

OARC In Action

For Residents By Residents

February 2026



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Meet Your New Coach! Introducing OARC's New Education and Home Support Regional Coaches!

This year, OARC has expanded its service delivery model to include four new Regional Education and Home Support Coaches. Regional Coaches provide practical strategies to strengthen Council processes, build confidence and support meaningful resident influence and collaboration in every home.

We're excited to welcome:



Jessica Chong
East Region
jchong@ontarc.com



Sierra Roberti
North Region
sroberti@ontarc.com



Erin Westwood
West Region
ewestwood@ontarc.com



Sarah Masonovich
Central Region
smasonovich@ontarc.com

Stay tuned for upcoming newsletters where we will learn a little more about each Coach!

In the Know at OARC

Annual Survey Reminder – Share Your Valuable Feedback with Us!

Watch your mailbox...OARC's Annual Survey is on its way!

Hearing directly from Residents' Councils helps us to understand what's working well, identify needs and priorities, and improve the support and services that OARC provides.



This year a hard copy of OARC's survey will be mailed to every LTC home in the province to the attention of Residents' Council Leaders and Residents' Council Assistants. We invite Residents' Council Leaders to work together with their Residents' Council Assistant to fill out one short survey and share your home's valuable feedback with us.

There are two ways you can fill out the survey:

- ▶ **By mail, fax or email.** Physical copies of the survey are being mailed to each home and are expected to arrive later this week or early next week.
- ▶ **Online.** You can access an online version of the survey here: <https://shorturl.at/qADpl>

Please share your thoughts with us by completing this survey by April 15, 2026

Questions? Please contact **Chloe Yeung**, Evaluation and Quality Manager, at cyeung@ontarc.com or 1-800-532-0201 x 290.

Early Bird Contest Alert!

Fill out your survey early and send it to us by **March 18th** to be entered into a draw for a chance at winning a gift card of your Council's choice, valued at \$100! Submissions must be received by this date, whether by email, mail, online or fax.

March Webinar Wednesday - Elevating the Resident Voice: Early Insights from OARC's Food Services Survey in Long-Term Care

Join OARC for an informative webinar exploring food services and the dining experience in long term care.

This session will present early findings from OARC's Food Services Resident Survey and highlight how OARC, in collaboration with the Ontario Senior Nutrition and Advocacy Committee (OSNAC), is using resident and LTC home feedback to guide and strengthen food service advocacy across the sector.

Date: March 18, 2026 | 2:00pm EST | For Residents

[Register here today](#)

February Webinar Recording: Everything About Residents Involves Residents, A Co-Designed Toolkit

What does meaningful resident engagement really look like in long-term care (LTC)? If you missed our February Webinar Wednesday highlighting OARC's new Resident Engagement Toolkit, you can now access the recording on our [YouTube channel](#).

Our toolkit is now live! **Download a free PDF of the toolkit [directly from our website](#).**

Webinar Recording: Applying Tools for Transformation, OARC's Resident Engagement Toolkit

Hosted by the Ontario Centres for Learning, Research and Innovation in Long-Term Care (CLRI) and co-presented by OARC REAL members Jim Gilhuly, Gale Ramsden, and OARC's Chloe Yeung, this session explored the why, where, and how of co-designing with residents and leaders in LTC home settings.

This workshop introduced OARC's new Resident Engagement Toolkit and included practical strategies for including co-design principles in the home. Watch the recording on [CLRI's YouTube channel](#).

OARC Membership Matters – Join Us

Connect your Residents' Council with a province-wide network dedicated to empowering residents and amplifying their voices and lived experiences. By joining the Ontario Association of Residents' Councils (OARC) as a member, you are signaling support for the work that we are doing to ensure residents remain at the centre of planning, decision-making, and quality improvement in every home.

Please consider becoming a member or renewing your membership for the 2026-2027 year. Learn more at www.ontarc.com/membership or contact Jennifer Langston at jangston@ontarc.com to confirm your Council's membership status.

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Being part of OARC allows our group to stay connected with other long-term care homes, and stay abreast of issues that have an impact on our quality of life...it's empowering.

Residents' Council Member

OARC Impact Stories

The Impact of Resident Voices at the 2026 Canadian Institute

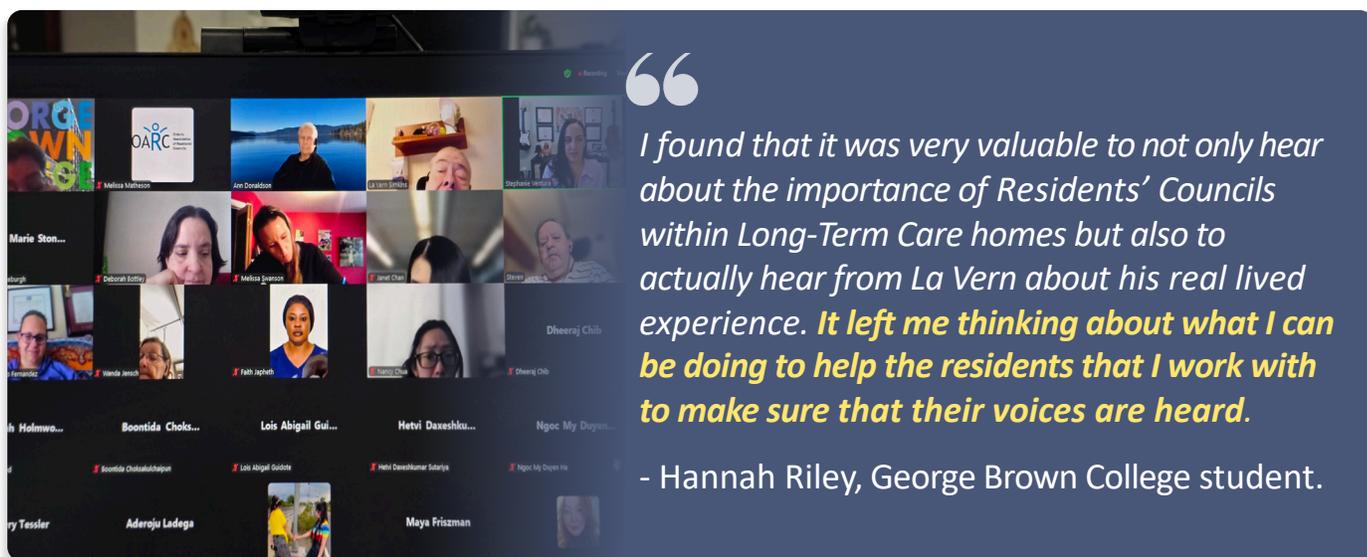
Each resident is an expert when it comes to living in long-term care (LTC). When their voices are brought to the table early, guiding decisions rather than reacting to them, the result is more positive, person-centred outcomes for everyone involved. When Dee Tripp, and Board Directors Ann Donaldson and Jenn Killing, attended the [Canadian Institute's Forum on Healthcare Infrastructure for Aging Populations](#) last month, their impactful, resident-led presentation reminded the LTC home operators, architects, construction company owners, urban planners, and home designers in the room that they are not building for residents, but with residents.

*“As passionate difference makers, Dee, Ann, and Jenn **inspired all of us on the fundamental importance of purposefully engaging residents** in building new homes for aging adults. [...] they inspired all of us to create homes that don’t just meet clinical needs, but foster meaningful experiences filled with a sense of belonging, joy and purpose - and reflect the lives and preferences of the people who live there. The goal is simple: make it homelike, because it is home.”*

- Megan Allen-Lamb, President, peopleCare Communities Inc.

Inspiring Students at George Brown College

A few weeks ago, OARC Director of Education Stephanie Ventura, and Resident Leader La Vern Simkins presented to the Recreation Management in Gerontology students at George Brown College. As Hannah, one of the student participants, shared, hearing directly from someone with lived experience in long-term care (LTC) is a valuable opportunity for developing learning within the LTC sector.



Resources and Opportunities

Research Advisory Opportunity: Geras Centre for Aging Research

[The Geras Centre for Aging Research](#) is seeking Resident Advisors to join its Resident and Family Research Advisory Committee for long-term care research. This volunteer group meets 2–3 times per year to share lived-experience insights that help shape studies aimed at improving health and quality of life, including fracture-prevention efforts, in long-term care.

Residents with firsthand experience of falls or fractures are especially encouraged to participate. To learn more, contact [Melissa McVie](#) at mmcvie@ontarc.com.

Research Advisory Opportunity: Understanding Experiences of Chinese-Speaking Residents in Long-Term Care

A research collaboration team from Bruyère Health Research Institute and the University of British Columbia School of Nursing, is forming a Resident and Family Advisory Committee to help identify and co-develop research priorities related to the experiences of Chinese-speaking residents in LTC.

This commitment will involve 4-6 online meetings per year. Members will be compensated with an honorarium to recognize their contributions. Any LTC residents or caregivers with an interest in the experiences of Chinese-speaking residents in LTC are welcome to participate.

Please contact **Seles Yung**, Research Coordinator at selesy@mail.ubc.ca to express your interest.

Therapeutic Recreation Month – Benefits for Long-Term Care



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*Meaningful engagement is not an ‘extra’ in long-term care — **it is foundational**. Over my nine years in Therapeutic Recreation, I’ve witnessed how recreation therapy sustains dignity, cultivates connection, and elevates quality of life.*

Sarah Masonovich, OARC Education & Home Support Regional Coach

This February, OARC proudly recognizes the meaningful contributions that Therapeutic Recreation (TR) professionals make in long-term care (LTC) homes. Through their creativity, compassion, and skill, TR professionals enrich the daily lives of residents.

Created by Therapeutic Recreation Ontario (TRO), [this infographic](#) highlights the benefits of TR in LTC. Specialized TR programs can enhance quality of life, promote a sense of independence, and provide meaning and purpose. Consider taking part in [TRO’s daily TR challenge](#) beyond the month of February as a source of fun, engaging and enriching activities for residents.

Resident (Patient) and Care Partner Involvement Opportunity: Guideline for Safely Reducing or Stopping Diabetes Medication

As people age and their health needs become more complex, it may be appropriate to reduce or discontinue certain diabetes medications. To meet new guidance needs, a deprescribing guideline created in 2017 is currently being updated by a research team from the University of [British Columbia](#) in collaboration with [deprescribing.org](#).

Starting in March, the project team is seeking input from people aged 65 and older who live with type 2 diabetes and their care partners. Decisions about diabetes medication use should always be made collaboratively with residents (patients) and their care partners. Feedback is needed to ensure the updated guideline supports person-centred decision-making.

If you would like more details or to get involved please contact: **Wade Thompson** at 778-668-6378, wade.thompson@ubc.ca or **Annabel Chapman**, annabel.chapman@ubc.ca

The Future of Seniors' Care: Together We Care Convention

Canada's largest gathering of leaders from the long-term care and retirement living sectors takes place **March 23–25, 2026**, at the Toronto Congress Centre.

The *Together We Care* (TWC) Convention and Trade Show brings together sector leaders, innovators, and change-makers to connect, collaborate, and share practical strategies shaping the future of seniors' care. This year's newly released program features 45+ long-term care, retirement, and joint-sector sessions, including inspirational keynotes, real-world case studies, and emerging models of care.

Check out the 2026 program here: <https://bit.ly/4qDfjPe>

Assessing LTC readiness for Dementia Care: Ontario CLRI Snapshot Results

Ontario Centres for Learning, Research & Innovation in Long-Term Care (CLRI) has released a snapshot infographic of the results from their 2025 [Dementia Care Preparedness Initiative](#). In this document, CLRI shares successes, next steps, and opportunities for improvement, as well as current models and approaches used in Dementia care.

Access a printable version of their [Snapshot here](#).

News Release: Ontario Increasing Access to Dementia Care in LTC Homes – February 24, 2026

The Ontario government has launched the new Improving Dementia Care Program (IDCP), beginning with 17 long-term care homes and expanding to nearly 50 by 2027–28. The province is investing \$9 million over three years to strengthen emotion-based,

person-centred dementia care and enhance training for team members (staff).

Ontario is also adding up to 153 new resident spaces in dedicated Behavioural Specialized Units across five long-term care homes to better support residents with complex needs. These investments aim to improve quality of life for residents living with dementia, who make up more than 60% of Ontario's long-term care home populations.

[Read the full news release here.](#)

Explore Black History Month Resources: CLRI Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in LTC Newsletter

Ontario Centres for Learning, Research & Innovation in Long-Term Care (CLRI) has just released the 17th edition of their [EDI newsletter](#). In this quarterly issue, explore ideas for LTC organizations to honour Black History month, watch video resources about Dementia in the Black community, and other learning opportunities in EDI including resources for Lunar New Year and Ramadan.



Supporting Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Long-Term Care: Community of Practice

The Centres for Learning, Research & Innovation in Long-Term Care (CLRI)'s EDI Community of Practice group is an opportunity for LTC professionals to come together with peers in a welcoming, inclusive, and affirming learning environment.

The topic of this March 13th, EDI in LTC Community of Practice is "Addressing Discrimination and Racism in LTC." If you would like to participate, please visit the [EDI Community of Practice webpage](#) and fill out an [Expression of Interest form](#).

Tips for Managing Your Medications: Tip Sheet and Checklist

Stay informed and ask the right questions when being prescribed new medication. Created by Tejal Patel, pharmacist and Schlegel Specialist in Medication Management and Aging, [this tipsheet](#) shares expert recommendations to simplify and improve medication safety.

For more information visit the-ria.ca

Long-Term Care Home Spotlight

Showcasing Olympic Spirit at Glen Stor Dun Lodge

Shared by Tracey Delage, Supervisor of Resident and Outreach Services

Residents of the Glen Stor Dun Lodge in Cornwall are fully embracing the Olympic spirit! On Wednesday, February 5th, they kicked off their very own Winter Olympics with a lively opening ceremony, proudly showcasing their home area flags and infectious team spirit. The celebration marked the start of an exciting 16-day event, during which residents took part in five modified winter sports designed for fun, inclusion, and friendly competition. The festivities concluded on Tuesday, February 24th, with a special medal presentation followed by a closing ceremony to celebrate everyone's participation and achievements.



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Thank you to [AdvantAge Ontario](#), [Extencicare](#), [Java Group Programs](#), [peopleCare communities](#), [Sienna Senior Living](#) and [S&R Group](#) for supporting OARC's Confidence in Culture Change Program.

To find out more about how you can support OARC, please contact [Dee Tripp](#), Executive Director dtripp@ontarc.com 1-800-532-0201 x 240.

Tel 905-731-3710 | Toll-free 1-800-532-0201 | Fax 905-731-1755

www.ontarc.com | info@ontarc.com

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