

# GuestHouse

A home away from home

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
MARCH 2006

**Perley Rideau**

The Perley and Rideau Veterans'  
Health Centre

*Société Alzheimer Society*  
OTTAWA



The Guest House is *A home away from home*. More than 10,000 Ottawa residents struggle daily with Alzheimer Disease, and an equal number of people are at home, caring for them.

## The Challenge and The Solution

In 1999, the Alzheimer Society of Ottawa (Alzheimer Society) held a Dementia Care Forum, followed soon afterward by a city-funded Dementia Respite Care Research Study in 2000. The number one priority, identified by both the Forum and the research study, was the urgent need for residential respite for caregivers in Ottawa. As a result, plans began to build a single-level, home-like bungalow with a suitable environment for those with mild to moderate Alzheimer Disease and related dementia. The Alzheimer Society joined together with the Victorian Order of Nurses Ottawa-Renfrew County Branch (VON) and The Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre (Perley Rideau) to formulate a solution that would fulfill our community's identified need. The Guest House idea would meet the needs of caregivers and those they care for, and would fill an identified gap in the continuum of care, providing much needed support for caregivers and people with Alzheimer Disease and related dementia. The Guest House concept succeeds in meeting crucial needs in an appropriate, caring, effective, and financially prudent manner. Caregivers can renew their strength, and their loved one is temporarily cared for in a safe, reliable, home-like environment.

## The Concept

The proposed Guest House is an 8,000 square foot, 12-bedroom residence that will provide respite care for people with mild to moderate Alzheimer Disease and other dementias. This Guest House - *A home away from home* will allow caregivers to take breaks ranging from several hours during the day or night, to three weeks of continuous care, and up to 90 days per year. It will operate year-round, 24 hours a day, with emergency and flexible accommodation also available.

## The Caregiver

For the caregiver, the Guest House will offer the precious gift of time. Respite gives these individuals an opportunity to temporarily place their loved ones in a safe, understanding, and non-institutional environment. Caregivers can confidently spend the time they need to restore their energy and good health, before returning to the task of caring for their loved ones in their own home.

## The Loved One

For the loved one, the Guest House welcomes them in a friendly, comfortable home-like environment. Each guest will have a private room with his or her own washroom and shower, and common spaces such as the kitchen, dining room, study, and living room will allow residents to engage in the same types of activities they would at home. Secure outdoor gardens will permit guests to safely spend time outside. In addition, the location on the site of the Perley Rideau will give guests access to a variety of services already provided at the Health Centre.

## The Building

The Guest House will function as a self-sufficient home environment. Meals can be made in the kitchen. Television sets will be available, books in a library, gardening equipment outdoors. It will purchase only those services that the clients cannot readily participate in with staff, such as major house cleaning services, building maintenance services, and some food preparation.

## Operations, Project Costs, Governance

The total construction and set-up costs for the Guest House are estimated at \$2.5 million. To date, the partners have started a reserve for this project, land for the Guest House is available at the site and has been donated by Perley Rideau, and discussions with The City of Ottawa are underway regarding the waiving of city permits and planning fees.

The anticipated annual operating budget will be mainly funded by the Ministry of Health, through an arrangement that provides a percentage of the per diem costs, based on the requirement that families pay partial costs associated with a stay. Veterans' Affairs Canada will contribute to the operating costs of one bed designated for veterans. The Guest House will charge modest room fees and provide subsidized support for low-income families unable to afford the daily fee.

The governing body for the Guest House will be the Board of Directors of the Perley Rideau. There will be an Implementation Committee consisting of representatives from the three collaborating partners (Alzheimer Society, the Perley Rideau, and VON) who will oversee the implementation and first two years of operation of the Guest House. The Implementation Committee will report to the Board of Directors of the Perley Rideau.

## Joining the Partnership

Together, individuals, families, local businesses and government are demonstrating their belief in the urgent need for respite. Your contribution today will ensure the Guest House is built and able to provide compassionate care. To learn more about how you can help make the dream of a Guest House, *A home away from home*, a reality please call 526-7170 Ext. #2200.