

June/July 2025



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Congratulations New Orchard Lodge, Contest Winner!

In OARC's [Spring/Summer issue of Seasons magazine](#), we asked you to tell us what kinds of materials you'd like to see in this year's [Residents' Council Week](#) celebration package. Thank you to those who took the time to provide your valuable feedback— our package preparations are currently under way.

Congratulations to our lucky draw winners, the Residents' Council at New Orchard Lodge in Ottawa. We hope you enjoy your Dollarama gift card prize.



Residents' Council Week 2025 is September 15th – 21st!

*Stay connected with the latest from the Ontario Association of Residents' Councils! **OARC in Action** is a quick and engaging read that keeps residents, Residents' Councils, and their supporters **informed, inspired, and involved.***

 *Use it to spark conversation, share updates, and celebrate the voices of residents across Ontario.*

OARC Governance Update

OARC is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, comprised of residents and people who bring expertise in different areas of long-term care. Every June, OARC holds its Annual General Meeting (AGM), the mandatory gathering of Directors and executive leadership for the Association. It's the culmination of a year of activities including Board meetings, Board Committee activities, acknowledgement of significant successes and challenges. It's also the time when new Directors are welcomed to the Board through a voting process.

OARC is very pleased to welcome [Jenn Killing](#), Vice President, Research, Quality and Partnerships at peopleCare, as the newest member of our Board of Directors!



Register for OARC's July Webinar Wednesday

Welcoming with Pride: Rekai's Journey to 2SLGBTQI+ Inclusive Long-Term Care
Wednesday, July 16th from 2pm-3pm EST

Join us for an inspiring webinar exploring the Toronto-based Rekai Centres' transformative journey toward building a truly welcoming and inclusive long-term care environment – including the creation of North America's first dedicated Rainbow Wing.

Discover the strategies, challenges, and community partnerships that shaped their path to fostering belonging for residents, team members (staff), and families alike. Executive Director Barbara Michalik will share how one resident's courageous conversation sparked a movement toward 2SLGBTQI+ inclusion, and how Rainbow Champions – including residents – continue to lead this work. This session offers valuable insights for anyone committed to equity, inclusion, and culture change in long-term care. **Register today and invite a friend:**

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_tXScx-RzQ4mAdDbgBaasGg#/registration

Learn more about the Rekai Centres' Journey [here](#) in an article written by the Ontario CLRI.

A screenshot of a presentation slide titled "How Can I Participate in Shared Decision-Making?". The slide is divided into two columns. The left column is titled "Questions to ask the health care provider:" and lists four questions. The right column is titled "Questions to ask yourself:" and lists two questions. At the bottom right of the slide, there is a small video inset showing two participants, Ann Donaldson and Palmerina Hovest, in a video call. The deprescribing.org logo is visible at the bottom left of the slide.

Questions to ask the health care provider:	Questions to ask yourself:
1. What are the different options available? Are there any non-drug options?	1. What goals are important to the resident?
2. What are the risks of each option?	2. Am I ready to make a decision now or would I like more time or information?
3. What are the benefits of each option?	
4. What happens if we don't change anything?	

Miss our June webinar with guests from [deprescribing.org](https://www.deprescribing.org)? A recording of 'Your medications, your choice: making informed decisions about medications in long-term care' can be accessed here:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGGewWVsrc8

Download [slides](#) and [supportive resources](#).

Remembering our Friend and Resident Leader, Leslie 'Les' Froats



OARC recently lost a very special member of our Resident Expert Advisors and Leaders (REAL) Group, Leslie "Les" Froats.

Les was incredibly proud to be a resident living at St. Patrick's Home of Ottawa, and by openly sharing his learnings and experiences as a Resident Leader at his home, he helped to inspire others to get more involved. Residents and team members across Ontario were always excited to hear about Les' active involvement as a teacher of Residents' Rights, his participation on the home's hiring committee, and serving as a champion for quality improvement, including medication safety.

During his time with OARC, Les loved meeting with student groups, offering words of gratitude and encouragement to those pursuing a career in long-term care. REAL Group Co-Chair, Gale Ramsden, described Les as an "extraordinarily positive person, who loved being part of a presentation, and having a captive audience."

Les was a compassionate peer facilitator of OARC's weekly Resident Forums, keeping the group's focus on their mental health and well-being. He was a friend, first and foremost, offering a listening ear and encouraging words to fellow residents who were expressing sadness, frustration, or going through a difficult time. He didn't need to say much to make others feel validated, valued and heard.

Through his willingness to be vulnerable, Les embodied OARC's commitment to keeping things authentic and REAL, and rooted in resident lived experience. He was a cheerleader, and a champion, with a tender heart and a kind soul. Our organization, and the REAL group, was better because of Les. May he rest in peace.

Residents' Council Spotlight: Greenwood Court, Stratford, ON

The Resident Council at Greenwood Court has been vibrant and active over the past year, bringing joy and connection to the community through a variety of resident-led initiatives.



- **Resident Council Week 2024** was a highlight, featuring daily name draws where each resident received a thoughtful gift. Every resident was also honoured with a beautiful flower corsage, creating a sense of celebration and appreciation.
- Building on this success, the “**Resident of the Week**” initiative was launched. Each week, one resident is featured with a personalized profile and photo proudly displayed in the lobby—an uplifting way to recognize individual stories and contributions.
- Currently, residents are compiling a **community recipe book** with cherished submissions from residents, staff, and families. This special collection will be available for purchase at upcoming events like the **Fall Festival** and **Christmas Bazaar**.



These initiatives reflect the creativity, spirit, and leadership of Greenwood's residents. Through meaningful engagement and collaboration, the Resident Council continues to foster a strong sense of community, pride, and belonging.

Thank you to Rose E., Residents' Council President, for sharing this story with OARC!

Residents' Council Spotlight: Southbridge London, London, ON

At Southbridge London, a resident-led initiative recently came to fruition...just in time for Canada Day! It all started with one resident's idea to purchase a flagpole for the home. With this, the Residents' Council jumped on board and made a motion to fundraise to purchase a flagpole to fly our Canadian flag and show our pride. Their goal was to have it in the ground and the flag up for July 1st, Canada Day. The residents worked hard by holding raffles and bake sales, encouraging families, staff and the community to help support. By the end of June, they had reached their goal, and the pole was put in place. Canada Day was celebrated by hosting a flag raising ceremony while singing the Canadian national anthem. The residents are very proud of their accomplishment and the pride that it brings to Southbridge London community.



Thank you to Carol Burke, Resident Leader and OARC REAL Group Member and Russlyn Wade, Director of Life Enrichment, for sharing your story with us!

Building Relationships One Conversation at a Time

One of OARC's responsibilities is to consult with the government such that issues of importance to residents are clearly articulated to policy and decision makers throughout various levels of the government. OARC, over the years has established healthy, respectful and communicative relationships across branches of government on the bureaucratic side as well as the elected official side of the Ministry of Long-Term Care. Regular touch points across these branches provides both government and OARC to become well versed in priorities relevant to both parties.

In early May of this year, after Deputy Minister (DM) Melissa Thomson took a leave of absence, Peter Kaftarian was appointed as Interim DM. While attending the AdvantAge Ontario Conference in May, Devora Greenspon (a member of OARC's REAL group and former Director on the Board) and Dee Tripp (Executive Director) saw Peter on what was his very first day as DM. Deputy Kaftarian is not a stranger to OARC; over nine years ago, during regular government consultation work, Dee and Devora met with he and his team within the Health Capital Division of the Ministry of Health and LTC.

Peter is a gifted, approachable, strategic thinker ... **and listener** ... who models person-centred care and invites the difficult questions and topics. His service with Ontario Public Service extends over 23 years in various senior-level positions.



May was a significant month for Peter. In addition to being appointed as DM, Peter received the King Charles III Coronation Medal honouring his decades of committed work in Health Care. On June 18th Dee met with DM Kaftarian in his office in downtown Toronto for an hour, at which time Dee and Peter caught up with respective priorities and re-established their working relationship. Dee was delighted to share how OARC had changed over the past nine years, and she explained current priorities. Some of the discussion points were carried forward from conversations with DM Thomson, and Dee was assured by DM Kaftarian that he is, “not there to keep a seat warm.” He intends on pursuing commitments and action items that DM Thomson was moving forward prior to her leave, and he assured Dee that regular meetings with him will occur (likely quarterly).

Another Ministry of LTC (MLTC) consultative opportunity began with OARC in early June with the first meeting of the LTC Homes Cultural Pilot Advisory Committee. Dee and Devora from OARC are members of the Committee along with several other system partners. The Committee will provide advice and guidance to the MLTC and Ontario Health at Home pertinent to a pilot project called the “LTC Homes Cultural Pilot.” This pilot program seeks to address the fact that changing demographics and recent policy changes have impacted some Ontarians’ access to religious, ethnic or linguistically appropriate care in LTC homes. The Committee will meet bi-monthly until December 2025.

REAL Members in Action

This summer has been off to a busy start for members of OARC's provincial advisory group, the [Resident Expert Advisors and Leaders \(REAL\)](#). Speaking engagement highlights have included meeting with groups of long-term care leaders as part of the AdvantAge Ontario (AO) Administrator Leadership Program (ALP) on June 11th and the AO Region 1 group on June 13th.

At the ALP course, REAL members Steven, Devora, Ann, Jennifer, Gale, together with OARC's Director of Education, Stephanie Ventura, presented to 42 students as part of the online course, delivering a strong message: *"Ask a resident first."* The session emphasized the Administrator's role in setting the tone of the home through visibility, direct engagement, and ensuring resident voices are at the heart of every decision. Reflecting on her experience, REAL member Ann remarked that she was very impressed by the high level of engagement in the 'chat box' with participants, which signaled to the residents that Administrators were excited to listen and learn directly from them.

On June 12th, REAL member La Vern had the special opportunity to meet with an engaged cohort of 12 students participating in the [Virtual Interprofessional Internship in Innovation and Aging in Long-Term Care](#), offered through the Ontario Centre for Learning, Research and Innovation (CLRI) at Baycrest. With an emphasis on relationship-building and drawing from his lived experiences as a person living in LTC, La Vern helped to leave the group feeling connected and inspired to pursue a career path in the sector.

Share your feedback on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) with the CLRI

Our friends at the Ontario Centres for Learning, Research and Innovation in Long-Term Care (CLRI) are seeking your feedback to help update and inform a practical and useful toolkit for advancing EDI in long-term care (LTC).

Residents, LTC leaders, team members and family care partners are invited to complete a short 15-20 minute survey to inform the next iteration of their toolkit resource.

[Access the survey here](#). Alternatively, residents are welcome to complete a printable, hardcopy survey which can be downloaded [here](#).

Updates from our Ministry of Long-Term Care

In recent weeks, there have been a number of communications circulated by our partners at the Ministry of Long-Term Care. OARC has highlighted several updates below that might be of interest to residents:

- **Welcome Back Minister Kusendova-Bashta!**

OARC sends a warm welcome to Hon. Natalia Kusendova-Bashta, our Minister of Long-Term Care, who returned from her parental leave last week.

- **The Long-Term Care Food Budget has increased!**

OARC received an exciting update from the Office of our Minister of Long-Term Care:

“The Government of Ontario has increased funding for nutritional supports in Long-Term Care homes by 2.8%. This investment is part of the province’s ongoing commitment to ensuring residents receive the highest quality of care and nutritional support. With this increase, homes can continue to provide meals and supplements that meet residents’ health needs and preferences, supporting overall well-being and quality of life.”

- **New long-term care home accommodation charges came into effect on July 1st.** Read the letter from the Assistant Deputy Minister of LTC: [English](#) | [French](#)
Co-payment Bulletin: [English](#) | [French](#)
 - **Application forms for the 2025-2026 Long-Term Care Rate Reduction program cycle were made available last month.** Residents seeking to complete a rate reduction form may access any required support from team members at their homes.
 - **The Ontario government has announced funding increases for long-term care homes to support staffing improvements.** Read full memo [here](#). Key details include:
 - \$1.82 billion in total funding to help homes meet the legislated target of 4 hours of direct care per resident per day by March 31, 2025
 - This includes a \$571 million increase over the previous year to support hiring more Personal Support Workers (PSWs), nurses, and other frontline staff.
 - The funding also supports wage enhancements and training initiatives to retain and attract staff.
 - Homes will receive allocations based on their size and current staffing levels, with reporting requirements to ensure accountability.
 - The Ministry of Long-Term Care has circulated materials, including a [memo](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQ) resource, which explains how the **Case Mix Index (CMI)** has been used to calculate funding for nursing and personal care in long-term care homes for the 2025-2026 year. "Case mix" refers to the **mix of residents** in a long-term care home and how **complex their care needs** are. Some residents might need more assistance and support with daily activities, while others may need less. The more complex the needs, the higher the funding required. Residents’ Councils with questions about long-term care funding are encouraged to speak with their home’s leadership team to learn more.
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Conference and Events Corner

OARC Attends Family Councils Ontario (FCO) Conference

The week of June 9th, 2025 was Family Council Week. OARC and Family Councils Ontario (FCO) have been system partners for years, supporting their respective mandates and working together on various projects. While similar, OARC and FCO serve different clients, with unique, separate and distinct needs. Dee Tripp, Executive Director for OARC was delighted to attend FCO’s conference in Hamilton on June 11th where family and

friends of residents in LTC homes who are serving in leadership roles with Family Councils across Ontario came together to learn, laugh and connect. In fact, the title of the conference said it all; Connecting Through Care: Creating Champions! Dee networked with several delegates and event exhibitors. Among the sessions Dee attended and learned from were Innovation in LTC, Supporting the Transition to LTC: Promising Practices, Building Community Connections: Family Councils Supporting New Caregivers and Indigenous Caregiving Experiences. Dee enjoyed the creative and inclusive atmosphere with many delegates while many others joined the program virtually. An excellent conference FCO! Congratulations, and thank you for the work you do supporting Family Councils across Ontario!

OLTCA's *This is Long Term Care* Conference Program Now Live!

The Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA) has just released the [full program](#) for its much-anticipated fall event — *This is Long Term Care 2025*, happening October 26–28 at the Beanfield Centre in Toronto. This annual conference brings together leaders and innovators from across the long-term care sector to share ideas, explore new approaches, and inspire positive change in long-term care homes. Learn more [here](#).

New Publication about Ontario Ombudsman Complaints from CLEO

CLEO has a [new booklet](#) about making a complaint to the Ontario Ombudsman (Ombudsman). Not to be confused with [Patient Ombudsman](#), who OARC recently hosted for a webinar, the Ombudsman takes complaints from people about how they were treated by certain Ontario or city government services. Examples of government services include Ontario Works, the Ontario Disability Support Program, and the Family Responsibility Office. This booklet explains what people can complain about, how to make a complaint, and what may happen after a complaint. You can order copies for free or read online [here](#).

June Reflections

Last month the OARC team was truly inspired by the stories and social media posts shared by LTC home teams featuring residents engaged in events to celebrate Senior's month, demonstrating their 2SLGBTQIA+ Pride, and recognizing Indigenous History Month. OARC encourages residents and Residents' Councils to continue to explore and embrace new ways to make your LTC home more inclusive and welcoming in addition to finding new ways to listen and learn. The online and printable [Diversity and Inclusion Calendars](#) developed by the Ontario CLRI's are excellent resources for residents and teams. Let OARC know how you are using them -we'd love to hear from you! Email mmcvie@ontarc.com.

Stay connected and share ideas at our OARC Forums

Are you looking for a way to connect and learn from other residents or team members that support Residents' Councils? Consider joining one of our OARC Forums.

RESIDENT FORUMS: Weekly, Thursday at 2 pm EST – Find more details about these resident-led weekly Forums [here](#).

RESIDENTS' COUNCIL ASSISTANT FORUMS: Monthly, last Tuesday of the month at 1:30 pm EST – Learn more and register [here](#).



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.

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

www.ontarc.com | info@ontarc.com

©2016 OARC | 4261 Highway 7 East, Suite #A14-360, Markham, ON L3R 9W6



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.