

---

**Subject:** Seniors Services Quality Improvement Report: July – September, 2021

**Report to:** Public Health and Social Services Committee

**Report date:** Tuesday, December 7, 2021

---

## **Recommendations**

1. That this report **BE RECEIVED** for information.

## **Key Facts**

- The purpose of this report is to provide Committee and Council with highlights of quality initiatives for Seniors Services.
- Areas of focus in this report are:
  - Resident Safety Plan Update
  - Resident and Family Centered Care - Update

## **Financial Considerations**

The Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC) and Ontario Health West are the primary sources of funding for the Seniors Services division. Other funding sources include user fees and levy. Additional funding from the province has supported increased costs due to the implementation of pandemic related orders, directives and guidance.

## **Analysis**

### **Resident Safety Plan Update**

In the long-term care sector there is a strong connection between excellence in care and safety. Seniors Services is committed to sustaining a safety culture and ensuring resident care and services are provided safely. The Seniors Services Resident Safety Plan is a planning document that outlines a standardized approach to improving the quality, safety and consistency of care and resident experience across each of the eight long-term care (LTC) homes.

The Resident Safety Plan provides a roadmap for resident safety that outlines risk mitigation strategies and quality improvement initiatives to ensure continued resident

safety. The action plan summarizes the key activities homes are engaging in to advance resident safety. Each of these plans have been developed in consultation, collaboration and or co-design with residents and families.

The homes incorporate foundational resident safety activities into operations including resident safety incident reporting (critical incidents and near misses), resident safety trend analysis, and associated education and training.

### **Resident Safety Plan Achievements**

- Implementation of the enhanced cytotoxic medication<sup>1</sup> and waste handling program: This program was implemented to provide direction and describe safety measures to be taken for the receipt, storage, preparation, administration and spill clean-up and waste management of hazardous medications and to ensure the safety of staff when handling bodily fluids from residents who are taking cytotoxic agents.
- COVID-19 Safety Measures: Implementation of further risk mitigation measures including roll-out of the mandatory vaccination policy for staff, students, volunteers and support workers, third dose vaccinations for residents, implementation of randomized testing of fully vaccinated staff and mandatory testing at each visit for unvaccinated visitors.
- Code White Week: Each of the eight LTC homes held a code white week to raise awareness of safety and security measures in the event of violent outbursts by residents, visitors or staff. The week included training, information tables and events to support learning.
- Annual Observed Fire Drill: The LTC homes practice code red (fire response) drills on days, evenings and nights each month. Annually each long-term care home completes an observed fire drill and mock evacuation at which the Fire Department times and evaluates each home's ability to successfully respond to a fire emergency and potential evacuation with night shift staffing levels. All homes completed the exercise successfully within the required response times.
- Carbon Dioxide Monitoring in LTC: Public Health is exploring the link between CO<sub>2</sub> levels and COVID-19 transmission. Seniors Services long-term care homes worked

---

<sup>1</sup> cytotoxic hazardous medication: Category of hazardous medications that are potentially detrimental or destructive to cells within the body. Deemed to pose maximal risk in the event of occupational exposure.

in collaboration with Public Health to pilot a process to measure CO<sub>2</sub> levels in long-term care homes.

### **Resident and Family Centered Care – Update**

Resident and Family Centered Care continues to be a key priority for Seniors Services. Making sure that residents are involved in all aspects of their care is central to developing high quality care and achieving excellent outcomes in long-term care homes.

### **Dignity and Respect**

Dignity and respect for each resident is the foundation of resident and family centered care. Niagara Region's eight long-term care homes are continuing on their path of putting residents and families at the centre of decisions and working in collaboration to achieve the best outcomes. Working within the paradigm (and some of the inherent restrictions) of the pandemic, the homes have sought creative opportunities to ensure that the philosophy of, "nothing about me without me" continues to be operationalized. Examples of ensuring resident and family centered care through information sharing, resident and family participation, and collaboration are detailed below.

### **Information Sharing**

Information sharing over the past year has been very important to ensure that residents and families are fully aware of changing directives, and the implications for long-term care homes and the residents who call the facilities home. In uncertain times ready access to clear and timely information helps to sustain trust and to decrease anxiety. Examples of information sharing with residents and families in the past year include:

- Regular updates on the website, through newsletters, brochures, fact sheets, zoom, e-mail updates and communication blasts
- Training for essential caregivers and visitors to ensure safe infection prevention and control practices including videos, posters and brochures detailing good hand hygiene practices and instructions on how to safely don and doff personal protective equipment
- Information packages that clearly outline best practice programs in skin and wound care, falls prevention and bed rail and entrapment safety are available for residents and families in an understandable format

- An information brochure to provide clarification on the purpose and structure of care conferences is available to help residents and families actively participate and leverage the value of the meeting

### **Resident and Family Participation**

Families play an important role in enhancing a resident's quality of life. However, not all residents choose to have family involved in information sharing and decisions relating to their care and services. In support of residents' rights, procedures are in place to ensure that competent residents are able to define his or her family and to share preferences for family involvement. All eight long-term care homes consult and involve residents and their designated families through surveys, meetings, review and analysis of complaints, compliments and suggestions, input at point-of-care, and information sessions. This year, the homes have implemented new programs / approaches to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on participation opportunities. Below are some specific examples of resident and family participation in 2021.

- Virtual Care Conferences: To ensure sustained participation in resident care conferences throughout the pandemic the long-term care homes transitioned to "zoom for health care services" virtual meetings. This virtual meeting option will continue to be a valuable communication tool to support ongoing participation in post-admission, annual, and situational care conferences.
- Virtual Resident Wellness Group: Opportunities for socializing beyond their cohort decreased for residents during the pandemic. To mitigate the risk of social isolation and ensure opportunities to engage in broader socialization a Virtual Resident Wellness Group was introduced. This program linked a group of residents with similar interests from across the homes through a virtual platform. It was very well received and provided an important opportunity to meet new people beyond the walls of the home.
- Supporting Essential Caregivers: The long-term care homes collaborated with families to support the return to the home in the essential caregivers role. A program was implemented to identify essential caregivers as per Ministry of Long-Term Care guidelines. Training materials ensured that essential caregivers were well equipped to participate safely in the daily care and services of residents.

## **Collaboration**

Seniors Services continues to focus on increasing opportunities for residents and families to collaborate and co-design aspects of residents' care and services. Some examples of this level of engagement and inclusion include:

- A resident and a family participated in the selection of a new Administrator for Rapelje Lodge. Both the resident and the family member participated in developing interview questions and participated in the interview process.
- A family and resident advisory council meets regularly and actively provides input to divisional leadership
- Family Council meets regularly and actively provides input to LTC home leadership
- Resident's Council meets regularly and actively provides input to LTC home leadership
- Residents and families actively participated in the collaboration and co-design of:
  - the Seniors Services strategic plan
  - the updated ethics framework
  - the enhanced admissions process
  - the resident and family handbook
  - the design of the new long-term care homes

The long-term care homes continue to focus on their journey of ensuring resident and family centered care in all aspects of care and services.

## **Alternatives Reviewed**

Quarterly reports are required as per the Ministry of Long-Term Care and Accreditation Canada and do not allow for alternatives.

## **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

Healthy and Vibrant Community – supporting the delivery of quality care to Niagara's Senior population

## **Other Pertinent Reports**

COM -2021 Seniors Services Quality Improvement Report, April – June, 2021

---

**Prepared by:**

Henri Koning, MHSc  
Director  
Community Services

---

**Recommended by:**

Adrienne Jugley, MSW, RSW, CHE  
Commissioner  
Community Services

---

**Submitted by:**

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.  
Chief Administrative Officer

This report was prepared in consultation with Jordan Gamble, Program Financial Analyst, Corporate Services; Cathy Saliba, Manager of Resident and Family Support Services; Nathan Warden, Manager LTC Facilities; Kim Eros, Associate Director Clinical Support Services; Viviana Menendez Continuous Quality Improvement Advisor.

**Appendices**

Appendix 1              Seniors Services Report Card 2021