



BUILDING A PROVINCIAL MEMORY CAFÉ NETWORK IN NOVA SCOTIA: PARTICIPANT WELL-BEING AND SOCIAL CONNECTION OUTCOMES FOR PERSONS LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

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The Problem

Social isolation is a critical health risk for older adults living with memory challenges and their care partners.

It accelerates cognitive decline, increases mortality and heavily contributes to caregiver burnout and premature long-term care placement. CADTH, 2022

The Rural Challenge

These risks intensify in resource-scarce rural areas.

Nova Scotia's rapidly aging population is dispersed across a largely rural landscape. Access to dementia care is challenging given limited local services and transportation barriers. Bacsu et al., 2025 · Li, 2025

The Literature Gap

While psychosocial benefits of Memory Cafés are validated globally, a research gap remains around rural implementation within the Canadian context. Protoolis et al., 2022 · Innes et al., 2022

The Intervention & Project Objective

Memory Café NS includes 19 low cost, community-based social gatherings designed to address social isolation and well-being for those with memory challenges and their care partners.

Objective: to evaluate the effectiveness of the network in facilitating social inclusion and sense of well-being.

Impact Metrics (N=155)

99.3%

Reported improved sense of social connection

Methodology

Quality assurance project using retrospective, secondary data analysis. Includes participant (n=155, av. age of 75 yo) feedback survey data spanning 2024 and 2026.

Descriptive statistics to analyze scaled and binary metrics regarding well-being and social connection.

98.7%

Reported improved overall sense of well-being

References

CADTH. (2022). Dementia Concerns and Considerations: A CADTH Panel of People With Lived Experience. Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health.

Li E. (2025). Memory Café in Rural Communities: Reflection from Participatory Action Research (PAR). *Alzheimer's & Dementia*, 20(Suppl 4), e088598.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/alz.088598>

Bacsu J-DR, Berlinguette C, Smith M, et al. Examining the care priorities, service needs and lived experiences of rural people with cognitive impairment and dementia in Canada: a scoping review protocol. *BMJ Open* 2025;15:e106497. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2025-106497

96.1%

Care partners found vital peer support network

Visit MemoryCafeNS.ca or contact info@memorycafens.ca for more information about how you can get involved!