

NEW LTC Resident Forums: A Place for Connecting with Peers



This week, OARC is launching new Long-Term Care (**LTC Resident Forums**) for residents to connect virtually for peer support and sharing. Our hope is that the OARC-supported forums may help to combat some of the isolation and loneliness that residents might be feeling and provide some reassurance and support from peers who are navigating similar life changes brought about by COVID-19.

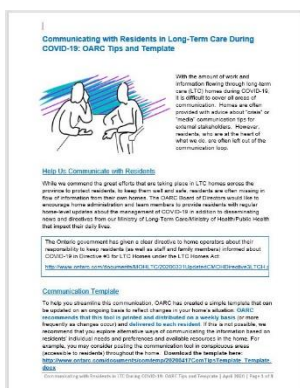
LTC Resident Forums are 45-minutes long and co-facilitated with an OARC Board member (a LTC resident leader) and an OARC team member. Our Forums are a place to meet new friends, ask questions, share concerns and successes and stay informed. While this avenue is not formal counseling or therapy, we recognize incredible value in providing a venue for peer to peer support. Forums will be held once a week on Thursdays (alternating mornings/afternoon timeslots), starting on **Thursday, April 30th at 2 pm.**

Register Here: <https://attendee.gototraining.com/rt/4948757107395787522>

PLEASE NOTE:

- These forums are for residents living in Ontario LTC homes only
- Each forum is limited to a maximum of 10 residents
- Forums run on the GoToTraining platform
- Residents may participate in the forums using a computer, tablet device or smartphone or by phoning in on our toll-free phone line (shared upon registration)
- The registration process will require residents to enter an associated email address – we ask that team members and home administration assist interested residents with this process as necessary

NEW Tool for Communicating with Residents in LTC During COVID-19



With the amount of work and information flowing through LTC homes during COVID-19, it is difficult to cover all areas of communication. Through OARC's efforts to date, it has become apparent that residents, who are at the heart of what we do, are often left out of the communication loop. Residents want and need to be informed about what is happening in their homes.

The Ontario government has given a clear directive to home operators about their responsibility to keep residents (as well as staff and family members) informed about COVID-19 in [Directive #3 for LTC Homes under the LTC Homes Act](#).

To assist with this communication, OARC has created a simple template that can be updated on an ongoing basis to reflect changes in your home's situation. OARC recommends that this tool is printed and distributed on a weekly basis (or more frequently as changes occur) and delivered to each resident. If this is not possible, we recommend that you explore alternative ways of communicating the information based on residents' individual needs and preferences and available resources in the home. Click here to access the template:

<http://www.ontarc.com/documents/comtemp/20200417ComTipsTemplate.docx>

We hope that this will assist you in your continued efforts to communicate with residents living in the home you operate. If you have suggestions or questions, please contact OARC's Executive Director Dee Lender dlender@ontarc.com 1-800-532-0201 x 240

PUBLIC APPEAL: Shining a light on concerns in LTC homes during the COVID-19 Crisis - Patient Ombudsman Making Public Appeal for Stories and Concerns



In response to receiving a dramatic increase in calls during the COVID-19 crisis, Ontario's Patient Ombudsman (OPO) is asking residents, families and staff to share their stories and situations where they feel the safety of long-term care home residents may be in jeopardy because of COVID-19. This information will help to inform the OPO about systemic issues that long-term care homes are facing and help them advise and respond appropriately.

Due to COVID-19 the Patient Ombudsman is learning of significant safety concerns in long-term care homes including:

- Severe staffing shortages;
- Inadequate infection control and prevention measures;
- An inability to meet the basic care needs for some residents; and
- Poor or no communication to residents and families.

What will the Patient Ombudsman do with the information/complaints?

Like all complaints that come to their office, they will try to resolve the individual concerns you might have directly with the long-term care home. The OPO will escalate any urgent complaints that require action with the appropriate organizations (Ministry of Long-term Care, LHIN regional leads, etc.) OPO's main goal with this call for complaints is to gather more information to help the long-term care home sector with pandemic planning. OPO wants to know what is working and what isn't.

OPO understands that that two thirds of long-term care homes do not yet have a COVID-19 outbreak and they are aware that there may be a second wave of COVID-19 during cold and flu season later this year. Their hope is to learn from the experiences of residents, families and caregivers, to protect everyone in long-term care from a possible second wave of COVID-19 and for future pandemic outbreaks.

OPO knows that this is a frightening time for so many and want to thank you for helping them shine a light on what is happening in long-term care homes.

Anyone with relevant information about COVID-19 issues in Ontario's long-term care homes is encouraged to file a complaint online at www.patientombudsman.ca or call the Patient Ombudsman at 1-888-321-0339.

Membership with Ontario Association of Residents' Council (OARC)

Formed by residents living in long-term care homes over 30 years ago, OARC has grown to be a central place for Residents' Councils.

Focusing on education, tools and support, OARC empowers Ontario long-term care residents to understand their rights, share their lived experience, and inspire a better tomorrow. Your Residents' Council membership with OARC helps make this happen by supporting our efforts to help educate and coach Councils. **Membership renewal notifications were sent to your Residents' Council Assistants on February 12th and if your Council is not already a member of OARC, please consider joining our over 400 Residents' Council members.**

Do you have questions about membership? Please contact Jennifer Langston, Client Relations and Support Manager jangston@ontarc.com 1-800-532-0201 x220



Now Accepting Visa and Mastercard for Membership Fees!

Pay Now

Residents' Bill of Rights Language Bank Grows

Starting last year, with the support of the Ontario Centre for Learning, Research and Innovation in Long-Term Care (CLRI) and several long-term care homes, the OARC team initiated a project to make the Residents' Bill of Rights (RBR) more accessible to residents across Ontario by having it translated into different languages. We are pleased to share that 2 additional languages have been added to our RBR Language Bank this month: [Estonian \(with special thanks to Ehatare Retirement and Nursing Home\)](#) and [Finnish \(generously shared with us by Finlandia Village\)](#).

We hope to continue to expand our RBR Language Bank to include several indigenous languages as well as others that have been requested including Bosnian, Czechoslovakian, Croatian, Tamil, Serbian and Urdu. If your long-term care home has a translated resource readily available that you'd be willing to share, please contact Melissa McVie, Education and Support Facilitator, mmcvie@ontarc.com 905-731-3710 x 260.

Every resident deserves to have a copy of the Residents' Bill of Rights in their first/preferred language to support their understanding, and the team at OARC is hoping to make this possible through this ongoing initiative. OARC's RBR Language Bank can be accessed here: <http://www.ontarc.com/residents-bill-of-rights.html>

National Institute on Aging Long Term Care COVID-19 Tracker

The National Institute on Aging and their collaborators launched the NIA Long Term Care COVID-19 Tracker today (April 29, 2020). The tool has all 1400 Ontario long-term care homes and retirement homes and their corresponding hospitals listed on a Google Maps Platform providing a visual aid to tracking the spread of the virus geographically in Ontario.

Click here to access the Tracker: <https://ltc-covid19-tracker.ca/>

The Tracker will be updated daily and within 24-48 Hours will have all Provincial and Ontario Summaries included as well as Public Health Unit summaries too. For more information about NIA visit: <https://www.nia-ryerson.ca/>

Celebrating Residents' in April

Southampton Care Centre

Brenda Misch, Activity Director from Southampton Care Centre, says residents are “crushing COVID-19” with social distancing and meaningful activities. Residents have taken on some new roles supporting each other and their home. They have become Gardeners; an all-round handy man, this resident prepared the garden for spring. We are thankful that he was able to clean the whole courtyard himself! Our Recyclers assist residents prepping the supply boxes to be put in the recycling bins. As Helpers and Comforters residents are able to support each other when families are not able to visit. We are grateful to have Haulers too. The resident pictured below was a long-distance truck driver and has been assisting to deliver the supplies and also drives a cart as staff go from room to room to check that team members (staff) have all the supplies they need. Thank you to Southampton’s residents and Brenda for sharing!

Residents from Southampton Care Centre



Gardener



Recyclers



Helper and Comforter



Haulers

Celebrating Team Members from Cedarvale Lodge Retirement and Care Community, Keswick

The Cedarvale Lodge Retirement and Care Community's Family Council wanted to share their thanks and appreciation for Cedarvale's exceptional care of their loved ones. They created a banner to be displayed in the home and collected \$565 which they converted to gift cards for the staff to share. The home's story received 100's of "hits" on [Snapd, Georgina!](#) Thank you to Carolynn Snow, Residents' Council Leader at Cedarvale, for submitting this story!



Celebrating Team Members at Cedarvale Lodge Retirement and Care Community

Virtual Visits Toolkit

VIRTUAL VISITS TOOLKIT FALL 2020

Helping people use technology to see and connect with their families during the COVID-19 pandemic is absolutely critical. Never before have residents in long-term care and retirement communities felt more isolated and removed from normal life. The mental and emotional well-being of many is at stake.

AN ORGANIZED METHOD FOR SETTING UP VIDEO CALLS BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND THEIR LOVED ONES DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, families and friends of residents are not permitted to visit their loved ones living in long-term care and other senior-focused dwellings. Many teams around the country have mobilized to set up video calls using tablets, smartphones, and laptops for residents and their families. This is exactly what needs to be done. To make video calls a reality, seniors need assistance accessing devices they may not own, Wi-Fi connections they do not have, and the know-how to navigate technology. We all know this is not as simple as picking up a telephone to call someone. There are many moving parts and several things that can go wrong.

This toolkit has been developed to help any long-term care or retirement residence team to take on the task of setting up scheduled video calls between seniors and their loved ones. A team of professional technology educators and senior-focused community organizations prepared the content. They were actively informed by frontline examples of video-calling initiatives that have launched with success since the COVID-19 pandemic started.

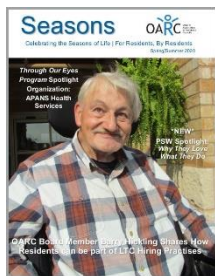
If you think your organization or any senior-focused community you know would find value in this resource, please share it freely, far and wide. The more people we can help connect through technology, the better!

WHAT'S NEEDED TO ORGANIZE VIDEO CALLS?

- A space with reliable Wi-Fi or Wi-Fi available throughout the community
- A device such as an iPad, a Samsung tablet, or a laptop with a webcam
- Staff or volunteers who can schedule video calls with families
- Staff or volunteers to help seniors maintain and operate the device

Helping people use technology to see and connect with their families during the COVID-19 pandemic is absolutely critical. This toolkit has been developed to help any long-term care or retirement residence team to take on the task of setting up scheduled video calls between residents and their loved ones. The content was prepared by Family Councils Ontario, the Ontario Association of Residents' Councils, and Tech Coaches Inc. as part of a collaborative partnership rooted in crisis resolution. This toolkit will provide you with the information and support you need to start a Virtual Visits program at your home. This free resource is available here: <http://www.ontarc.com/covid-19/virtual-visits-toolkit.html>

Spring Summer Seasons Magazine



Seasons magazine was mailed out on April 27th. Although the post office is struggling to keep up with the volume of items and social distancing practices, the magazine should arrive at long-term care homes next week. [Click here](#) to access an electronic copy of this edition. **UPDATE TO PAGE 7: The CLRI webinar “Nutrition in Disguise” has been moved from May 10, 2020 to September 10, 2020.**

Link2LTC – Linking Student to LTCH

The Ontario Long Term Care Association launched **Link2LTC** powered by Tazwiz as part of a sector-wide solution to the critical need for staff – exacerbated by COVID-19.

Ontario’s long-term care homes, and qualified students, are connected directly for roles like the Resident Support Aide to support nurses and personal support workers so they can focus on delivering direct care. All students will be actively screened for COVID-19 as part of the application process, as well as on-site by long-term care homes, in addition to a required Vulnerable Sector Screen. There will also be orientation and critical training, including infection prevention and control protocols and procedures. Ontario’s health students are uniquely qualified to support long-term care homes and would benefit from these paid opportunities. For more information visit <https://ltc.tazwiz.com/>



Recordings for Recent OARC Webinars Now available

OARC’s *Courageously Living Through COVID-19 Together: Residents and Families* webinars occurred on April 15th and 28th, 2020. These webinars were recorded and can be accessed on our YouTube channel here: [April 15 Webinar](#) and [April 28 Webinar](#) Click the links to receive immediate access to the session. Additionally, resources from the webinar are available here, [Questions and Answers](#) and [Webinar Slides](#). For more information about OARC’s COVID-19 communications, tools and resources visit <http://www.ontarc.com/covid-19-updates.html>

Special Dates and Celebrations

- June 2020 – Pride Month
- June 2020 – Seniors Month

OARC Launching Ontario’s FIRST Residents’ Councils Week September 14th-19th, 2020

Residents Councils’ play an important role in shaping the place residents call home. They bring residents together as peers, to discuss issues of importance and to stay connected and engaged in home operations and decision-making. Ontario’s first official Residents’ Councils week will allow Councils the opportunity to creatively showcase who they are and what they do. Stay tuned in the coming months for customizable tools and templates to help promote this special week in YOUR home! Check our website for updates <http://www.ontarc.com/residents-council-week.html>

Resources:

- [OARC COVID-19 Communication](#): Contains all OARC bulletins regarding COVID-19 news, Tools and Resources
- Caregiver Materials from The Ontario Caregiver Organization:
 - [Caregiver Mental Health During COVID-19 Outbreak](#)
 - [How Technology Can Support Caregivers During COVID-19](#)

OARC Representing Residents' Councils

Working with our Ministry of Long-Term Care (MOLTC) and Stakeholder Groups as members of various committees, residents attend and provide their lived experience to government and sector leaders through:

- Ministry of Long-Term Care
- Behaviour Supports Ontario: Advisory Group, Integrated Teams Collaborative, Lived Experience Advisory Group, Non-Stigmatizing Language Expert Panel
- CLRI Provincial Advisory Committee; CLRI Supporting Diversity and Inclusion in LTC Advisory Group; CLRI Ontario Caring Advisory Circle (OCAC), Implementation Advisor
- Health Quality Ontario: Resource Development Advisory Group; Long-Term Care Practice Report Advisory Committee; Transitions from Hospital to Home Advisory Group



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Thank you to Java Group Programs and the Ontario Centres for Learning, Research & Innovation in Long-Term Care for supporting OARC's Culture Change products and education programs. To find out more about how you can support OARC, please contact Dee Lender, Executive Director dlender@ontarc.com 1-800-532-0201 x 240.

We encourage you to share this information with residents in your home. We love to hear from you - call, write or email us with your questions, suggestions and stories.



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