

Ontario Dementia Advisory Group

Dear ****

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The Ontario Dementia Advisory Group (ODAG) was formed in fall 2014 with the purpose of influencing policies, practices, and people to ensure that we, people living with dementia, are included in every decision that affects our lives. This group came together at a time when government began recognizing the need to improve dementia supports, but there was concern that decisions about dementia supports would continue to be made without the direct involvement of people living with dementia.

On February 4th, a historical meeting was held at the Alzheimer Society of Niagara Region offices in St. Catharines. In attendance was Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris, MPP for Halton and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and members of the newly developed Ontario Dementia Advisory Group (ODAG) and their support systems.

With great passion, ODAG members introduced Ms. Naidoo-Harris to two critically important documents developed by people with dementia:

1. *Engagement and Involvement in Public Policy*, and
2. *Canadian National and Ontario Dementia Plans – Input from those living with Dementia*.

The documents were received quite well, and with great emotion Ms. Naidoo-Harris vowed to ensure people living with dementia will be at the center of the newly forming Ontario Dementia Strategy.

ODAG wishes to thank Ms. Naidoo-Harris for her openness to change the status quo while working directly with those who have dementia.

To facilitate the inclusion of more people with dementia in public policy and decision-making, our group is urging those who work in the dementia field to rethink how they view the person with dementia and work towards involving people with dementia in decision-making at local, provincial and national levels.

As someone who is interested in improving care for people living with dementia in Ontario, we are reaching out to send you the above mentioned document, titled *Engagement and Involvement in Public Policy*. We developed this document to provide an outline of what we feel it means to be engaged in public policy activities. It is meant to provide insight into how to involve people with dementia in decision-making activities, and include practical considerations for continued involvement.

We hope you find this helpful.

Sincerely,

Ontario Dementia Advisory Group

www.odag.ca

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