

## Supporting Wellness: tips for self and resident peer support

Never doubt yourself.

People often think they  
can't do something,  
but really, they can.

*~Sharron*

**Residents'  
Council  
Shared  
Leadership  
Model**

**RNAO's LTC Best Practice Coordinators  
can NOW support homes in implementing  
OARC's Through Our Eyes program!**



# Seasons

Seasons is published 3 times a year and contains relevant news and information of interest to those living and working in long-term care homes.

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**Cover Page Photo: Sharron Cooke, York Region  
Newmarket Health Centre**

**Back Cover Page Photo: Melissa McVie, OARC  
Education and Home Support Facilitator with  
Cooksville Care Centre Residents’ Council  
in Mississauga**



**FIND THE SNOWFLAKE & WIN!**

If you are a resident living in LTC and you find the hidden snowflake please email us at: [mmcvie@ontarc.com](mailto:mmcvie@ontarc.com) and tell us your name, address, and the page number of where you found it! We’ll randomly draw a name for the winner of an OARC pin! **Congratulations to Patricia Gallant from Cassellholme in North Bay as the winner of the Summer Seasons “Sunflower Contest”.**



## Holiday Season Reminds Us of Growth and Transition

With joy we extend our warmest wishes to you for a wonderful holiday season, a Merry Christmas, a Happy Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, New Year...which ever holiday you observe in the coming weeks. Wherever your celebrations take you, we are unified in seeing the Christmas tree as an iconic symbol of growth and transition. Growth - from a tiny seedling to a strong, dynamic, intricate tree. It transitions and moves from a one dimensional object to a beautiful, majestic, glistening symbol of hope, beauty, wonder and solidarity. How is that done? Ornament by ornament, light by light, tinsel by tinsel...each piece playing its own unique part in solidifying the collective look of majesty. Once decorated, we marvel at the end result, knowing that the work, the time, the energy and the VISION was worth it.

And so it goes within our long-term care sector. Each person committed to making a change, challenging the status quo, having resident-centred conversations, moving away from task driven work to relationship driven work, lifting up Residents' Rights, educating teams about Residents' Councils, etc ..... Everyone has a unique part to play in influencing one of the most dynamic and beautiful movements in our social history. Moving from an institutional model of care to a social model of living invites us all to re-envision life and work in long-term care homes.



L to R: Sharron Cooke, OARC President and Dee Lender, OARC Executive Director

Within our sector, OARC seeks to be one of the pieces (or ornaments) that creates our collective vision of the best possible reality for long-term care. We work and partner with many other organizations, government, people, and Councils through education, awareness lifting Residents' Bill of Rights and Residents' Councils' influence to where they impact lived experiences every day. Through the work we do together, Residents' Councils thrive and influence change and people remain connected to their community. Our work leads us into this new year together, with you, our partners to envision the greatest year yet! Thank you for all you do, big or small, in being the ornament that glistens on our long-term care tree of transition! Happy holidays everyone.

Sincerely,

Sharron Cooke  
and Dee Lender

# Meet OARC's New Board Members

## Kay Garland



Kay's commitment to volunteerism, including extensive work through the United Church, the Boy Scouts, Girls Club and children's camps, was driven by a deep desire to help others (both young and old) and make their lives better. In this spirit, Kay welcomed the opportunity to join the OARC Board in the capacity of Director and sees this new chapter as an extension of her passion for helping and advocating, and another way to "make life interesting."

Kay has worn many different hats and has held many different positions, including nine years as an Activity Supervisor at a Seniors' Home.

Kay is President of the Residents' Council at Carveth Care Centre in Gananoque.

## Frank Tod



Frank Tod studied Biology and holds a degree from the University of Manitoba. A dearth of suitable jobs in his chosen field led him to pursue an unexpected but fulfilling career in the flooring industry.

Frank values hard work and giving back, and he is always willing to roll up his sleeves and invest his time and energy to organizations and causes that he cares about, including the Humane Society and the Red Cross. His extensive community engagement and his commitment to bettering the lives of others, make him a strong addition as Delegate Member on the OARC Board.

At his home, Niagara Ina Grafton-Gage Village in St. Catharines, Frank is an active part of the Leadership Team of the Residents' Council and he openly welcomes opportunities for collaboration and personal growth.

## Denise Burke



Denise Burke is a vibrant woman with a diverse resume, having worked in both radio and television, as well as law.

Denise is the Vice President of the Residents' Council at Pioneer Manor in Sudbury, Ontario. A self-described "go-getter" with a great sense of humour, Denise prides herself on being a "people person" with a strong desire to make a difference beyond the four walls of her home.

In joining OARC as a Delegate Member, Denise saw an opportunity to use her skills and knowledge to advocate for positive change, and to enhance policies affecting residents living in long-term care across the province.

# Meet OARC's New Board Members

## Reid Walker



Reid Walker enjoyed a career working in the automotive industry, with experience as both a mechanic and service manager.

Reid has always taken a hands-on approach to life, both inside and outside of his work. He actively played hockey and coached sports for 30 years.

Reid is Vice President of the Residents' Council at Chartwell Brant Centre in Burlington. He is most passionate about life-long learning and enhancing resident quality of life by advocating for increased operation budgets (for food and staffing) in long-term care. Reid is also enthusiastic about intergenerational programming and bringing more of these types of interactions into his home.

## Carolynn Snow

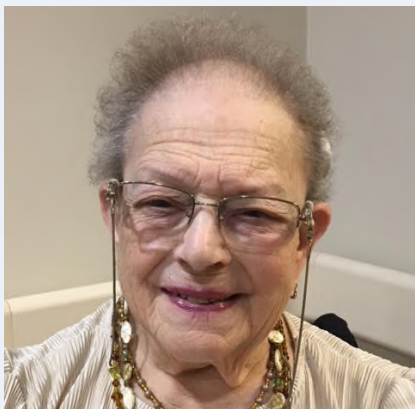


Carolynn was always actively involved in her community. She particularly enjoyed being part of the Parent-Teacher Council at her children's school and acting as Secretary for her son's Scout Group.

Carolynn is president of the Residents' Council at Cedarvale Care Community in Keswick. She has been working hard with her Council to increase meeting attendance and has played a big role in enhancing communication and collaboration with the home's management team.

As a new OARC Board Member, Carolynn hopes to impact change at the provincial level.

## Joyce Williams



Joyce Williams is the President of the Residents' Council at Chartwell Brant Centre in Burlington. A retired teacher of Music and English, Joyce is a strong proponent of education and literacy. Following her retirement, Joyce volunteered with the Burlington Literacy Council for ten years.

Joyce's positive attitude and perseverance have helped to elevate the Residents' Council at her home and cultivate a culture of caring and camaraderie.

As a Director with OARC, Joyce hopes to direct her efforts towards projects where she can continue to advocate for increased funding and resources in long-term care.



# Transformation to a Shared Leadership Model: One Residents' Councils Experience



Photo (L to R): Emmy Fernandes, Abraham Folts (standing) and Diane Fisher

## Streetsville Care Community, Mississauga

For years, Streetsville Care Community has had the traditional approach to Residents' Council, more of a hierarchical structure with designated roles and responsibilities. In the fall of 2017, the Ontario Association of Residents Council (OARC) provided the residents and staff with education on a new approach for Residents' Council, the Shared Leadership Model. Based on this education session, our Residents' Council decided to trial the new approach for six months. During the six months, there were many changes to Residents' Council. Residents who previously may not have been active leaders in the home were empowered to be part of a new "Team" approach, to share their personal strengths to enhance the resident experience. Residents felt purposeful and it made for a more sustainable and effective Council.

"As Residents' Council Assistant, my knowledge of each resident as an individual and their social

***"I feel great! I feel empowered and I am happy to contribute to our community." Emmy, Resident Leader***

Written by: Jessica Chong, CTRS  
Director of Resident Programs, Streetsville  
Care Community Sienna Senior Living  
and

Emmy Fernandes, Resident Leader,  
Streetsville Care Community Sienna Senior  
Living

histories allowed me to help tap into resident's individual interests and experiences which has resulted in the creation of new subcommittees championed by different residents on the leadership team." – Jessica, Director of Resident Programs and Assistant to Residents' Council.

Emmy has been an active member of the Shared Leadership Team since the trial period in 2017. She is one of 5 resident leaders in the community and



prides herself in small acts of kindness: “I care for them – I show compassion by reminding them of programs and teaching others to respect opinions and differences” – Emmy, Resident at Streetsville Care Community. Emmy is a vital member of the group and takes on a variety of responsibilities throughout the care community. “I feel great! I feel empowered and I am happy to contribute to our community” – Emmy. She has been an advocate for residents and acts as a mentor and a friend. “I focus on welcoming and including new residents in programs. I enjoy the fresh air and going outside on our patio. When I see residents sitting in the halls, I invite them to go out with me. I do not want to see residents isolated. I know they will love the programs. All of the programs have variety to meet everyone’s interests” – Emmy.

Reflecting on this transition and shift to a Shared Leadership Model, the Council as a whole, has really emerged and transformed. We have created a Council of equals, where everyone has something of value to contribute, where we support and highlight individual’s strengths and abilities.

## Residents’ Council Leadership Team

This type of team collectively assumes the accountabilities of a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Sharing the administrative responsibilities across the Leadership Team is attractive to many people because it:

- Encourages the elected leaders of the Council to cooperatively work as a group;
- Dilutes the pressure of feeling specialized expertise is required for certain assignments; and
- Gives each leadership team member an opportunity to learn and use different skills.

To learn more about the ‘Shared Leadership Team’ we invite you to visit our archived webinars located on our website [www.ontarc.com](http://www.ontarc.com)

The Shared Leadership Team has focused on creating friendships with others, advocating for Resident’s Rights, and has focused on creating an inclusive care community. The Residents’ Councils Shared Leadership Team is proud to represent the residents at Streetsville Care Community.

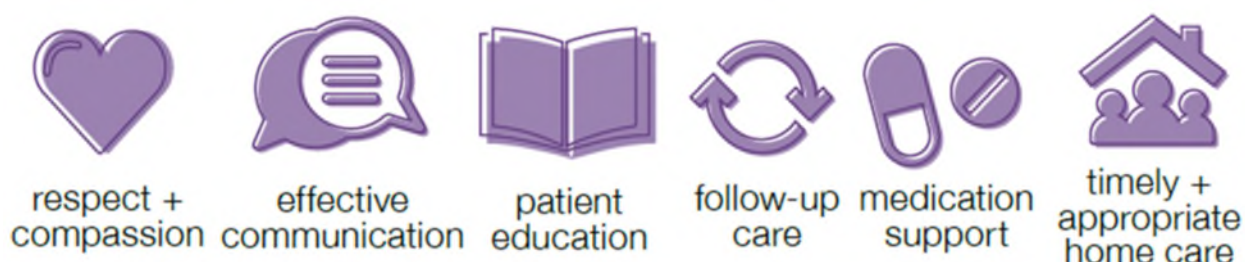
# Health Quality Ontario Transitions in Care



The journey home after hospital admission is challenging. It is a time of stress for the resident or patient, their family, caregivers and the health care system. Poor transitions increase the risk of complications and can put a strain on the system. And we know our health system can do better.

Health Quality Ontario (HQO) has placed a focus on this critical juncture in the health care journey. HQO is striving to develop a provincial standard of care when it comes to transitions; looking at what best-evidence and the lived-experience of resident or patients and families tells us about high-quality transitions of care.

To develop this standard, David Wells and the Patient and Public Partnering team at HQO embarked on their largest patient engagement initiative ever. Over 2 months, they heard from more than 1200 patients, residents, families and caregivers from across the province, who shared their stories and experiences about transitions in care. Stories that were big and small. Good and bad. Emotional stories and passionate experiences. They spoke about what worked and what didn't when it came to transitions in care. And when HQO looked at the responses, they found that they fell into six broad categories:



On September 25th, David Wells joined the OARC Board of Directors at their Board meeting to discuss these results and themes. He was eager to find out if these experiences resonated with them. And are there unique aspects of a transition in care back to a long-term care residence that should be highlighted? Following animated discussion across multiple sites, it was abundantly clear that YES, there are unique aspects of transition in care for long-term care residents. Members passionately recalled instances of miscommunication, of frustrating delays in leaving hospital, all affecting their transition home. That communication – both when arriving and when leaving hospital – was felt to be of utmost importance.

By understanding these priorities for residents, Health Quality Ontario will shine a spotlight and focus on areas of transitions of care that are most important. And to see what different populations value when it comes to their transitions in care. Overall, it was a fantastic and valuable experience to have OARC discuss these issues with this provincial agency.

If you are interested in sharing your opinion and letting Health Quality Ontario know your priorities when it comes to transitions in care, please feel free to contact David Wells toll-free at 1-866-623-6868 ext. 710, at [david.wells@hqontario.ca](mailto:david.wells@hqontario.ca) or fill out the survey online.



## Supporting Wellness

Holidays can be a time to gather with friends and family and celebrate, however, for some the holidays can be a difficult time. During the holidays, we may feel the absence or distance of family, friends, and traditions that were observed in the past may no longer be possible. The losses and changes may result in feeling subdued, reflective, sad or angry. If you or someone you know is experiencing the “blues” for a long time it may be more than simple sadness. Talk to someone about your concerns. Know you are not alone; know that someone has had a similar experience; and, know that there is a system of support and sense of hope.

### What You Can Do to Support Your Mental Wellness

You need to make yourself a priority. Sometimes you need to say “no” in order to have a better balance between other commitments and your own self-care. Be kind to yourself. Try and develop a plan of self-care by pursuing healthy strategies to reduce stress.

Self-care ideas may include:

- Reading
- Listening to music
- Enjoying a bath or shower
- Finding ways to laugh
- Keeping your environment bright and cheerful with plants or flowers
- Visiting with friends or pets
- Writing personal feelings in a journal or sharing them with a trusted person
- Reflecting, meditating

### What Residents’ Councils Can Do to Support Residents Experiencing Depression

Residents’ Councils can be a positive force for their fellow residents experiencing depression/anxiety. The gentle support of peers, especially those who have experienced similar illness, can be a beacon of hope and relief. Bringing awareness to residents, staff and family members about depression can help your community to increase their knowledge, reduce stigma and provide a sense of connection that your fellow resident may need.

### Residents’ Councils could consider the following in supporting resident(s) with depression:

- Let them know you care and are there to listen
- Accept them as they are, without judging them
- Gently encourage them to help themselves – for example, by staying physically active (go for a brief walk or roll around your home), eating a balanced diet and doing things they enjoy
- Get information about the services available to them, such as psychological therapy services or depression support groups in their area (this information is great for staff and families to know)
- Stay in touch with them by messaging, texting, phoning or meeting for coffee. People who are depressed can become isolated and may find it difficult to leave their home or room (meeting for a quick hello or a coffee/tea can be very supportive)
- Share a smile
- Share a fond memory

Do not under estimate your ability to add cheer to someone’s day!

For more information on mental health and self-care look at the following on line resources:

Mental Health Commission of Canada  
[www.mentalhealthcommission.ca](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca)

Mental Health First Aid Canada  
[www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca](http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca)

Canadian Mental Health Association  
[www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca)

Canadian Mental Health Association - Ontario  
<http://ontario.cmha.ca/>

National Health Service – United Kingdom  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>

Jennifer Blaik, Psychogeriatric Resource Consultant,  
Regional Municipality of York

*The content in this article is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.*

# A Celebration of Diversity in the Taste of Erin Meadows, Mississauga

Written by: Kristian Partington for 'The Village Voice', Schlegel Villages

When Schlegel Villages decided to make a concerted effort to change its approach to care and create a more "social model of living" for every resident, the leaders and team members from all Villages created a series of "aspiration statements" to guide them through this culture change.

These aspirations are like beacons, helping steer through the challenges associated with re-thinking entrenched approaches to long-term care and retirement living; they ground the team in eight key concepts that each make life a little better for residents and team members alike.

This summer in the Village of Erin Meadows, a series

***"This is the best project I've ever seen at this Village, and that's quite something to say"**  
David Kent, President of Residents' Council*

of culinary events in each neighbourhood, culminating in a massive Village-wide event on Main Street, brought several of these aspirations together. The Taste of Erin Meadows capitalized on the diversity of cultures that creates such vibrancy in the Mississauga home, and brought teams, families and residents together in exciting new ways.

"This is the best project I've ever seen at this Village, and that's quite something to say," says David Kent, President of Residents' Council and chair of the Village Advisory Team that helped organize the event. "I've never seen anything that could match this."

Essentially, the series of events showcased a different part of the world through the smells and flavours of each region, and people from across the



Village were drawn to each neighbourhood out of curiosity, enticing aromas and the sound of music. The first week focused on central and eastern Europe, with resident and team members joining forces to make pierogies and borscht. The following week brought forth the sweet spicy aromas of Caribbean staples, jerk chicken and rice and peas. India in all of its complex wonder took centre stage in the third week with vegetable pakora and chicken kebabs; it was amazing to see team members teaching others about their culture as they shared the secrets of the food, David says. The Howland neighbourhood then hosted a Mediterranean theme followed by the flavours of





East Asia, complete with homemade spring rolls created by a team member's mother. Lastly, the pleasures of Africa rounded things out, with this last neighbourhood party erupting into dance to the beats of African rhythms.

"It just kept getting bigger and bigger every week," says David during a follow-up Village Advisory Team meeting to discuss how to maintain the event's momentum. Perhaps the best part of each event was how accessible it was to all; people living with dementia enjoyed it as much as anyone else, while even who can't see or speak could enjoy it, because "they can taste and they can smell," he says, and the feeling of togetherness accompanied every meal.

To wrap everything up, a second event was created with the help of the hospitality, marketing and recreation teams, drawing more than 200 people into the Village from the community beyond. It was a complete success, says hospitality director Dan Villamere — not just the final large event but also the entire endeavor, from start to finish. Perhaps what made it so was the fact that residents played an important roll in making each event successful, working alongside team members, just as the aspirations suggest.

"To see that here just really shows you that life isn't over," he says. "There's still purpose and meaning in life and you can see that in something like this."



## Case Manor, Bobcaygeon Villa



Written by: Brittany Thorn, Director of Programs & Admissions, Case Manor

At Case Manor we had a fabulous program that the Residents' Council initiated. They wanted a flag pole installed, with a ceremony to follow and that's exactly what we did! A local company worked with the Residents' Council over a few weeks organizing where they wanted the flag pole, and all the details. We then planned a flag raising ceremony with the local legion. On the day of the event, the colour guard came to perform the flag raising ceremony. We had representation from our local Councillor, and the Residents' Council spoke at the event as well. Our Minister presented the legion members with the flag. We had a lovely cake made for the day!





## A Mentorship Journey at the County of Simcoe Long-Term Care Homes

Written by: Rosa Athanassoulis, Program and Support Services Supervisor, Simcoe Manor, County of Simcoe LTC

Supporting optimal functioning and well-being is what inspires each one to bring forth an air of creativity and the furtherance of recreating. It is a continuous dedication within the field that inspired and supported the mentorship program of the four long-term care homes within the County of Simcoe.

Through a continuous acknowledgement of one another, noted by monthly meetings, job shadowing, sharing of ideas and storytelling, program staff successfully inspired one another to recreate new and exciting programs, work stations, Montessori activities and resources.

Georgian Village and Manor implemented destination theme months. Residents were able to explore the culture of the country without physically travelling to the destination.

Simcoe Manor, recognized a need for more specialized themed rooms and stations to recreate a home-like setting that are both familiar and transcending.

Sunset Manor considered the possibility to include residents in fundraising incentives and with this, recreated a successful woodworking program. These items are now being sold in support of many fundraising projects within the home.

And finally, Trillium Manor took art work that the residents had created and made it into a yearly calendar featuring a different piece of artwork each month. Funds raised went to the Residents' Council account where they will decide how to use the funds.

## Residents' Council Newsletter

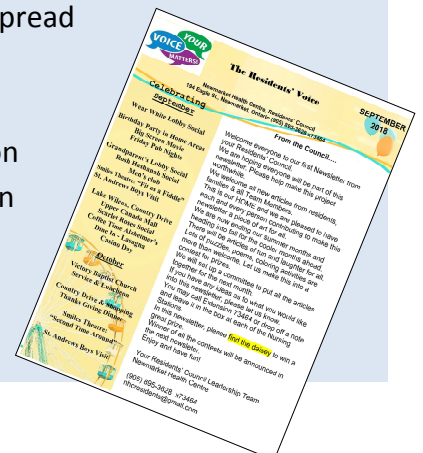
Newmarket Health Centre's Residents' Council released its very first Residents' Council newsletter for the home & community to read and enjoy!

Written by: Sharron Cooke, Residents' Council Leadership Team Member, Newmarket Health Centre

Our Residents' Council came together and decided it was important to share resident life, to share and showcase all the liveliness and excitement that happens within our home. We got ideas from all departments, residents and families. We formed a committee to start this new adventure and were greatly supported by our Administrator.

Together we agreed this newsletter was an opportunity to welcome new residents, acknowledge birthdays, express condolences, announce special holidays, activities and express gratitude and recognitions within the home to our hard-working staff and volunteers. It would also provide residents with the chance to share stories and poems.

We felt that this newsletter has put a lot of smiles on faces and has brought great interest, interaction and excitement to our home. A monthly newsletter is a great way to spread transparency, encourage communication and strengthen relationships.





## Providence Manor, Kingston

Respectfully Submitted by:

**Ann St Denis**, Chairman Providence Manor Veterans Committee

**Kelsey Melrose**, Recreationist

**Danielle Preston-Gowdy**, Volunteer Co-coordinator



Sharron Cooke, President of OARC, Dee Lender Executive Director of OARC and Jim Stinson Past President of Providence Manor's Residents' Council.

"It was a pleasure to witness the devotion and honour paid to Veterans. The Veterans' lounge is filled with hundreds of original artifacts, photos, uniforms etc., from the World Wars, each piece catalogued in a book so visitors can read about each item's significance." ~ Dee Lender

## Veterans are Recognized and Celebrated

The Providence Manor Site Long-Term Care Home formed a Veterans Committee in 2002.

Our first Project was to open up a Veterans Lounge in our home where Veterans could display memorabilia, and have a special room that could be enjoyed by all residents living in the home.

The Lounge contains displays of military uniforms on mannequins, books, memorabilia, DVD's, life histories, display cases, medal display, custom made furniture suitable for wheelchair access, etc.

Our Veterans Lounge was inaugurated in 2004, and all Veterans, residents, families and visitors enjoy this lounge throughout the year.

Besides our regular meetings our Veterans Committee host a flag raising and lowering ceremony indicating the official opening and closing of our garden areas each year.

During the year our Veterans extend invitations to some of the Royal Canadian Legion Branches 560 and 631 members to attend our meetings and functions.

In November each year our Veterans Committee hosts a Remembrance Day Service and invites the Kingston Military Base personnel to join us for this very special service.

In December each year our Veterans host a special "Pub Day" afternoon where they can extend "Thanks" to our Legion Friends for their contributions and help throughout the year.





# OARC and RNAO Working Together to Enhance Residents' Quality of Life: Aligning Best Practices and the Residents' Bill of Rights

The Ontario Association of Residents' Councils (OARC) and the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) are pleased to announce an alignment of resources that will benefit long-term care home participants of the OARC's Through Our Eyes: Bringing the Residents' Bill of Rights Alive program and RNAO's Person-and Family-Centered Care best practice guideline.

RNAO's best practice guideline (BPG) is an opportunity to implement evidenced-based best practices that enhance the quality of care for residents. RNAO's Person-and Family-Centered Care is a whole home approach to further develop the resident and family health-care experience.

OARC's Through Our Eyes program meets many of the practice recommendations in RNAO's Person-and Family-Centered Care BPG.

Together, these programs work to complement evidence-based recommendations and facilitate participation from residents, family members and the whole home as they improve resident's and family's experience of health care and the Residents' Bill of Rights (LTCHA 2007).

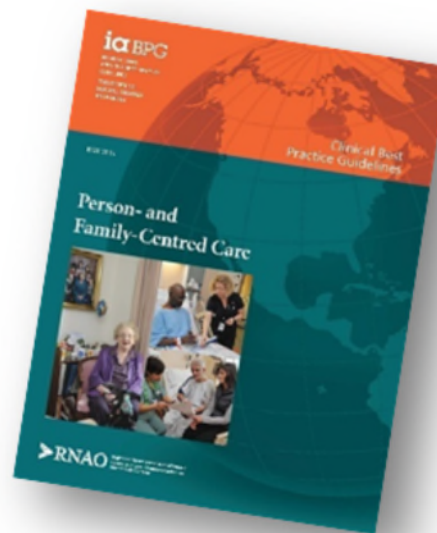
RNAO's Long-Term Care Best Practice Coordinators (LTC BPC) work with LTC home leaders, nurse practitioners and point-of-care staff to establish and adopt practices, based on RNAO clinical BPG recommendations, to provide high quality care to LTC home residents and their families. Now, LTC BPCs can support homes in implementing OARC's Through Our Eyes program!



# Learn More About These Programs



To learn more about OARC's *Through Our Eyes: Bringing the Residents' Bill of Rights Alive* visit OARC's [www.ontarc.com](http://www.ontarc.com) or contact OARC [info@ontarc.com](mailto:info@ontarc.com) | 1-800-532-0201



To learn more about RNAO's *Person- and Family-Centred Care BPG*, visit RNAO's [www.rnao.ca](http://www.rnao.ca) or contact your local Long-Term Care Best Practice Coordinator at 1-800-268-7199



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## OARC's Mission Statement

Through relationships, education and awareness, OARC:

- Assists Residents' Councils in improving their effectiveness and sustainability;
- Encourages residents to participate in decisions affecting them;
- Provides a collective voice for Residents' Councils; and
- Works with government and other organizations interested in improving quality of living in Long-Term Care homes

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