

# Creating Conversations: A dementia activity toolkit to reduce social isolation

## Midterm Update

In 2016, ArtLink Central released a garden-themed toolkit designed to improve communication and build relationships in care settings between caregivers and people with dementia, and between people with dementia, with the aim to enhance quality of life for people with dementia. This toolkit was developed with support from the University of Stirling to evidence the benefits achieved for participants, staff, and organizations, and to enhance the guidebook for facilitators. The toolkit includes the following:

- Table cover
- Set of discussion cards (includes images and conversation starter topics)
- Coloring pages
- Guidebook
- Various resource materials (both online and printed)

The Institute for Continuing Care Education & Research (ICCER) will examine the toolkit with the intent to make it appropriate for the Canadian context (changing words and images, including Canadian resources), and to test it in 12 sites that include the spectrum of continuing care in Alberta (home living [day program (DS)], supportive living [all levels (SL)], and long-term care [LTC]).

The project is designed to help better meet the social, emotional, physical, and health needs of persons with dementia, as well as to assist caregivers in providing person-centred care. Often, caregivers are unsure how to connect with individuals with dementia and are uncertain how to begin a conversation. This toolkit will aid caregivers by giving them fun and interesting conversation starters and activities that can be used during facilitated sessions and extended into everyday activities.

### Midterm Milestones:

1. Project team established
2. Handbook, discussion cards and table cover conceptualized
3. Collaboration with Artlink Central and University of Stirling
4. Sites for implementation identified

