

OARC In Action

For Residents By Residents

August 2026



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Thank You for Your Contributions, Jim Gilhuly

OARC extends its sincere thanks to Jim Gilhuly for his years of dedicated service and leadership. Since joining OARC's Provincial Advisory Group in 2022, and later serving on OARC's Board of Directors, most recently as Treasurer, Jim has made a lasting impact on the organization. As Jim steps away from the Board, we thank him for his commitment, insight, and leadership, and wish him our very best.

A passionate advocate for resident engagement, Jim was instrumental in OARC's national research project, and a visionary member of the co-design team that helped shape the Resident Engagement Toolkit, [Everything About Residents Involves Residents](#), launched earlier this year. He also played an important role in the evolution of [Seasons Magazine](#), providing editorial guidance, championing visual storytelling, and helping identify new ways to engage readers.



Beyond OARC, Jim generously contributed his time and expertise to numerous sector initiatives and advisory groups. Throughout his involvement with OARC, he

brought thoughtful questions, fresh perspectives, and an unwavering commitment to improving the resident experience. We are grateful for his many contributions and the positive impact he has had on our work.



In the Know at OARC

Team Member Spotlight: Stephanie Buosi, Communications Coordinator

In previous issues of OARC in Action, we've introduced you to our Education and Home Support Regional Coaches. This month, we're turning the spotlight on the person who helps bring OARC's stories to life each month: Stephanie Buosi, Communications Coordinator.



What I love most is the opportunity to meet people and help tell their stories. Recently, I've had the chance to conduct one-on-one interviews with residents and long-term care homes. [...] Being trusted with someone's story is really special."

[Click here](#) to read the full interview and learn more about Stephanie's role.

➡ Upcoming Webinars

September Webinar: Residents' Council Week Webinar: Explore OARC's New Website

Celebrate Residents' Council Week with OARC as we launch our brand-new website. Discover a more accessible and user-friendly experience, along with the resources and tools you need for success. [As part of the webinar, we'll also announce the recipient of the 2026 Sharron Cooke Annual Legacy Award \(SCALA\)](#), which recognizes collaborative, home-level initiatives that bring residents and team members together to enhance their home community.

Register: <https://shorturl.at/DdVtt>



➡ Webinar Recordings

August webinar Recap – Supporting Resident Participation in Municipal Elections

“If you feel things aren’t going right, get out and vote. Because it’s your right, and voting helps produce a better society where we have choice not dictatorship.”

- La Vern Simkins, Resident Leader and Co-presenter.

During OARC’s recent webinar, Supporting Resident Participation in Municipal Elections, panelists explored how residents can exercise their democratic right to vote and how long-term care homes can help make the process accessible, respectful, and meaningful.

The discussion reinforced a simple but powerful message: moving into a long-term care home does not take away a person’s right to participate in civic life. Municipal elections influence many services that affect daily life, including accessible transportation, public library and recreation services, and emergency services.

Common questions about voting in long-term care homes were also addressed including: accessibility supports, voter identification, and the rights of residents living with dementia. Every resident deserves the opportunity to make their voice heard and participate in decisions that shape their community.

As election day approaches, residents are encouraged to learn about local candidates, ask questions, and prepare to vote.

Watch the August webinar recording on YouTube today and help prepare for this fall’s Municipal elections.

Recorded Webinar Link: <https://youtu.be/rBbfN7jhM8E>

Why Voting Matters

Residents Are Citizens

- Moving into a long-term care home does **not** take away a person’s rights as a citizen
- Residents continue to have:
 - The right to vote
 - The right to participate in civic life
 - The right to express opinions
 - The right to make personal choices



Additional Resources:

- ▶ Webinar Slides: <https://shorturl.at/xIEag>
- ▶ 2026 Voters Guide: <https://shorturl.at/RuBmr>
- ▶ Check your municipality’s website to get in touch with your municipal clerk: <https://shorturl.at/fWARu>
- ▶ More information about proxy forms: <https://shorturl.at/j4msg>

➡ OARC Opportunities

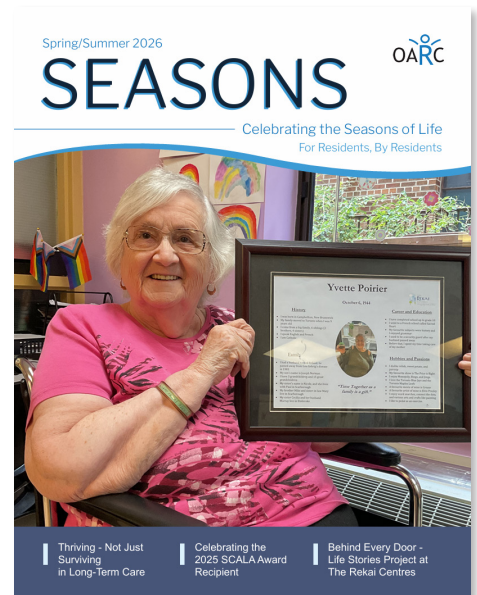
Submit to *Seasons Magazine* – Celebrating residents in every season of life.

Do you have a story about a project, event or program that was supported by your home's Residents' Council? We invite you to submit your stories for the chance to be featured in our Fall/Winter 2026 issue!

Seasons Magazine welcomes articles about resident-led initiatives, quality-improvement projects (with resident perspectives included), and stories that celebrate meaningful resident engagement and the positive aspects of living in long-term care.

To share your story, please email **Stephanie Buosi** at sbuosi@ontarc.com by October 15th.

- ▷ For more information, visit: <https://shorturl.at/XXuhr>
- ▷ Read our latest issue: <https://shorturl.at/4cKRz>



Sharron Cooke Annual Legacy Award - Update

The Ontario Association of Residents' Council would like to thank everyone who took the time to apply for the Sharron Cooke Annual Legacy Award (SCALA). This year we were delighted to receive twice as many applications compared to last year, making the adjudication process both inspiring and challenging for our team of resident reviewers. We're thrilled to see how this recognition award continues to gain momentum.

Please join us in congratulating the 2026 SCALA recipient on Wednesday, September 16th at 2 pm, during our live Residents' Council Week webinar.

Register for the webinar: <https://shorturl.at/1bAWv>

➡ Ministry Updates

Ontario Investing \$35 Million to Support Long-Term Care Residents with Complex Needs

This funding investment will aim to help long-term care homes across the province support residents with complex needs by supporting initiatives that connect people with

the right care, reduce unnecessary emergency department visits and hospital stays.

“Providing consistent, multi-year funding to the Local Priorities Fund will ensure long-term care homes across the province have access to the tools they need to provide the care that residents deserve.” said Natalia Kusendova-Bashta, Minister of Long-Term Care.

For more information, and a list of projects receiving funding, read the full news release at: <https://shorturl.at/gh22g>



Tackling Your Toolkit

Be part of long-term care (LTC) culture change!

Help inspire new ways of engaging with residents in shaping the places they call home. Each month we are showcasing a different resource, implementation tip, or spotlight from our Resident Engagement Toolkit, *Everything About Residents Involves Residents*. We hope you will be inspired to start or continue your co-design journey.

Learn more about the toolkit here: <https://shorturl.at/xmEed>

LTC Toolkit Spotlight: Implementing a Town Hall at John Noble Home

After reviewing the Toolkit, the team at John Noble Home (JNH) took a deeper look at how they could strengthen the connection between their leadership team and residents. JNH holds monthly meetings with the Residents' Council members, as well as Resident Choice meetings in each home area to give residents an opportunity to share their thoughts and feedback. Their new initiative, however, would connect residents directly with the leadership team.

A new, informal monthly Town Hall was set up with the goal to ensure residents felt informed and up-to-date on the happenings within their home. Residents could ask questions about upcoming programs or services and learn more about the roles of staff members they see every day. The informal set up of the meeting encourages open conversation, and has led to strengthened relationships between residents and staff.



The connections that start at the Town Hall expand throughout the home, with residents and leadership now conversing in the hallways at any time of the day

Residents feel included, valued and connected to their home, and leadership gains valuable insight into the residents' experiences, ideas, and needs.

“Residents really enjoy the town hall meetings, particularly when they are looking for more information about upcoming event or initiatives,” Karli Cass, Director of Programs at John Noble Home, shares. “For example, with construction of our new home areas, we can provide more frequent updates throughout the process. This allows us to remain responsive to residents’ questions and ensure they continue to receive timely and meaningful information.”

The connections that start at the Town Hall expand throughout the home, with residents and leadership now conversing in the hallways at any time of the day.

Thank you to Karli for sharing John Noble Home’s Toolkit-inspired initiative with us!

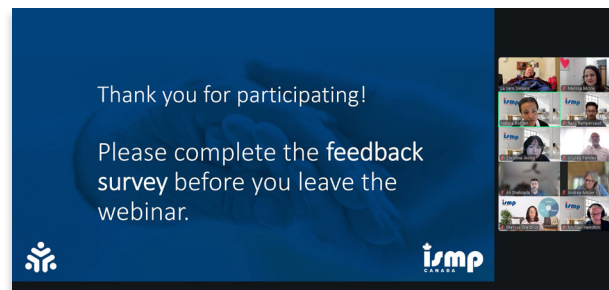
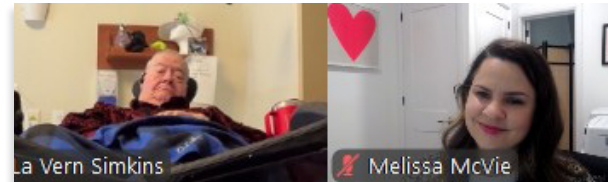


OARC Impact Stories

ISMP Canada Provincial Webinar – Infusing Resident Perspectives

On August 12, OARC’s Melissa McVie and Resident Leader La Vern Simkins joined a provincial webinar hosted by the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) Canada, bringing together long-term care leaders from across Ontario to discuss medication safety and related initiatives.

As panelists in a discussion on resident and family involvement in medication safety, ***Melissa and La Vern highlighted the importance of engaging residents as partners in quality improvement efforts.*** They encouraged long-term care teams to involve residents early in the process, asking what aspects of home operations, including medication safety, they are interested in learning about and helping to improve. Their key message was clear: residents want to be part of defining challenges and developing solutions, leading to stronger outcomes and more meaningful engagement for everyone involved.



Join the NEW Ontario Innovator Network for Pain Management

ISMP Canada is pleased to launch the Ontario Innovator Network for Pain Management to support Homes in optimizing pain management for residents. Join

the Network to become part of monthly sharing and learning webinars with other Ontario Homes.

- ▶ **For more information and to register:** <https://shorturl.at/ybmyH>
- ▶ **Registration Deadline:** September 1, 2026
- ▶ For further clarification or questions, contact christina.jeong@ismpcanada.ca.



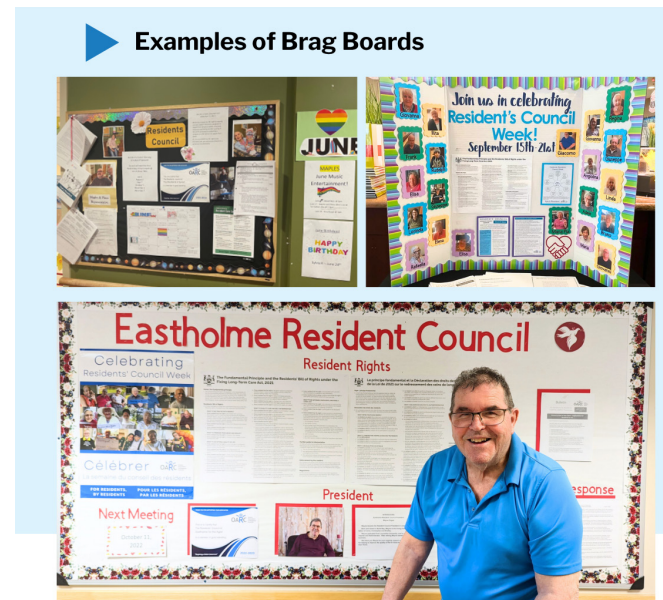
Residents' Council Week Updates

Contest Reminder - Show Us Your Brag Boards!

Submissions have started rolling in, and we're so impressed by all the amazing events and accomplishments Residents' Councils have achieved together with their home leadership and staff. This contest invites Residents' Councils to work with their Residents' Council Assistants and Home Leadership to create a Brag Board – a visual showcase of any medium that highlights the council's positive impact on the home.

The contest submission deadline is September 14th, just in time to showcase your boards during the celebration week!

For more contest details, visit: <https://shorturl.at/qNCKh>



New Celebration Planning Resources Available – in French!

This document was developed to assist homes with planning for this special week, pulling together suggested celebration and activity ideas. Arranged by suggested thematic days, we hope you will be inspired by new ways to highlight resident engagement in all areas of your home's operations.

Access the French version of the document today here: <https://shorturl.at/OT9Ni>

Access the English here: <https://shorturl.at/sPoaU>

Resident Council Week New Downloadable Activities

Did you know OARC has free downloadable activity sheets and colouring pages created especially for Residents' Council Week? We are continuously adding to this collection and are excited to add two new items for your home's enjoyment:

1. Residents Across Ontario – Provincial Landmark Stamps Colouring Sheet:
<https://shorturl.at/lpQxZ>
2. Certificate of Recognition:
 - a. English: <https://shorturl.at/Bwm4X>
 - b. French: <https://shorturl.at/uXVhG>
3. **Browse the full list of downable activities:**
<https://shorturl.at/BYwW3>



LTC Community Engagement Day

This year, Residents' Council Week coincides with Long-Term Care Community Engagement Day on September 18, creating opportunities for homes to engage with community partners and local leaders and raise awareness of the relationship between long-term care homes and their local communities. We're excited to hear that many homes across the province will be participating in LTC Community Engagement Day, which has been gaining momentum since its official launch in 2024.

OARC encourages Resident Leaders to work with their LTC home teams to explore opportunities to serve as home ambassadors, greeters, or tour guides.

By welcoming visitors and sharing their experiences, Resident Leaders can help showcase their home and strengthen connections with the broader community

Learn more about LTC Community Engagement Day: <https://shorturl.at/4a8ID>



Coaches Corner

Coaches Corner brings you helpful tips, insights, and resources directly from our four new Education and Home Support Regional Coaches. This month, Sarah Masonovich builds on the theme of election preparedness in long-term care homes, focusing on ways a home and its residents can help prepare for Residents' Council elections.

Ready, Set, Vote! What Residents' Council Elections Can Teach Us About Resident Engagement

With the 2026 municipal election happening on October 26, residents across Ontario will soon have another opportunity to make their voices heard. This got me thinking: what can we learn from municipal elections when it comes to Residents' Council elections? While the scale may be different, the principle is the same. At the heart of both is something we know well at OARC: resident voice matters. ***Election season is a great opportunity to talk about why participating, voting and stepping into leadership roles can make a difference in the community they call home.***

Across my visits with homes in the Central Region, I've seen some great ways Councils are building engagement around elections. Some are starting the conversation early, inviting residents to consider running, creating opportunities to meet the candidates, and making election information visible throughout the home. Others are finding ways to increase voting accessibility through mobile or roving voting, reducing barriers for those who may have difficulty getting to a central voting location. These approaches connect closely with the ideas outlined in OARC's Elections Fact Sheet, which highlights options such as mini-elections, mobile/roving elections, virtual elections and election by acclamation. The resource is a great starting point for Councils to explore what election process works best for their residents!

“***I've seen some great ways Councils are building engagement around elections***”

So how do we get started? As election season approaches, I encourage Councils to ask: “How can we make sure every resident knows their voice has a place at the table?” Consider:

- ▷ hosting a “Meet the Candidates” event
- ▷ bringing voting into the home areas,
- ▷ making Election Day a celebration,
- ▷ or simply inviting a resident who hasn't participated before to get involved.



Elections aren't just about choosing leaders, they're about creating opportunities for residents to be heard, represented and engaged.

Let's use this year's municipal election as inspiration to strengthen our own Residents' Council elections and celebrate residents' voice, choice and leadership!

► Want to explore more election ideas?

1. **Check out OARC's Elections Fact Sheet** for practical considerations and different approaches Councils can use when planning their election process. Link here: <https://shorturl.at/5inJF>
2. **Get inspired by Berkshire Care Centre's dynamic election experience in Windsor!** Read "Residents' Council Election Success at Berkshire" from Seasons magazine, Spring/Summer 2024 (p.12-13). <https://shorturl.at/qtxml>



► Sarah Masonovich

Education & Support
Coach, Central Region

smasonovich@ontarc.com
T 905-731-3710 ext. 320

If you have any questions about Residents' Council Election preparation, or would simply like to connect with Sarah, we encourage you to reach out.



LTC Home Spotlights

Tullamore Community's Summer Slip N' Slide Day!

For the last two years, Tullamore Community has hosted a summer dunk tank event, inviting residents, families, and staff to enjoy a fun day together "dunking" the home leadership team. This year, residents expressed wanting more involvement from their frontline team members. ***"Residents always tell us how much they enjoy seeing staff participate in activities and events alongside them, so that was a big part of the inspiration behind this year's event,"*** Heather Barrow, Director of Resident



Programs, shared. “While shopping for this year’s event, I came across a 25-foot slip-and-slide, and the fun ideas just started flowing!”

Heather pitched the Slip N Slide idea to the Residents’ Council, and from there they worked together to plan their summer event. With the increased foot traffic the event would bring, the Council suggested they use the opportunity to host a 50/50 draw –to help fund future resident initiatives and activities. The day was a success, bringing many smiles and opportunities for the home to engage together in a friendly competition. Even OARC’s Melissa Matheson was invited to join the fun, and never one to turn down a challenge, she raced Heather to the finish line. We’re excited to return for another round!

Special thanks to Heather for providing the details of the day, and for Art J Thompson, Resident leader at Tullamore Community, for sharing his wonderful poem commemorating the day!

“

*There were squirt guns and balloons
There were egg races and games
With water flying everywhere
Without mentioning any names*

*Residents were laughing
Guests were smiling too
A great day at our water park
A pleasure for me and you*

An excerpt from “Liquid Sunshine”
by Art J. Thompson, Resident
Leader at Tullamore Community

Read the full poem here:

<https://shorturl.at/b1lit>

David Payne – Resident Leadership in Action at Trillium Community

Summer months are gardening months for David Payne. Visitors, residents and staff alike would often find him tending to and growing a wide variety of vegetables and flowers outside. “You gotta talk to them. I talk to my flowers, tell them to grow. They don’t talk back, but that’s okay, I talk to them anyway.”

To David, conversation is a powerful tool. Not just for flowers, but for building connections and relationships in the home. One of his many skills is his ability to get along with everyone. His methods are simple, yet powerful. Saying hello, smiling, and making himself open for others to simply sit and visit with him. A resident at Trillium Community, Kingston, for



six years now, David spends his time actively volunteering, working with plants, and building friendships with the staff and the residents in the home. “I do a lot around here, but I just be myself and just be happy. I love this place. You know, this is my home. This is where I’m going to be living the rest of my life.”

“ I do a lot around here, but I just be myself and just be happy. I love this place. You know, this is my home.

–David Payne, Resident Leader

Before moving into Trillium Community, David worked with the City of Kingston for 44 years. Starting with a pick and a shovel working on the roads, to working with asphalt, sanitation, and then becoming a supervisor to a crew of 54 people, his career is one of dedication and hard work. And connection. David was well known at City Hall and had the opportunity to have lunch with three of the city mayors. He was well known and liked by the people who worked with him too. It was his crew who gave him the nickname Spook, after a midnight shift where David playfully scared one of the guys. **“I enjoyed working for a long time. But I’m very, very happy where I am now.”**

David is a proud member of Sienna’s Gems in Our Community Program, a resident-led volunteer initiative that encourages meaningful engagement and active participation in daily life at the home. When volunteering at the home’s Community Living events, he’ll often wear his bright orange Gem shirt and name tag, inviting family members and residents to approach and ask questions. Never one to be shy, he’s quick to jump in and lend a hand—be it setting the table for dining or calling numbers at bingo. He’s especially happy contributing to any program that involves children. Through



Community Living, he’s volunteered at corn shucking, Slip and Slides, and parachute games and songs that are often attended by children. “I love being around the kids.] When the kids come to daycare [the home has an adjoining daycare centre onsite], I’ll hear ‘Hi Dave, hi Dave,’ they all know who I am.”

With his ability to form connections, David is often instrumental in encouraging the involvement of residents in event planning and keeping them informed. Last year, Trillium Community participated in the KAIROS Blanket Exercise, an Indigenous-led experiential workshop that uses blankets to guide participants through the history and ongoing impacts of colonization on First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples in Canada. **“David was a huge part of making sure that residents were involved in that when we planned it.”** Sara Prest, Director of Resident Programs, shared. “With David’s help, we also did a full haunted house in our multi-purpose room, for the first time, and he dressed up like a grave digger. Scared all the residents as they came through.”

In recognition of his help in these events, and for all his other volunteer contributions, David was recognized by Sienna Senior Living and surprised with a Sparkle Award from the CEO. The award was unexpected for David. When asked how we felt about receiving it, he said “Shocked. I was shocked. All these people were sitting around and looking at me. The manager said, ‘we have something for you, David.’ I’m very, very happy I got that (Sparkle Award).”

Special thanks to David Payne for taking the time to talk with us and share his story with us. His experience is a wonderful example of how an individual can lean into their strengths and passions to impact their home in big and small –but memorable—ways.

Thank you as well to Sara Prest for helping to arrange this interview.



Resources

➡ Program Inspiration

Silver Screammers – Resident Creativity through Horror Movie Making

What happens when a group of seniors decide to make a horror movie? Silver Screammers is an uplifting and entertaining documentary that follows a group of older adults as they come together to make a horror film, challenging stereotypes about aging while discovering creativity, friendship and a renewed sense of purpose. The film has screened at festivals across Canada, the United States and internationally, winning awards along the way, and is now available for screenings in retirement and long-term-care communities.



How to Screen the movie in your LTC home

Plan a movie night at your long-term care home today! Homes interested in arranging a screening can contact [Sean Cisterna](#) at mythicproductionsinc@gmail.com

- ▷ Individual, multi-home home screenings, and larger organization-wide educational licensing options are available.
- ▷ Screenings can be arranged using either MP4 or a private link
- ▷ Virtual or in-person filmmaker Q&As can also be arranged.

Watch the trailer at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpT0fO2svr8>

Cycling Without Age - Volunteer Bike Rides Helping Seniors Beat Isolation

Cycling Without Age pairs seniors with volunteer cyclists for rides on special electric trishaws –with seniors on the front row seat. Founded in Denmark in 2012, the organization is celebrating it's 10th anniversary operating across Canada. Rides are 30 min to an hour and often become more about connection than transportation.

Watch the Globe and Mail's video feature to learn more: <https://shorturl.at/OSiVC>

- ▷ Currently, Cycling Without Age have chapters in 15 cities across Ontario. You can find your closest one here: <https://shorturl.at/tfCX0>
- ▷ Or you can start a chapter in your home through the CWA CA Program. Learn more here: <https://shorturl.at/hkR1C>

Watch: Stronger Together – Mind/Body/ Soul, making Diverse Movement Possible and Fun in Long-Term Care.

“My motto has always been strong body, mind and soul. Without supporting all three, you're left vulnerable and this program checks all three of those.”

The Stronger Together- Mind/Body/Soul project is an ongoing initiative to make diverse movement possible, meaningful, accessible and fun for all residents in long-term care. This video is a culmination piece highlighting the initiative, residents, and the Recreation Staff at Pinecrest Home, a District of Kenora Home.

Watch the video here: <https://shorturl.at/kgZgk>



➔ Courses, e-learning and webinars

Dementia-Friendly Canada Resources

A dementia-friendly community is a place where people living with dementia, their family and care partners feel welcomed, included and supported. Alzheimer Society's Dementia-Friendly Canada project supports this with a broad focus on raising awareness and creating shared educational materials and resources.

Access communication tips, fact sheets, and videos here: <https://shorturl.at/GhdEN>

Also available: **Building Dementia-Friendly Communities**, an online course created for community members, organization leaders, and employees across various sectors. **Register:** <https://shorturl.at/JM8In>

Family Councils Ontario Free E-Learning for Family Members and Caregivers.

Family Councils Ontario's eLearning hub brings together practical, accessible learning designed to support families, caregivers, Family Councils, and long-term care home teams across Ontario. Newly added, "Family Councils Foundations," is designed to support family members and partners in care as they learn about family councils and their role in long-term care homes.



Broken down into 4 modules, and available in English and French, **access this free course and others at:** <https://shorturl.at/hYtlw>

Learning Series for LTC Home Operators – LTC Funding and Reporting: Updates and Essentials

AdvantAge Ontario is offering a learning series for long-term care home operators focused on the latest funding, budgeting, and reporting requirements. This popular annual two-part learning series helps Ontario long-term care homes stay current on Ministry funding, budgeting, and reporting requirements that impact operations and financial planning. Participants will gain practical guidance on funding envelopes, staffing and care funding updates, budget development, reporting processes,

resident co-payments, annual reporting, OHRS standards, and reporting best practices from Ministry staff and sector leaders.

Learn more: <https://shorturl.at/1L7pn>

Advance registration and payment are required.

Foundations in Geriatrics for Interprofessional Teams: Free online Fall Courses

Are you new to working with older adults or looking for a refresher? Offered by Provincial Geriatrics Leadership Ontario, this 11-week interactive learning series is facilitated by health professionals experienced in the care of older adults and runs from September 11th to December 1st .

- ▶ **Tier 1:** Foundations in Geriatrics for Interprofessional teams, focuses on what older adults want, age-related changes, ageism, communication and processes of care and frailty
- ▶ **Tier 2:** Enhanced Knowledge and Skill Development in the Care of Older Adults: focuses on applying care to topics such as medication, delirium, dementia, mental health, and more.



Access the promotional flyer to learn more: <https://shorturl.at/HKsqB>

Workbooks and Resources

Better Conversations, Better Care: Tools for Residents and Families to Improve Conversations around Entering Long-Term Care

Entering long-term care can be overwhelming for residents and families. Many don't know what to expect, feel unprepared for the journey ahead, and struggle to navigate complex decisions. To help change this, the Waiting Room Revolution has co-designed a set of practical, accessible Quick Guides to support residents, families, and staff from day one. These resources, now available to all long-term care homes across Ontario for free, strengthen communication, reduce crises, and help ensure care reflects what matters most.

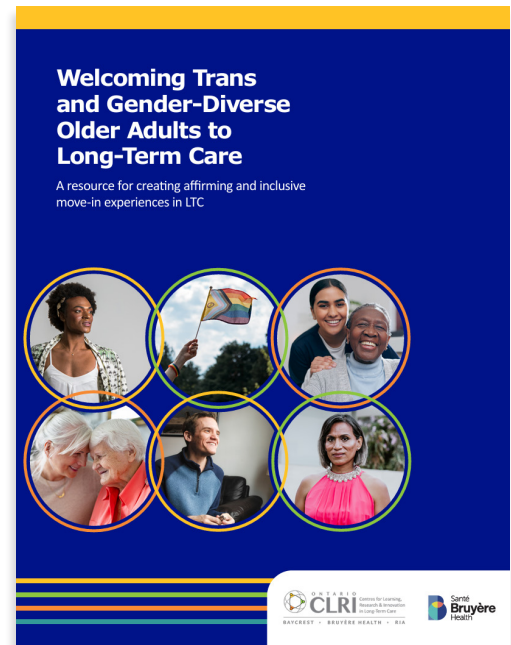
To register for the program and access the guides, visit: <https://shorturl.at/z0TWH>

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Practice Guides for Long-Term Care

To support long-term care homes in their ongoing work of creating welcoming and inclusive homes, the Ontario Centres for Learning, Research & Innovation (CLRI) has launched a new series of EDI Practice Guides.

Welcoming Trans and Gender-Diverse Older Adults to Long-Term Care is the first in the series, and supports teams in reviewing admission, assessment, care planning, communication and organization practices. Offering concrete strategies, this guide will help homes create welcoming and affirming move-in experiences for trans and gender-diverse older adults.

Access the guide: <https://shorturl.at/OznHt>



➡ Studies and Feedback Opportunities

Understanding Older Men's Spousal Caregiving: A Photovoice Study

Conducted by researchers from the Men's Health Research program, this study aims to better understand older men's experiences of spousal caregiving, including how aging, caregiving, masculinities and mental health intersect. Findings from this study will also inform the development of a support group program for older, male spousal caregivers.

To participate in this study, you must:

1. Speak and understand English
2. Live in Canada
3. Self-identify as a man
4. Be aged 65 years or older
5. Be currently caring for a spouse/partner in community, Assisted Living, or in a Long-Term Care home

To learn more, visit: <https://shorturl.at/MAH00> or contact project manager **Dr. Nina Gao** at nina.gao@ubc.ca

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA **UBC Men's Health Research Program**

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

Understanding Older Men's Spousal Caregiving: A Photovoice Study

We are seeking older, male spousal caregivers to participate in a photovoice study to:

- Better understand how aging, caregiving, masculinities and mental health intersect
- Develop tailored support programs

Participation involves:

- Completing a brief demographic survey (10 minutes)
- Taking and submitting 5-10 photographs that illustrate caregiving experiences
- Narrating the photographs in a Zoom or in-person interview (1 hour)

Who can participate?

1. Speak and understand English
2. Live in Canada
3. Self-identify as a man
4. Are aged 65 years or older
5. Are currently caring for a spouse/partner living in community, or an Assisted Living or Long-Term Care home

Honorarium available for participants

FOR MORE INFORMATION Email Project Manager Dr. Nina Gao (nina.gao@ubc.ca)
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR Dr. John Oliffe (john.oliffe@ubc.ca)

Ethics ID: H25-03246
V.1 June 4, 2026



Team Member Spotlight – Stephanie Buosi

Meet Stephanie Buosi: The Storyteller Behind OARC in Action

Stephanie joined OARC in January of this year and is responsible for a wide range of communications initiatives, including the development of our monthly newsletter, social media, and Seasons magazine. Working collaboratively behind the scenes, she helps capture and share the stories, successes, and innovations happening across OARC and Ontario's long-term care sector.

To learn more about Stephanie's role, her vision for OARC communications, and the person behind the newsletter, OARC's Melissa McVie (MM) and Resident Leader Jennifer Brown (JB) sat down with her for a conversation.

MM: You've been with OARC for about seven months now. What have you enjoyed most about being part of the OARC team, and has anything surprised you along the way?

SB: There are so many things I've enjoyed, but one of my favourite parts of the role has been leading the development of the newsletter. It's a month-long process that involves gathering stories, connecting with staff, curating resources, and learning about what's happening across the sector.

What I love most is the opportunity to meet people and help tell their stories. Recently, I've had the chance to conduct one-on-one interviews with residents and long-term care homes. I always feel a little nervous going into those conversations, but I come away inspired every time. Being trusted with someone's story is really special.

What has surprised me most is OARC's culture. For a remote organization, there are very few silos. People collaborate



across departments, focus on each other's strengths, and genuinely connect. That sense of teamwork and openness has been incredibly refreshing.

MM: Thanks for sharing that, Stephanie. Expanding our team has been so exciting for us at OARC, and we're fortunate to have such a passionate, kind, and collaborative group of people.

Looking ahead, what are some of your hopes or aspirations for OARC's communications work?

SB: I hope we continue creating

opportunities to share more stories from long-term care homes, residents, and members. Every time I reach out and ask someone if they'd like to be featured, the response is usually enthusiastic. People want their stories heard.

One idea I'm particularly excited about is creating a resident spotlight feature.

Our Regional Education Coaches meet so many remarkable residents with unique experiences, talents, and interests, and I think there is an opportunity to celebrate those stories more regularly.

We've also talked about expanding how we share content, whether that's through enhanced email communications or exploring a blog format in the future. A blog could make stories easier to find and create more opportunities for dialogue and contributions from others. And, of course, I'm excited about working on the Fall/Winter edition of [Seasons Magazine](#) and bringing stories to life through both writing and design.

JB: A resident storytelling blog could be excellent, Stephanie! I volunteer to help out!

Now for another question. Given your last few months of learning and interactions with residents, what do you think could improve their lived experience in long-term care?

SB: One thing I've learned very quickly is that staff make a tremendous difference in residents' lives. In fact, when I asked a resident what he loved most about his home, his answer was simple: "the staff."

Supporting staff so they have the time and resources to build meaningful



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relationships with residents is incredibly important. When staff are stretched thin or taking on multiple roles, it can become difficult to balance tasks with the personal interactions that help make a home feel like home.

At the same time, I think improvements need to be guided by the residents themselves. Every home is unique, and what residents value can vary widely. Some may want more recreation opportunities, stronger community connections, additional outdoor experiences, or different services altogether.

The key is listening. Rather than assuming what residents need, we should be asking them directly and ensuring their voices help shape decisions.

JB: Well said, Stephanie. It's so much more than throwing money at a problem. Real improvements happen when we listen to residents and work together to find creative solutions.

Talking about relationships and quality of life, perhaps you could share something personal about yourself. What does your perfect day look like?

SB: My perfect day is actually pretty simple.

It would start with a quiet summer morning volunteering as a Turtle Protector in my

West Toronto community, checking on nesting sites and spending some time in nature. As someone who's both social and introverted, I love beginning the day with a little solitude outdoors.

Then I'd spend the day with my husband, Dan, and our daughter, Cici. We'd grab coffee and croissants from a local café,

visit a playground, and later head to my parents' house for a barbecue with family. Good food, good conversation, and time together are really what make a day special. The perfect ending? Cici goes to bed without a fuss, and Dan and I settle in to watch a classic 1990's Julia Roberts movie. That's about as perfect as it gets.

Final Thoughts

Whether she's crafting newsletters, interviewing residents, designing magazine layouts, or exploring new ways to amplify voices across the sector, Stephanie's passion for storytelling and connection shines through in everything she does. We're grateful to have her helping share the stories that connect and inspire our OARC community.

Thank you, Stephanie, for letting us turn the spotlight on you this month!

Inspired by Stephanie's vision for sharing more resident and home stories? We'd love to hear from you. If you have a story, innovation, or initiative you'd like featured in OARC in Action or *Seasons Magazine*, contact Stephanie at sbuosi@ontarc.com



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

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OARC is funded by the Ministry of Long-Term Care, with additional support received through Membership and OARC's Confidence in Culture Change Supporter Program. The views expressed in this publication are the views of OARC and do not necessarily reflect those of the province