



2023 - 2024
ANNUAL REPORT



NOTHING ABOUT RESIDENTS, WITHOUT RESIDENTS

“ *Nothing about residents, without residents* ”

"Nothing about residents, without residents" features prominently on the cover of this 2023-24 Annual Report. It is a simple yet poignant message that captures our organizational commitment to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion by partnering with and amplifying the voices of people that call long-term care **home**.

Created by residents over four decades ago, the Ontario Association of Residents' Councils (OARC) is a non-profit association that provides a unified network for residents and their Residents' Councils. We are committed to the belief that residents' voices must be heard, their experiences valued, and their presence integrated into the fabric of our organization and reflected in decisions made at the long-term care home and systems levels. Resident engagement is at the centre of all that OARC does, with residents actively involved in our governance, operations, presentations and consultations. No one is better positioned to speak about and influence life in long-term care than those who live it 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This year was particularly important for our team as we travelled to Northwestern Ontario for the first time in many years. While OARC's home support trips usually involve the delivery of educational presentations, this time, we were the ones engaged in active listening and learning when we met with long-term care teams and community members. The experience has profoundly impacted us, offering firsthand insights into the regional nuances of the North, the ongoing effects of colonialism and the resilience of Indigenous communities. It has ignited and strengthened our resolve to address historical injustices and integrate Indigenous and other diverse perspectives into our work.

This 2023-24 Annual Report highlights our work and proud moments from the last fiscal year. Together with residents, OARC is helping to cultivate and inspire a vibrant, empathetic, and effective culture of long-term care in Ontario for the residents of today and tomorrow.



Ontario
Association
of Residents'
Councils

OUR MISSION: We empower Ontario long-term care residents to understand their rights, share their lived experience, and inspire a better tomorrow. We do this by working together with our partners to educate stakeholders, build a collective voice, and create positive culture change.

OUR VISION

Every resident shapes the place they call home.

OUR MANDATE

ASSIST AND SUPPORT RESIDENTS IN:

Forming, operating
and sustaining
effective Residents'
Councils.

Becoming participants
in their long-term care
home operations and
communities.

Sharing and consolidating
ideas and promoting
policies that improve
quality of living.

Educating the
community about life in
long-term care, including
the issues they face.

COMPASSION

DIGNITY

INCLUSION

COLLABORATION

MESSAGE FROM OARC'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR

This past year was a time of expansion, going to new places, interacting with new people, and broadening our perspectives by hearing directly from residents what was important to them.

In response to unprecedented growth of the long-term care sector in Ontario, this past fiscal year OARC was privileged to support even more residents to shape the places they call home.

The desire and demand for resident engagement has been overwhelming – we're inspired and encouraged by the collective “ah-ha” moment that seems to have reached every part of the sector and beyond. This past year our Resident Expert Advisors and Leaders (REAL) group was called upon to provide feedback on topics ranging from mental health to long-term care home design considerations and OARC was invited to bring resident voice to inform a number of regulatory and policy changes. Amidst the increasing demand for resident

engagement is an awareness that meaningful engagement requires its own set of rules. OARC is responding by leading our first grant-funded research project to have evidence and data to support what we have always known is right and true – *nothing about residents, without residents.*

We are grateful for the trust bestowed on us by residents across Ontario – those who comprise our REAL group, those who hold positions on our Board of Directors, and every resident involved in the important work of inspiring positive changes in their homes through their Residents' Councils.



Dee Tripp,
Executive Director

Mary Nestor,
OARC Board Chair

OARC BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023-2024

Chair: Mary Nestor

Principal, MKN Consulting
Former Senior Manager, Long-Term Care
Inspections Branch, Ministry of Health and Long-
Term Care

Vice Chair: Dr. Fred Mather

Medical Director, Sunnyside Home
Past President, Ontario Long-Term Care
Clinicians

Treasurer: John Scotland

CEO, Steeves & Rozema

Secretary: Carolynn Snow

Resident Leader, Cedarvale Lodge Community

Jennifer Bethell

Affiliate Scientist, KITE Research Institute,
Toronto Rehabilitation Institute – University
Health Network

Jennifer Blaik

Psychogeriatric Resource Consultant,
The Regional Municipality of York

Joan Devine

Former Director of Education at Pioneer Network

Jim Gilhuly

Resident Leader, Sunnyside Home
OARC Resident Expert Advisors and Leaders

Calvin Morrisseau

Former CEO, Fort Frances Tribal Area Health
Services

Gale Ramsden

Resident Leader, Perley Health
Co-Chair, OARC Resident Expert Advisors and
Leaders

Connie Redmond

Senior Care and Housing Specialist

(Late) Murray Woodcock

Resident Leader, Extendicare Brampton

OARC TEAM MEMBERS



**Jennifer
Langston,**
Operations and
Project Manager

**Stephanie
Ventura,**
Director of
Education



**Dee
Tripp,**
Executive
Director



**Melissa
McVie,**
Director of
Communications

**Chloe
Lee,**
Evaluation
and Quality
Specialist



**Julie
Garvey,**
Administration
and Finance
Manager



**Melissa
Matheson,**
Education and
Home Support
Manager

KEEPING IT REAL

The acronym for OARC's provincial advisory group, Resident Expert Advisors and Leaders, (aka "REAL") was inspired by former Board Director Jamie Ward, who reminded us to always keep our work "real" and grounded in the resident experience.

Residents engaged as part of the REAL group and those who serve on OARC's governing Board, live in long-term care homes located in different parts of the province. Their voices and impact can be seen and felt in all aspects of our work.

Presenting at Conferences



Inspiring Students and Long-Term Care Teams



Training Ministry Inspectors and Investigators



Participating on Provincial and National Advisory Groups



Engaging in Advocacy and Government Consultations



- Facilitating Resident Forums
- Co-hosting OARC Webinars
- Partnering on Research Projects
- Contributing to OARC Communications
- Co-designing Education and Training Modules

WE RECOGNIZE AND CELEBRATE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF OUR 2023-24 REAL GROUP MEMBERS:



Devora Greenspon
REAL Co-Chair
Ottawa, ON



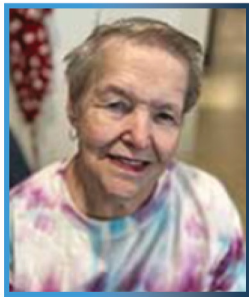
Gale Ramsden
REAL Co-Chair
Ottawa, ON



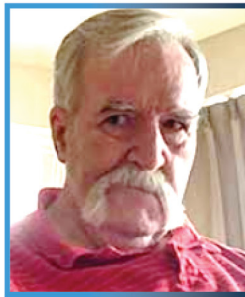
(Late) Bernie Flanagan
Toronto, ON



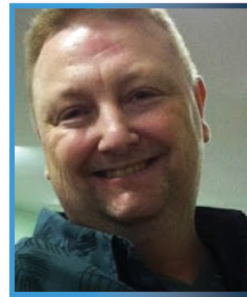
Bob Neveu
Chelmsford, ON



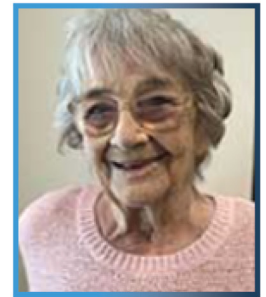
Carol Burke
London, ON



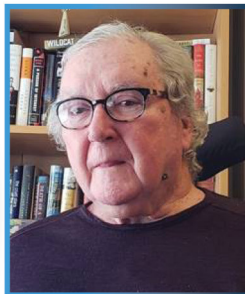
Dave Stanyon
Toronto, ON



Gary Strickland
Fort Frances, ON



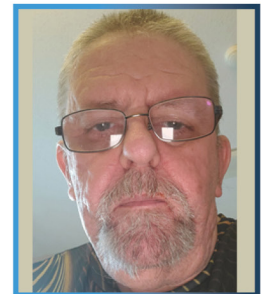
Gloria Macbeth
Burlington, ON



Jim Gilhuly
Kitchener, ON



Leslie Froats
Ottawa, ON



Steven Wenzowski
Hamilton, ON

OARC Resident Leaders
participated in
90
consultations
and committees

REAL member feedback:

- **100% agree** that being a REAL member has given them opportunities to learn and build strengths as a Resident Leader.
- **100% find** serving on the REAL Group to be a satisfying and rewarding experience.
- **100% believe** the group creates a culture that actively encourages all members to participate fully in discussions.

“OARC has been a lifeline for me. They gave me the information I was looking for and a sense of purpose.”

– Gale Ramsden



WHAT IS A RESIDENTS' COUNCIL AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

Residents' Councils are a vital part of the culture and experience in every long-term care home. And every home in Ontario is required by law to have one!

A Residents' Council is a formal advisory group that is independent of the long-term care home and belongs to the residents. Residents' Council meetings are intended to provide residents with a safe place to come together as peers, to share successes and challenges of living in a long-term care home and to reach consensus decisions. Through their Council, residents are also actively engaged in discussions about quality improvements and home operations.

The foundation of a strong, effective Residents' Council includes three pillars, working in partnership to maximize resident engagement and to realize the full legislated scope and powers of a Residents' Council. These pillars include the residents, an appointed Residents' Council Assistant, and the home Administrator.

The above photos feature Residents' Council pillars from long-term care homes located in Kingston, Windsor, Maple and Stoney Creek, Ontario.

Feedback from residents and team members helped to inspire the development of new tools and resources, including Fact Sheets outlining the legislated roles of the three Residents' Council Pillars (residents, Council assistants and Administrators) and a guidance document to support resident engagement on Quality Improvement Committees.



A Residents' Council is effective when residents are informed, empowered, and supported to shape the place they call home.



INFORMED

- Residents and Council supporters are educated about the Residents' Council's powers and scope of influence outlined in legislation.
- Residents are aware of their Bill of Rights.
- Residents know home-specific policies and are informed of any updates.
- The home's leadership team communicates proactively and transparently with the Residents' Council, provides necessary operational information (financial statements, funding allocations, etc.) and facilitates resident understanding.



EMPOWERED

- Long-term care home leadership and team members value and seek resident involvement in decision-making.
- The home (and owner/operator) ensures nothing is decided for residents without their involvement.
- Residents' Councils contribute to quality improvement by identifying important issues and possible solutions.



SUPPORTED

- The Residents' Council receives dedicated resources including team member time, private meeting space, access to technology (as desired) and supplies etc.
- The Residents' Council is aware of and connected to supportive organizations such as the OARC and other community groups.
- The diverse experiences of residents are embraced and accommodations are made to enable participation from all residents who wish to participate.



OARC EDUCATION AND HOME SUPPORT

Did you know that OARC uses a range of approaches and formats when supporting Residents' Councils and their LTC teams? These include:

- ✓ In-person visits
- ✓ Virtual coaching using a computer
- ✓ Phone calls and email exchanges
- ✓ Forums for Residents (weekly) and Residents' Council Assistants (monthly)

Tuning in to OARC's monthly "**Webinar Wednesdays**" has become a popular form of education for residents and their supportive partners at the home and organizational levels. This past year, our team offered live webinar sessions on topics including resident mental health, menu planning and pleasurable dining, end-of-life and friendships in long-term care. We partnered with our government to host five information sessions about long-term care inspections, respiratory preparedness, regulatory changes and other sector updates. Our "**Setting Your Residents' Council Up for Success**" series included tips for using OARC's templates for meeting agendas and minutes.

Top Support Topics:

- ▶ Residents' Council Education
- ▶ Governance and Operations
- ▶ Legislation and Residents' Bill of Rights
- ▶ OARC Tools and Resources

978 Education and Support Interactions with Residents' Councils

53 Resident Forums, and

11 RCA Forums

"It was interesting to hear how residents shared their personal experience. Gives these issues a different perspective for me."
— LTC team member

OARC HOME SUPPORT TRAVEL

We extended our home support outreach to numerous long-term care homes across the province of Ontario. With special interest in visiting Northern Ontario, we maximized our resources, built new relationships and recruited new REAL members.

In-Person Residents' Council Support Visits:

15% North West Region: Serving Thunder Bay to Kenora to Hudson Bay Coast

NORTH WEST
Region

10% North East Region: Serving Parry Sound to Sault Ste. Marie to Hudson Bay and James Bay Coasts

NORTH EAST
Region

15% Central Region: Serving Mississauga to Huntsville and Orangeville to Markham

CENTRAL
Region

WEST
Region

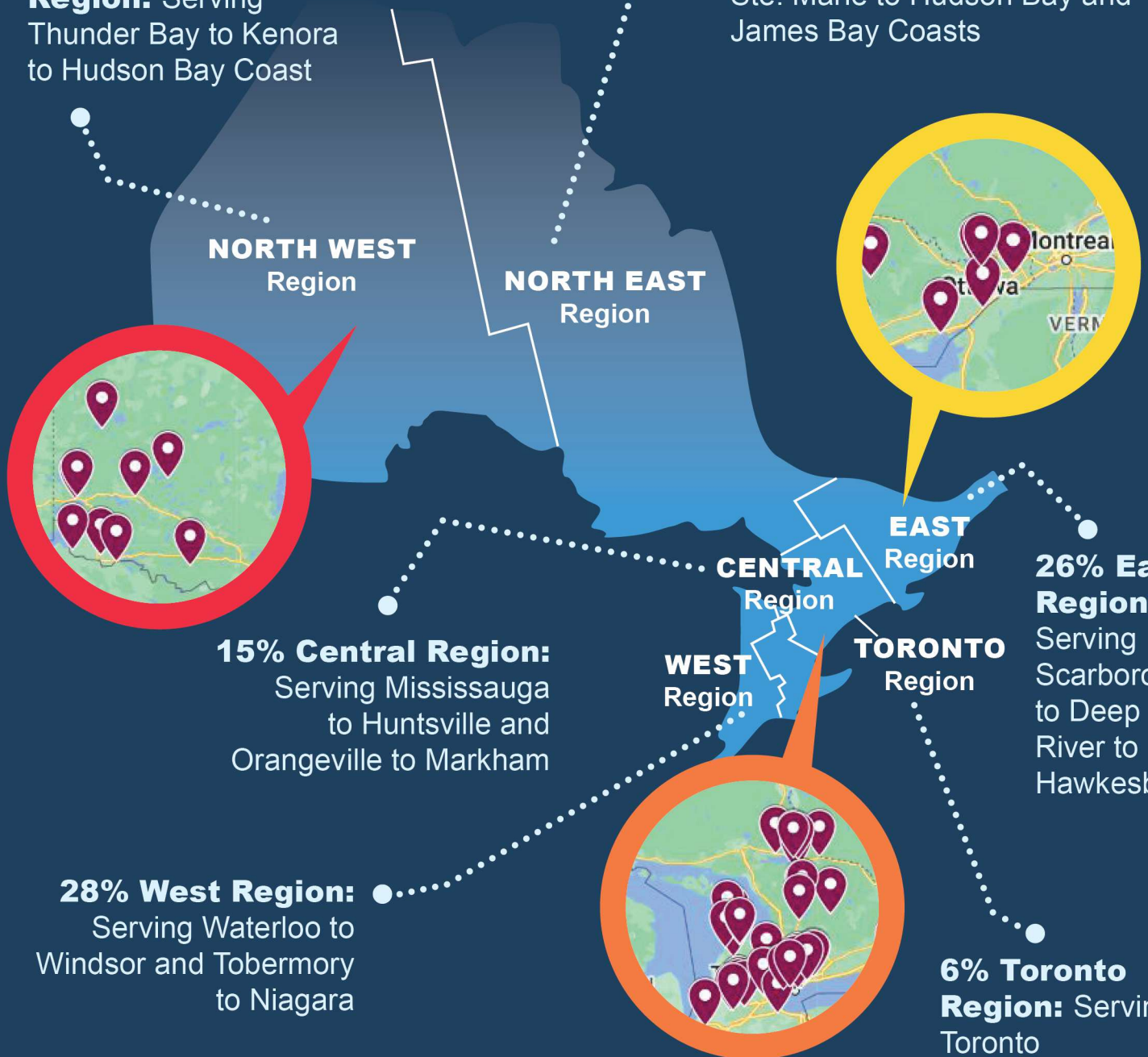
EAST
Region

26% East Region: Serving Scarborough to Deep River to Hawkesbury

TORONTO
Region

28% West Region: Serving Waterloo to Windsor and Tobermory to Niagara

6% Toronto Region: Serving Toronto



OARC IN THE NORTH

In June 2023, several members of the OARC team had the opportunity to travel to eight communities in Northwestern Ontario, with memorable visits at nine long-term care homes.

In speaking with residents, home leadership and team members (staff), our team learned about the needs, nuances and opportunities that exist in homes that operate in the North, including the Residents' Council groups that exist within them.

Our visit to the Northwest also included time spent with Calvin Morrisseau, OARC Board Director, from the Couchiching First Nation. Calvin accompanied us on our travels and shared regional history and stories. Calvin helped facilitate connections with local community members and played an integral role in opening our eyes to a different way of seeing the world and supporting the health and wellbeing of Indigenous Peoples in Ontario.

We have been truly humbled by the interactions and learnings. Visiting the beautiful communities in the North has reminded us about the critical importance of aging within a community and staying connected to the people, culture and traditions that shape and honour our identities throughout our lives. Miigwech – thank you to our new friends and connections in Northern Ontario. Our collective voice is strengthened with yours included.



This photo captures OARC's Dee Tripp with Residents' Council Assistant, Tracy and Council President Marguerite from Northwood Lodge in Red Lake, Ontario.

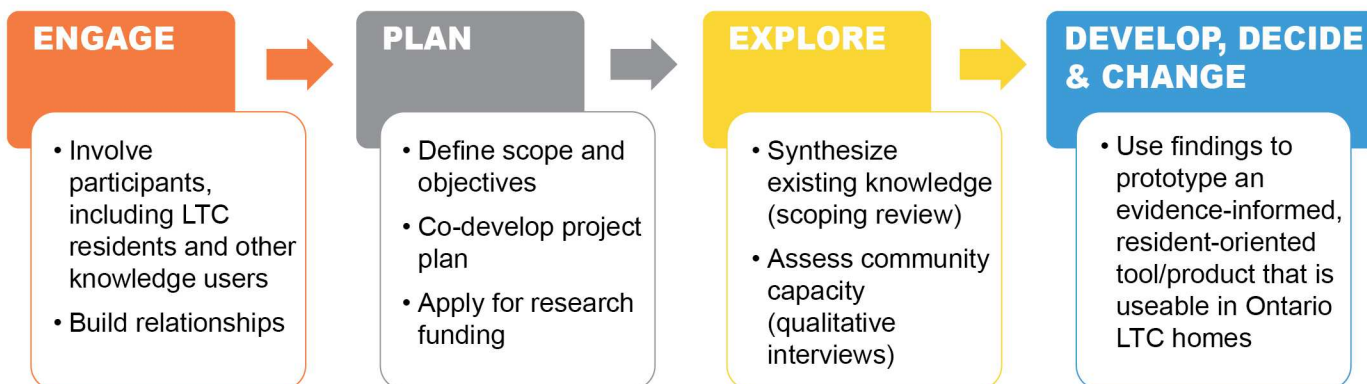


OARC ENGAGED IN RESEARCH

OARC is currently engaged in a two-year research project, entitled “Empowering Ontario Long-Term Care Residents to Shape the Places They Call Home,” funded through grants received from the Canadian Frailty Network joint with Perley Health and the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR).



Réseau canadien
des soins aux
personnes fragilisées



This year, our focus has been on completing a scoping review of existing literature (specifically, an examination of articles with examples of residents being engaged in home-level decisions) and consulting directly with residents and team members to learn more about their experiences with resident engagement. Our team eagerly looks forward to our third and final stage of the project which will include the co-design and development of a toolkit/resource for long-term care homes to facilitate resident involvement in their home operations and decision-making.

Learn more about our project:

www.ontarc.com/research-and-quality/current-research.html



Preliminary findings from OARC's scoping review were featured in a poster presentation at the 2023 Canadian Association on Gerontology Conference in Toronto and co-presented with Resident Leaders at a webinar hosted by brainXchange in partnership with the Alzheimer Society of Canada and the Canadian Consortium of Neurodegeneration in Aging (CCNA). Research project coordinator, Chloe Lee, also worked with the research team to publish a protocol paper in the open access British Medical Journal.



CELEBRATING RESIDENTS' COUNCILS

What a privilege it has been to recognize and celebrate special milestones alongside residents and their long-term care home teams.

In the third week of September, we recognized the fourth annual Residents' Council Week – a week dedicated to raising awareness and celebrating resident contributions in their long-term care homes.

September was also significant as OARC presented the inaugural Sharron Cooke Annual Legacy Award (SCALA) to Glen Rouge Community. Their Circle Café initiative brought together residents and their team members to plan and create a new social gathering space in the home. The SCALA award was conceptualized with the help of

OARC's longest-serving President, the late Sharron Cooke, as a way to honour the people who live and work in long-term care homes and the special relationships amongst them. We look forward to awarding the SCALA for years to come to recognize teamwork and culture change efforts.

OARC team members and Resident Leaders were also honoured to attend innovative program launches (including several Butterfly homes), ground-breaking ceremonies, and a 50-year Residents' Council Anniversary Event hosted by our friends at St. Joseph's Villa in Dundas, Ontario. Thank you for welcoming us into your homes so warmly and for leaving us feeling truly inspired!

CELEBRATING RESIDENTS' COUNCILS



INSPIRING POSITIVE CHANGE

When residents speak, their words command attention. This year, resident messages including those featured below helped to generate OARC's highest social media engagement to date. Harnessing the power of words and embracing a storytelling culture, OARC Resident Leaders encourage others to think differently about life in long-term care and inspire positive change.



OARC's publications, OARC in Action and Seasons Magazine, and our social media platforms, feature education opportunities and promising practices using resident voice and lived experience.

“

I didn't move into long-term care to die.
I came here to LIVE!



Devora Greenspon
LTC Resident Leader

“

There's a willingness to do things for us, not as much of a willingness to do things **with us**.



Jim Gilhuly
LTC Resident Leader

“

People say you only live once... but you only die once. You **live** each and every day.



Dave Stanyon
LTC Resident Leader

“

It's not just what you say, it's **HOW** you say it that affects us.



Steven Wenzowski
LTC Resident Leader

“

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

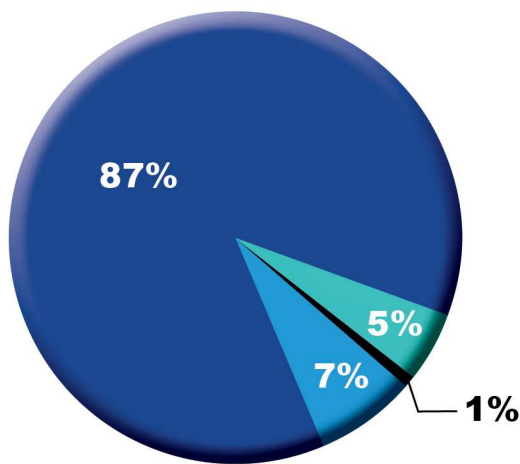


(Late) Sharron Cooke
Former OARC President

OARC FINANCIAL REPORT

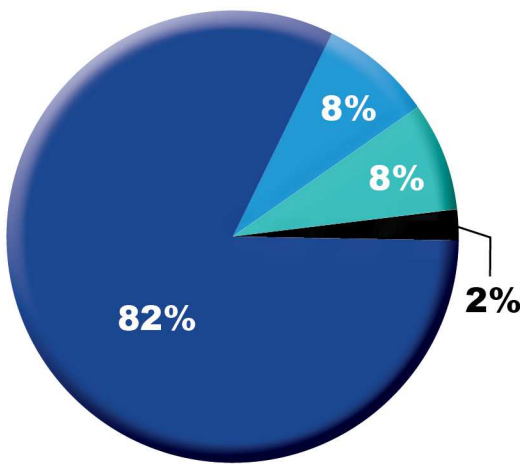
This section provides an overview of OARC’s funding and the costs associated with our operations and service delivery.

REVENUE



	Ontario Ministry of Long-Term Care	\$771,100
	Membership Dues	\$42,250
	Confidence in Culture Change Supporter Program	\$7,391
	Empowering Residents Research Project Grant Funding	\$63,085

EXPENSES



	Personnel	\$718,594
	Administration	\$68,183
	Tools, Resources, & Communications	\$66,646
	Professional Fees	\$19,474

Ontario  OARC is provincially supported through annual funds received from our Ministry of Long-Term Care. We receive additional financial resources through annual Residents’ Council membership dues, sponsorships (OARC’s Confidence in Culture Change Supporter Program) and research grant funding (Canadian Frailty Network joint with Perley Health and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research).

CONFIDENCE IN CULTURE CHANGE SUPPORTER PROGRAM

OARC is grateful to our 2023-24 Confidence in Culture Change Supporters, who have demonstrated support and further enabled our work through their generous monetary and in-kind contributions.

Interested in learning more? Visit ontarc.com.



AdvantAge
Ontario

Advancing Senior Care



Extendicare

Helping people live better



Sienna

Senior Living



JAVA

GROUP PROGRAMS



SCHLEGEL VILLAGES



YOUR SUPPORT HAS HAD AN IMPACT!

A sincere thank you to the Residents' Council groups that supported OARC through annual membership during the 2023-2024 year. We'd like to extend a special thank you to our Corporate Members for seeing the value in securing membership on behalf of the Councils within your respective organizations.





1-800-532-0201

info@ontarc.com

www.ontarc.com

4261 Highway 7 East, Suite #A14-360
Markham, ON L3R 9W6

Add Your Voice to Ours



Ontario Association of Residents' Councils
@OARCnews