

# Development of a marketing plan to spread and scale Our Dementia Journey Journal across Canada

Family/friend caregivers and care providers of persons living with dementia (PLWD) expressed a need for a resource to strengthen relationships along the dementia journey. In response, the Our Dementia Journey Journal (ODJJ) was co-designed through equitable engagement with diverse groups of caregivers, care providers, and PLWD. In a planned series of limited deployments of the ODJJ, information was gathered to develop a comprehensive marketing plan to support spreading and scaling the ODJJ across Canada.

“In dementia care, flexibility and openness are essential, as each day brings new challenges and opportunities. The ODJJ project embodies this commitment—constantly evolving to meet the unique needs of our community in collaboration with caregivers. It's a testament to the power of adaptability in delivering compassionate, person-centred care.”

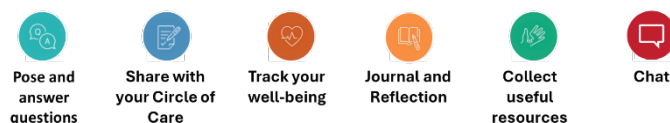
- Naomi Pickett, Clinical Educator, Taylor View Towers, Red Deer, Alberta

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## Project overview

Family/friend caregivers play an integral role in the delivery of patient and family centred care.<sup>1</sup> However, meaningful integration of caregivers as part of the dementia circle of care (e.g., caregivers, care providers, PLWD) has been a challenge. From 2018-2024, SE Research Centre researchers engaged over 80 diverse experts-by-experience (e.g., caregivers, care providers) using the [Participatory Research to Action Framework \(PR2A\)](#)<sup>2</sup> to co-design and adapt the ODJJ. The ODJJ now exists as a **mobile application and paper-based resource in English, French, Hindi, and Punjabi**. There are specific versions for **First Nations and South Asian communities**. The ODJJ has six main flexible features (**Figure 1**) that allow the circle of care to connect and record their roles, experiences, and expectations in a person's dementia journey. An 18-month project was undertaken to identify the essential features and develop a marketing plan to support future scale and spread.

Figure 1.



## What did we do?

With funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada's Dementia Community Investment, we delivered the ODJJ in **three diverse communities** across Canada and evaluated the efforts to encourage uptake and use and the health-related impacts. The ODJJ was delivered to each community in overlapping four-month pilots between March 2024 and January 2025 (**Table 1**).

A pan-Canadian 23-member **Project Advisory Committee (PAC)** with PLWD, caregivers, care providers, community volunteers, researchers, and members from diverse community organizations guided the project in monthly meetings.

The evaluation of the efforts were informed by best practice evidence for implementation and evaluation research.<sup>3,4</sup> Multiple types of data were collected: interviews with caregivers and care providers, focus groups with care providers, and pre and post surveys with all ODJJ users. Data were analyzed descriptively. Multi-cycle iterative analysis was timed for 1) review at monthly PAC meetings, and 2) PAC planning for the next delivery phases.

**Table 1.**

Communities	When	Sites	Description
Continuing Care Homes (AB)	Mar 2024-Aug 2024	-Millrise Seniors Village -Taylor View Towers	-20-bed dementia care unit -24-bed dementia care unit
Mamaweswen North Shore Tribal Council (ON)	Jun 2024-Jan 2025	-Garden River First Nation -Thessalon First Nation -Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation	-Used in the homes of PLWD and their caregivers identified by Community Champions
South Asian Communities (ON)	Jul 2024-Nov 2024	-Indus Community Services -Punjabi Community Health Services	-Adult day program serves 60-80 PLWD -Psychogeriatric resource consultant, caregivers and PLWD

## What did we find?

### What supports successful uptake and use?

1. Forming local deployment teams of motivated individuals with capacity to support the ODJJ
2. Assessing the tension for change at each site
3. Aligning delivery with the community's mission
4. Identifying key leverage points for introduction
5. Defining roles and milestones
6. Using ready-made, adaptable marketing materials
7. Pilot the ODJJ first with a small group, then expand reach

### How was ODJJ used?

The ODJJ was used in different ways and at different frequencies over the pilots. All sections of the ODJJ were found to be helpful at different points along the dementia journey (Table 2).

*"It's a really cool way of documenting your own journey as a caregiver and with the loved one that you're caring for" - A*

## What benefits were realized?

The evaluation showed that participating in the implementation and use of the ODJJ helped users and communities:

1. enhance **dementia care knowledge and skills** and helped caregivers share the

preferences and histories of PLWD with providers, promoting **person-centred care**

2. **open conversations about dementia**, reducing stigma and increasing access to services
3. strengthen relationships within the **community** and the **circle of care**, by offering more opportunities to connect and have conversations about dementia care, leading to better support
4. enhance caregivers' **wellbeing** by encouraging reflection and by suggesting supports and resources.

### The marketing plan

Based on the evaluation results of the cumulative, iterative pilots in the various communities, a three-level marketing plan has been developed for (1) organizations wanting to promote the ODJJ generally; (2) organizations and groups wanting to implement the ODJJ; and (3) caregivers and care providers who seek guidance on using the ODJJ.

**Next steps** SE Health's Future of Aging Team will use the marketing plan to introduce & spread the ODJJ across Canada.

**How is this research funded and supported?** The Public Health Agency of Canada's Dementia Community Investment Program, and SE Health, provided funding.

**To learn more about this work**



**To cite this work**



**Table 2.**

Uses	Sites	ODJJ features
Document, track, and communicate care needs and changes	South Asian Adult Day Program	Chat
Reconcile differences in care between home and the adult day program	South Asian Adult Day Program	Journal and Reflection
Orient care providers and caregivers to PLWD's preferences and abilities	First Nations Community	Share with Circle of Care
Centralized communication to promote person-centred care	First Nations Community	Share with Circle of Care
Document the dementia journey and the PLWD's legacy	South Asian Adult Day Program	Journal and Reflection
Support caregiver well-being	First Nations Communities, South Asian Adult Day Program	Track your well-being
Support relationships among the circle of care by forming a dementia-friendly community	South Asian Adult Day Program	All features
Enhance communication between caregivers and care team for continuity (e.g., new admission)	Continuing Care Home	Share with Circle of Care