that Dementia is one of the most significant and growing public health challenges facing countries around the world, and Bermuda is no exception. While dementia is often associated with ageing, it is not a normal part of ageing.

Research shows that up to 45% of dementia risk factors may be reduced through prevention and early intervention. However, at present there is no cure, and the majority of services required relate to the long-term care and support needs as the disease progresses.

Mr. Speaker,

This reality places significant responsibility on families and carers. Supporting these caregivers is therefore critical — not only to maintain the wellbeing of those living

with the disease, but also to sustain the broader system of long-term care services upon which our community depends.

Mr. Speaker,

Recognizing these challenges, a dementia pilot program was first launched in October 2023 by the Ministry of Youth, Social Development and Seniors together with Dementia Bermuda. The funding focused on dementia navigation and support services, supplementing Dementia Bermuda's in-home Occupational Therapy (OT) services program. Based on its success and the clear need within the community, as previously shared with the members of the House, this initiative later transitioned to the issuance of a grant in the sum of \$150,000 in July 2025. This amount totals approximately one third of the total program costs.

The importance of this service, **Mr. Speaker**, was reinforced through the Health Council's Dementia Health Needs Assessment and the Ministry's Dementia Integrated Care Pathway. The needs assessment identified potentially around 3,000 people living with dementia in Bermuda, recognizing better data collection is required, as well as current service availability and gaps. Whereas the integrated care pathway, or ICP, identified the clinical and support pathway required from prevention to end of life for persons with dementia and their carers.

A key strength of the existing system, highlighted in both reports, were the in-home OT program services provided by Dementia Bermuda and expanded through the Ministry's funding. More specifically, this program helps individuals and families understand the disease, access appropriate support, identify care plans and needed interventions that are strength and evidenced based, and plan for the disease progression.

Mr. Speaker,

A requirement of our grant funding is to receive statistics on the program, and I would like to highlight some of those with you now. The program has a current active caseload of 199 clients. Over Quarter 2 and 3 of this fiscal year:

- 64 new clients were served.
- The majority of these clients were female (53%), Black Bermudian (55%), and between the ages of 75 and 84 years (39 %).
- 45% were FutureCare recipients.
- Only 40% had a confirmed dementia diagnosis at the time they accessed the program. This reflects the overall trend and importance of early engagement and intervention to help ensure a diagnosis is obtained.
- The data also confirms that caregiving in Bermuda remains largely family-based and predominantly provided by women, often shared among multiple relatives.
- Notably, 77% of clients reported financial need, reinforcing the importance of maintaining accessible, community-based dementia services.
- Finally, and most importantly, Dementia Bermuda reports decreased caregiver stress, enhanced safety and improved quality of life for people living with dementia as a result of these interventions.

These findings, **Mr. Speaker**, underscore the importance of accessible dementia navigation and support programming to help sustain much needed family support, recognize the financial burden associated with such care, and to help facilitate the well-being of those living with dementia. Moreover, **Mr. Speaker**, I am pleased to report to this Honourable House; On Dec 18th, 2025, The Dementia Care Services Pilot Programme was recognized by the Bermudian Magazine for the Product and Service Award in the category of Government Service.

Mr. Speaker,

This Government remains committed to strengthening Bermuda's dementia care system by supporting programs that provide practical assistance, guidance, and emotional support to those navigating this complex and long-term process. The Ministry is committed to coordinating, advocating and advancing the recommendations from the Dementia Integrated Care Pathway including how to expand the accessibility of this type of program.

Through continued partnership with our stakeholders, we will continue to build a system that ensures those living with dementia, and those who care for them, are supported, respected, and able to maintain dignity and quality of life through to the end of life.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.