

Sharron Cooke Annual Legacy Award



Recognize and honour the people who live and work in long-term care homes.



Collaboration



Communication



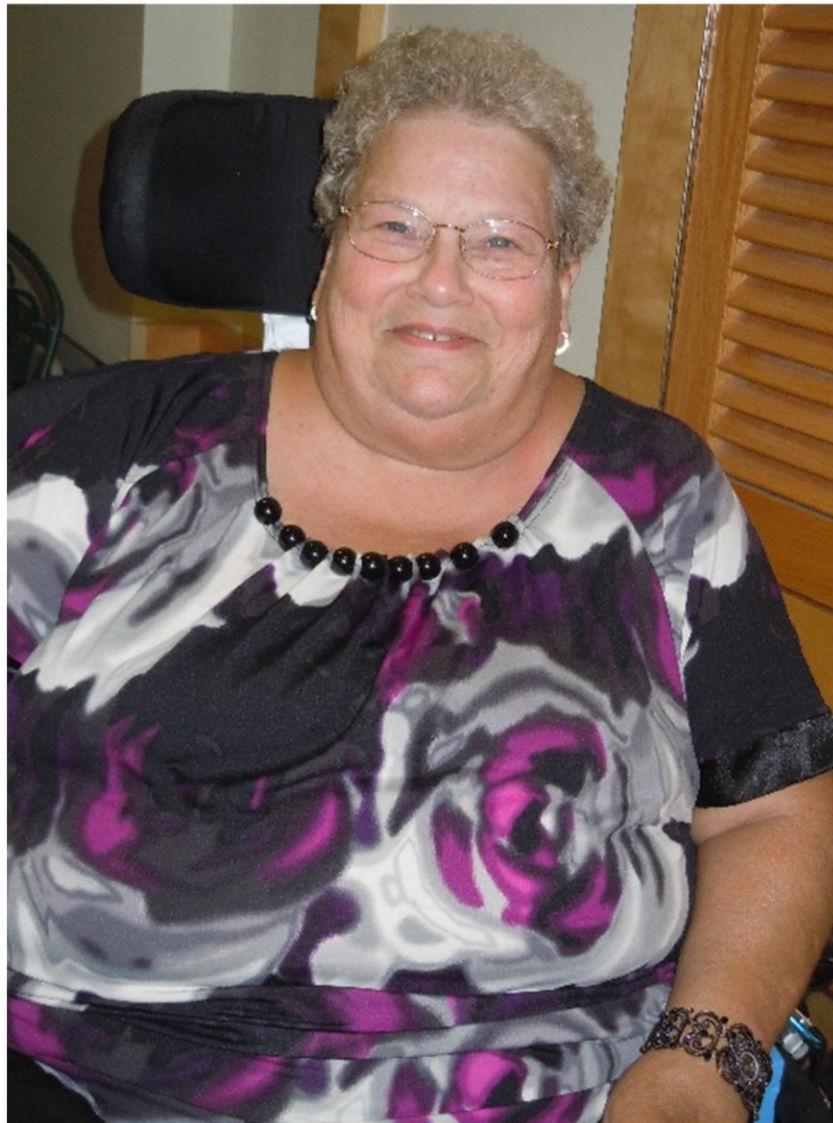
Trust



Friendship



Hope



“You can have all kinds of nice things in your home but the atmosphere and interaction with residents shows more person-centred care than material items. A friendly smile, conversation, involvement of volunteers, team members etc. make a good home. That is all any resident will ask for; the company of a friend to talk and listen to...life is simple really.” ~ Sharron Cooke, Former OARC President



PURPOSE

The **Sharron Cooke Annual Legacy Award (SCALA)** recognizes a long-term care home engaged in a shared home-level, grassroots project or initiative where residents and team members work collaboratively—or where residents take a leading role—to shape and enhance their home community.

Rather than recognizing individual volunteer efforts, this Award celebrates homes that demonstrate a collective approach—where residents and team members come together, or residents lead with support, from vision through to execution.



Sharron and team member

Sharron imagined a future where every home embraced the spirit of **culture change**, described by the Pioneer Network as “...the transformation of older adult services, based on person-directed values and practices where the voices of elders and those working most closely with them are solicited, respected and honored. Core person-directed values are relationship, choice, dignity, respect, self-determination and purposeful living.”

Guided by her relational, strengths-based leadership, Sharron championed the belief that meaningful change happens with residents, not for them. She understood that when residents, Residents’ Councils, team members, and home leadership come together in genuine partnership, a long-term care home becomes more than a place to live—it becomes a HOME, shaped by shared relationships and shared decisions.



AWARD

The Award Recipient (LTC home team) will be consulted to select a prize item (valued up to \$500) that helps to bring people together to build community in their home. We recognize that prizes are not ‘one size fits all’ and the intention of this Award is to afford flexibility to select a prize that best suits your home’s current needs and resident preferences. Below is a sample list of prizes, but your innovative ideas are most welcome:

- Outdoor enhancements: Flagpole, Raised Garden Planters, Patio Umbrella, BBQ, garden centre gift card etc.
- Residents’ Council Meeting Materials – Talking Sticks, Projector, Microphone, portable speaker, branded merchandise, etc.
- Gift certificate for a custom Residents’ Council Board
- Utility/Activity cart (to create a mobile Residents’ Council cart, for example)
- Gift card towards something else for Residents’ Council... and more!



Pictured to the left: 2025 Award Recipients, Algonquin Nursing Home in Mattawa, Ontario’s, selected for their “Community Outings Initiative.”

Residents wanted to reconnect with the community after long pandemic isolation, so the Residents’ Council and staff co-designed meaningful outings that rebuilt trust and inspired hope. A highlight was the March 26, 2025 skating event, where recreation staff

and high school hockey players helped residents onto the ice in wheelchairs. These experiences renewed confidence and belonging, showing the power of collaboration toward dignity, joy, and inclusion.



ELIGIBILITY

Because this Award honours the power of residents and team members working together, we ask that applicants meet the following eligibility requirements, ensuring each submission reflects this collaborative spirit.

- Resident–Team Collaboration: Applications must be submitted jointly by at least one Team Member and one Resident, demonstrating a shared, home-level, grassroots, co-developed initiative.
- Ontario LTC Requirement: All applicants must work or reside in a long-term care home in Ontario.
- Re-Application Window: Previous recipients of the Sharron Cooke Legacy Award may apply again two years after receiving the Award.

CRITERIA

Application packages must include the following:

1. Application form jointly completed by a Team Member(s) and Resident(s)
2. Description of how the initiative has positively influenced your home in at least one of the following areas:
 - Building trust and inspiring hope
 - Enhancing communication
 - Building compassion and empathy
 - Facilitating resident to resident peer support and friendships
3. Include direct feedback/quotes from residents, team members, home leadership, and other members of your community to illustrate the impact of your project
4. Include pictures to support your application – email to jlangston@ontarc.com in a .jpeg format

IMPORTANT: Recommended Word Length

To support clarity and consistency, we encourage applicants to keep submissions around 750 words. Applications tend to be strongest when they include:

- **Short descriptions** that clearly summarize key points
- **Bullet points** to highlight responsibilities, outcomes, or examples

This format helps reviewers understand each applicant's experience quickly and fairly.



SELECTION

Using the criterion outlined above, a Working Group comprised of OARC Resident Leaders will review the applications and select a recipient. The LTC home’s Residents’ Council, Council Assistant and Administrator will be notified the week of September 7, 2026. All applicants will be notified, via email, to learn if they are successful. Prizes will be coordinated in September, but delivery times might vary depending on the chosen item.

IMPORTANT DATES

June 8, 2026	Applications Open
August 21, 2026 – 5 pm	Applications Close
August 24 to 28, 2026	Award Selection (internal review)
Week of September 7, 2026	Applicants Notified/Prize selection
Residents’ Council Week September 14 -20, 2026	Recipient Winner announced

HOW TO APPLY

You may choose from 1 of 2 methods to apply for the award:

1. How to apply online:

Online link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SCALA2026>

Photos are to be submitted via email to Jennifer Langston jlangston@ontarc.com in a .jpeg or .pdf format



2. How to apply using the attached/paper application:

[CLICK HERE](#) FOR THE MS WORD VERSION OF APPLICATION FORM

Submit your application and photos via mail, email or fax:

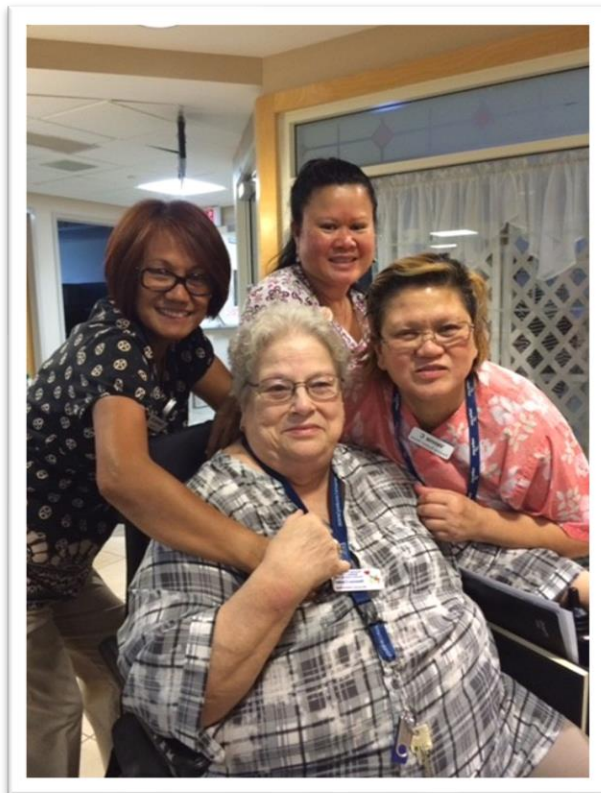
Mail: Ontario Association of Residents’ Councils
4261 Highway 7 East, Suite #A14-360, Markham, ON L3R 9W6

Email: jlangston@ontarc.com or Fax: 905-731-1755

PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE THE NAME OF YOUR LONG-TERM CARE HOME OR THE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS PORTION OF THE APPLICATION.



SHARRON COOKE | April 1948 – August 2022



Sharron and team members.

Sharron Cooke was a beacon of hope and a source of inspiration for residents, team members and long-term care sector partners across the province. As former Director and Chair of the OARC Board of Directors, Sharron led with compassion and focus for over a decade. She gave selflessly to others and was guided by a fierce sense of determination and a commitment to enhancing quality of life for all residents living in long-term care.

Sharron spoke with conviction and was not afraid to challenge the status quo. Her advocacy work included participation on countless government committees and stakeholder groups,

she offered insightful contributions to research and resource development, she infused resident voice into presentations and course curricula, and she was a devoted mentor, teacher and friend to team members, students and fellow Resident Leaders.

Before her passing in August 2022, Sharron helped to articulate her hopes for an annual recognition award, for a long-term care home that embodied the culture change principles she so admired and strived to promote. Her final wish for her peers was to live in a long-term care home with a culture that welcomes open communication, builds trust, hope and friendships.



APPLICATION FORM

[CLICK HERE](#) FOR THE MS WORD VERSION OF APPLICATION FORM

- 1. Main Contact: Provide the contact information of the person OARC will contact regarding the status of the application

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Position/Role: _____

Long-Term Care Home: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

- 2. Resident(s) and Team Member(s) Involved in Project/Program/Initiative – list up to 7 members

First Name and Last Name or Initial	Position/Role



APPLICATION FORM

[CLICK HERE](#) FOR THE MS WORD VERSION OF APPLICATION FORM

TO SUPPORT OUR ANONYMOUS AWARD ADJUDICATION PROCESS, PLEASE **DO NOT** INCLUDE THE NAME OF YOUR LONG-TERM CARE HOME OR THE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS PORTION OF THE APPLICATION. *Thank you!*

3. Provide a brief overview of your project/initiative, including what prompted the initiative and how residents and team members worked together. (Up to 500 words)

4. Describe how the initiative has positively influenced your home through **at least one of the following areas** (Up to 500 words):
 - Building trust and inspiring hope
 - Enhancing communication
 - Building compassion and empathy
 - Facilitating resident to resident peer support and friendships

5. Remember to:
 - Include feedback/quotes from residents as well as team members, home leadership and other members of your community to illustrate the impact of your project, and
 - Send photos illustrating your activity/project/impact to jlangston@ontarc.com
 - Limit your entire application to a maximum of 1100 words
 - Not include the name of your home and applicants in this portion of the application (Q3 & Q4)

Thank you for your application.