



## Dementia Friendly Language Guide

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This guide contains suggestions for ways to refer to people living with dementia and topics about dementia to ensure respectful, non-stigmatizing, and empowering language. These suggestions focus on putting the person first in conversation.

For further information, please contact the Centre for Education and Research on Aging & Health (CERAH), Thunder Bay, ON [www.cerah.lakeheadu.ca](http://www.cerah.lakeheadu.ca)

PLEASE USE	PLEASE AVOID
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer to someone living with dementia by their name or as a person 'living with dementia'- a person is not defined by their diagnosis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining the person by their disease/placing the condition before the person (e.g.. The 'patient' or the 'sufferer')</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dementia</li> <li>• A person living with dementia</li> <li>• Care partner and/or family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dementing or demented</li> <li>• Affliction</li> <li>• Suffering or sufferer</li> <li>• Victim/victims</li> <li>• Caregiver/Loved one(s)</li> <li>• Patient (when used outside of the medical context)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the symptoms of dementia (e.g., change in mood or behaviour, memory loss, difficulty finding words)</li> <li>• Describe the impact it is having (e.g., difficulty communicating, difficulty navigating)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Someone who has lost their mind</li> <li>• Slang expressions that are derogatory (e.g., "a couple cents short", "not all there", "losing his/her marbles")</li> <li>• "old-timer's disease"</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer to dementia as a condition</li> <li>• Young onset dementia (YOD)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referring to dementia as a illness/disease (unless speaking about a type of dementia such as Alzheimer's disease)</li> <li>• Early onset dementia</li> </ul>
<p><b>When describing the impacts of Dementia:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenging, life changing</li> <li>• Stressful</li> <li>• Complex</li> <li>• Requiring or needing support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hopeless</li> <li>• Unbearable, impossible</li> <li>• Tragic, devastating</li> <li>• Painful</li> <li>• Burden</li> </ul>