

# RESIDENTS' COUNCILS

## RESIDENT WELLNESS

## Ontario Long-Term Care Homes

### SHARING RESOURCES TO HELP YOU FIND YOUR WELLNESS

According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, “mental health is more than the absence of a mental health condition or illness; it is a positive sense of well-being, or the capacity to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face.” With this in mind, OARC is pleased to share the following tips, tools, and information to help support your wellness.

#### STAY CONNECTED

[Research shows](#) that social connections are important for the health and wellbeing of people living in long-term care homes. The following are two of many ways you can connect with other residents:

##### Residents' Councils

Every resident is a member of their home's Residents' Council and is encouraged to attend meetings. Council meetings are a great place to connect with others and to share concerns and successes.

##### OARC Resident Forums

Facilitated by a Resident Leader, this weekly forum is held over ZOOM or by phone every Thursday at 2pm. Forums provide an avenue for LTC residents from across Ontario to meet new friends, ask questions, share concerns and successes, and to stay informed. For more information, including meeting details, please check the [FORUM](#) tab on our website.

#### Starting the Conversation

Mental Health Week encourages us to #GetReal about how we feel and talk about mental health. There are many ways to support wellness and contribute to positive mental health; a good place to start is by creating a space where conversations about mental health can occur. We heard in our [Understanding Mental Health in Older Adults webinar](#) presented by the Canadian Mental Health Association, that one of the best ways to feel supported during challenging times is to share your thoughts and feelings with a peer who is experiencing the same thing. This brings us right back to Residents' Councils.

##### *OARC Recommends:*

At the beginning of each Residents' Council meeting, consider following your [opening remarks](#) with a resident wellness check-in. This could take the form of a roundtable discussion, with residents taking turns sharing how they are feeling and what they are doing to support their personal wellness/mental health.

## OARC's REAL and Board Members #GetReal About Wellness

Wellness means different things to different people, and the strategies and resources used to support wellness are also quite varied. Here are some tips shared by resident leaders:

**REAL Member Jim** shared that the [JAVA Music Program](https://javagp.com/java-music-club/) provides an opportunity to meet new people and to form trusting relationships where mutual sharing can occur. (<https://javagp.com/java-music-club/>)

**REAL Member Les** shared that he supports his wellness is by keeping busy, being involved in his home, and connecting with other residents. Read more about Les in the [Seasons Magazine](#) available on our website.

**Board Member Murray** supports his wellness by enjoying good food. In collaboration with his home's Recreation Team, Murray helps get interesting food programs onto the programs calendar for all to enjoy, such as Breakfast Club, Diners Club, themed Socials and BBQ's.

Other supports that may be available in your home including access to a Registered Social Worker/Social Service Worker, Recreation Therapy; Music and Art Therapy; Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care Providers; a Behaviour Supports Ontario Member; Psychogeriatric Services, and other peer-supports.

### Free Mental Health Resources

[BounceBack](https://bouncebackontario.ca/) is a skill-building program to manage low mood, mild to moderate depression, anxiety, stress or worry. Over the phone with a coach & through videos, you will get access to tools to support you on your path to mental wellness. (<https://bouncebackontario.ca/>)

[MindBeacon](https://www.mindbeacon.com/) is a Therapist Guided Cognitive Behavioural Therapy that supports individuals with depression, generalized anxiety, health anxiety, stress, insomnia, PTSD, chronic pain and more. Individuals have their own e-therapist to meet their unique needs. (<https://www.mindbeacon.com/>)

## For Residents, By Residents

**Ontario Association of Residents' Councils**

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*OARC is funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, membership dues and sponsorships. The views expressed in this publication are the views of OARC and do not necessarily reflect those of the Province.*