

April/May 2025



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OARC's Seasons Magazine is on it's way to your Council



Residents' Council leadership teams can look forward to receiving their complimentary copy of Seasons magazine in the mail in the coming days.

Published in both English and French, Seasons can be enjoyed in hardcopy, or in a digital format linked below:

[English](#) | [French](#)

Meet our cover model, Art J. Thompson:

Art is a Resident Leader at Tullamore Community in Brampton, Ontario. When invited to share a few words about his photo, Art was inspired to write a seasonal poem. We hope you enjoy it as much as we did!

*Seasons come and seasons go
Together we can all make the garden grow*

*Sowing seeds and having fun
Sharing ideas in the Summer sun*

*With collaboration on the mind
What a wonderful way to spend our time*

*Growing flowers growing food
To get us in the gardening mood*

*So come on down, take a look and see
What our residents do for tranquility*

*June the sixth is our planting day
Where volunteers help in many ways*

*Join the fun and help where you can
With a BBQ on us, that's the plan!*

Celebrating the Contributions of OARC Volunteers

National Volunteer Week was celebrated April 27 - May 3, 2025. OARC would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the dedicated individuals who give their time, energy, and passion to enrich our organization. We are incredibly fortunate to have such a vibrant group of volunteers serving on OARC's Board of Directors and the Resident Expert Advisors and Leaders (REAL) group. Their expertise, commitment, and diverse perspectives strengthen our work in immeasurable ways, helping us to achieve our mission and vision. To all our volunteers: thank you for your invaluable contributions—you inspire us every day!

OARC Welcomes New Board Director, Sadie Friesner

OARC is thrilled to welcome Sadie Friesner to our Board of Directors! Sadie is a dynamic and dedicated leader in long-term care, bringing a wealth of experience and a passion for culture change and enhancing the lives of residents and their families. She currently serves as the Administrator at Simcoe Manor Long-Term Care, County of Simcoe. Learn more about Sadie [here](#).



OARC's Vice-Chair, Dr. Fred Mather Receives Award

OARC would like to extend enthusiastic congratulations to Dr. Fred Mather, OARC's Vice Chair, on receiving the King Charles III Coronation Medal.

This medal was awarded on March 31st at a special ceremony in Mississauga, and it honours Dr. Mather's dedication to quality care and leadership in the long-term care sector. The award was jointly presented by Minister Kusendova-Bashta (MPP- Mississauga Centre) and Silvia Gualtieri (MPP Mississauga East- Cooksville).



OARC Resident Expert Advisors and Leaders (REAL) in Action

OARC's REAL group members, residing in long-term care homes across Ontario, stay connected through technology and Zoom meetings. But when opportunities present themselves for REAL members to travel to attend special events in-person, *magic happens*.

This was particularly evident at the AdvantAge Ontario Convention in Toronto, April 30 – May 2. With eager anticipation, four REAL members hit the road from various locations in the GTA, Ottawa, and London to join the OARC team and participate in this lively event.

On Wednesday, April 30th, Resident Leaders Ann Donaldson and Jennifer Brown joined OARC's Executive Director, Dee Tripp, on the main stage to deliver an inspiring presentation entitled, "Long-Term Care Saved My Life." Ann and Jennifer imparted stories about their move-in experiences, living through a very challenging pandemic, and finding renewed purpose as Resident Leaders in their LTC homes and through their involvement with OARC. They also expressed gratitude for their LTC home leadership and team members for the critical role they played (and continue to play) in their personal care and sense of well-being.

Throughout the week, REAL members Carol Burke and Devora Greenspon enjoyed connecting with delegates at the OARC booth, Seniors Expo trade show, and conference sessions. They also made a lasting impression at the Nashville-themed banquet dinner where they sang and danced the night away with equally spirited Convention attendees.

OARC would like to thank the entire team at AdvantAge Ontario and Convention support staff for their generosity and warm reception – congratulations on a very successful event! We are also most appreciative of the wonderful travel companions, Deena and Penny, who accompanied Devora and Carol – it was a pleasure to have you with us!



OARC's Annual Residents' Council Survey Reminder

Earlier this year, we invited Residents' Councils to complete a [short online survey](#) to learn more about their use of OARC's educational tools and home support. The survey also includes questions about how residents are engaged in their home operations.

Thank you to those who have already completed a survey - your responses help us to measure and evaluate our impact, inform the development of new and enhanced resources, and maximize our service delivery.

There is still time to complete a survey! Residents' Council Assistants are encouraged to review the survey with Residents' Council Leaders and **submit one survey per home by May 16th, 2025**. Access the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OACR25>

Do you have questions or need support? Contact Chloe Yeung at cyeung@ontarc.com.

New Residents' Bill of Rights Translation – Tagalog

We are excited to share the Residents' Bill of Rights translated to [Tagalog](#). A big thank you to Michelle Defante, Quality and Clinical Education Manager at Shepherd Village, who identified the need for this translation ensuring that our Filipino community can easily access and understand their rights as residents and family supporters. Shepherd Village was instrumental in identifying the need for the [Tamil](#) translation, further enhancing our commitment to inclusivity. The Residents' Bill of Rights is available in over 20 languages on our [website](#).

New Long-Term Care Food Services Orientation eLearning Course Series

Do you have dietary team members who are new to LTC? Are you looking for interactive courses to include in annual training to help support your dietary team, whether they're new or experienced?

Equip team members for the safe support

of residents during snack and mealtimes through our new eLearning series, [Long-Term Care Food Services Orientation](#)!



Co-designed with the Ontario Seniors Nutrition & Advocacy Committee (OSNAC) and the Ontario CLRI at the Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging, the eLearning series provides dietary team members with an introduction to food services teams, resident dining experience, and key dietary terms. It also explores diet reports, food textures, and fluid consistencies. OARC's Devora Greenspon also contributed a [resident's perspective on mealtimes](#) – a message that is sure to resonate with team members!

Upcoming Webinars, Research and Learning Opportunities

- **OARC Webinar Wednesday** - Wednesday, May 21st at 2:00pm – 3:00pm, EST
Better Experiences, Better Health Care: Updates from Patient Ombudsman

Join OARC as we welcome Patient Ombudsman, Craig Thompson, to provide insights into health care experiences across Ontario, including highlights from their 2024-2025 Report. Of interest to residents, this presentation will include data about long-term care homes, and examples of issues that were brought forward to Patient Ombudsman and the resolutions they have helped to achieve.

Register: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_whHTK1uAQa68ZCvGQUes5w#/registration

Please share this learning opportunity with residents, Residents' Councils and their LTC supporters. Thank you!

- **Strengthening Senior Living Dining Operations Through Cost Control: Navigating Challenges, Embracing Solutions** – Friday, May 16th at 1:00pm EST
Webinar hosted by the Ontario Seniors Nutrition and Advocacy Committee

In today's evolving landscape, senior living operators are facing increasing financial pressures. Instead of focusing on future unknowns, let's dive into practical, actionable tools that you can implement immediately to improve your bottom line. This session will explore both fundamental menu planning strategies and team productivity solutions that maximize efficiency and drive cost savings. By embracing these solutions and leaning into operational flexibility, there is opportunity to enhance your organization's resilience without compromising the resident dining experience. Learn more and RSVP to attend [here](#).

- **Improve Sleep in Long-Term Care – Research Institute for Aging Study**
Do you live in a long-term care (LTC) homes, or are you a family/friend of a resident, or are you an LTC team member?

[Dr. Sophiya Benjamin](#), Schlegel Chair in Mental Health and Aging, at the Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging (RIA) invites you to participate in a short questionnaire to share your experiences about sleep. This survey is part of a project called 'Co-designing a multicomponent intervention to improve sleep in Ontario long-term care homes.'

Learn more and access the survey [here](#).

OARC Annual Membership... It's time to renew for 2025-2026!



April 1st marks the start of a new membership period for Residents' Councils that hold annual membership with OARC.

For current OARC Residents' Council members, your 2025-2026 renewal packages, including invoices, have been emailed to the attention of your Residents' Council Assistant. We thank you for your continued support and investment in the work of OARC!

Some Residents' Council memberships with OARC are organizationally supported through our corporate membership program. We are grateful to our current corporate members (displayed below). Annual membership invoices for corporate

member homes have been sent to the central offices of each organization. Learn more about corporate membership [here](#).



Consider OARC Membership for your Residents' Council

Residents' Councils that may be considering becoming an OARC member are encouraged to [visit our website](#) or contact us directly to learn more and have your questions answered. We'd love to have you join our network of close to 500 Residents' Council members from across Ontario! Contact Jennifer Langston at 1-800-532-0201 extension 220 or by email: jangston@ontarc.com.

Government Updates

News Release – May 8, 2025 [Ontario Taking Action to Support Seniors and their Caregivers](#)

Last week, the Ontario government re-introduced a piece of legislation called the [Support for Seniors and Caregivers Act, 2025](#) (originally introduced on December 4, 2024). According to the [news release](#), if passed, “the proposed legislation would amend the [Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021](#) and the [Retirement Homes Act, 2010](#) and make a suite of changes to:

- Protect residents with dementia by requiring all long-term care homes in Ontario to have an organized program for dementia care and services.
- Support seniors and their families by strengthening residents’ rights to ongoing support from family or friends who provide care.
- Broaden requirements for long-term care homes to recognize and respect the cultural, linguistic, religious and spiritual needs of residents. This includes new regulations that require long-term care homes to increase information available in French.
- Introduce new offences related to the abuse or neglect of a long-term care home resident and enhance the ability to investigate and prosecute offences.”

As the proposed changes will have direct implications for residents, and how they experience life in their long-term care homes, OARC is committed to following the progression of this legislation and sharing updates in the weeks to come.

May Themes and Events

Mental Health Week – May 5th to 11th, 2025

Last week we recognized National Mental Health Week. As part of their 2025 awareness campaign, the [Canadian Mental Health Association \(CMHA\)](#) promoted the theme of ‘unmasking mental health’ with supportive handouts including [this one](#) that addresses the stigma associated with mental health and how ‘masking’ is often used as a coping strategy.

OARC encourages Residents’ Councils to work with their homes to keep the topic of mental health and well-being a priority year-round. Consider exploring some of our past webinars such as [A Conversation about Resident Mental Health](#) and our [Resident Wellness Fact Sheet](#).

May is Speech and Hearing Month

Speech-language pathologists (S-LPs) and audiologists play a critical role in supporting older adults with speech, language, and hearing challenges. This month, consider highlighting the topic of communication health, which affects many people living in long-term care.

Speech-Language & Audiology Canada has developed an informative brochure, [Communication Health and Aging](#), which might raise awareness and guide discussions.

[More May awareness themes & events in the Diversity and Inclusion Digital Calendar!](#)

Conference and Events Corner

Mark your calendars for some of OARC's most anticipated conferences coming up in 2025:

Connecting Through Care: 2025 Family Councils Ontario Conference, June 11-12

Hamilton Waterfront Conference Centre (Hybrid event with virtual option available)

With a focus on empowering family council members to become champions of change, Family Councils Ontario's upcoming conference will equip delegates with the tools they need to make a lasting impact. Learn more: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-CA/ticketing/creating-champions-connecting-through-care--2025>

Therapeutic Recreation Ontario 2025 Conference (Virtual), June 4, 18, and 25

With 27 sessions on topics including long-term care and mental health, this virtual conference allows delegates the flexibility to participate live or tune into recordings. Learn more: <https://www.trontario.org/conference/>

This is Long-Term Care, hosted by the Ontario Long Term Care Association Oct 26-28, Beanfield Centre and Hotel X

This year's conference will highlight new models of care, quality improvements, partnerships, and emerging research that challenge the status quo and drive better outcomes for residents, families, and staff.

Join the conversation and help lead the way forward in seniors' care.

To learn more, visit: <https://thisisltc.com> Registration opens May 14, 2025.



Thank you to [AdvantAge Ontario](#), [Extendicare](#), [Java Group Programs](#), [Schlegel Villages Inc.](#), [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.

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