



Long-Term Care & Services for Seniors Division
Hillsdale Estates Newsletter
Issue 1, March 2025



Mission

Strong People...Caring Communities...Our Future!

Vision

We will create a diverse, equitable and inclusive community that embraces person-centred care and meaningful connection for all

We Value

Individuality, Collaboration, Accountability, Respect and Dignity, Excellence

LTC and Services for Seniors Division news

Director's message

As we welcome spring 2025, it's a time of renewal, fresh beginnings and looking ahead with optimism. The changing season brings longer days, warmer weather, and a sense of energy and possibility– much like the work we continue to do in long-term care.

Recently, our divisional leadership team, alongside Family Council presidents, came together to develop our annual plan, reaffirming our commitment to the strategic pillars of care and service, embracing innovation and workplace excellence. These priorities will guide us as we strive to enhance the quality of life for residents and support our dedicated staff.

Spring is also a time of welcoming, and we extend a warm greeting to all new residents, staff and volunteers who have recently joined our homes. We encourage you to connect with our team, ask questions and know that we are here to support you.

Enjoy this edition of the newsletter.

~Laura MacDermaid, Director, Long-Term Care and Services for Seniors



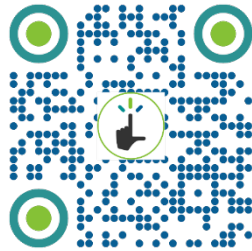
If you require this information in an accessible format, please contact Tammy Clarke, Administrative Assistant at 905-579-1777 ext. 6314.

Policy and practice update

Mandatory training

A huge shoutout to all staff for their dedication and hard work in completing the 2024 training— what an incredible achievement with a flawless 100 per cent completion rate!

This year, we've launched the training program earlier, giving everyone the opportunity to check it off their list early. Ready to get started? For tips on logging in and navigating the platform, visit the user guide by scanning the QR code below. Let's keep the momentum going!



Program improvements

All program committees have been actively working to enhance the services at our homes. Learning needs assessments for 2024 have been completed and the training team is currently reviewing the results to prepare the divisional training plan.



Skin and wound care education

We are focused on improving skin, wound and continence care within our homes. Clinical Leads Kim Burns, Chrystol Kennedy and Brett Chiasson will participate in the Skin Wellness Associate Nurse (SWAN™) Program, which is part of the Ministry of Long-Term Care initiative. Additionally, Jean San Luis, Manager of Nursing Practice at Hillside Estates, is pursuing education as a Nurse Specialized in Wound, Ostomy and Continence (NSWOC). These initiatives are designed to enhance shared expertise and improve care for the residents.

Fall prevention and management

The Fall Prevention and Management program is preparing for a policy review this year.



Pain management

Our Pain Management program will focus on enhancing training and compliance related to pain management.

Palliative care

Training will highlight a palliative approach to care, with collaborative palliative projects taking place at Hillside Estates and Fairview Lodge.



Student placements

We continue to welcome students from various disciplines. Between January and December 2024, 289 student placements took place across the four homes and the divisional office.



Research collaborations

Our research collaborations on Virtual Reality Reminiscence Therapy (VRRT) and exergaming with Ontario Tech are ongoing. Ontario Tech has gathered feedback from our teams to make the prototype more user-friendly. As the studies progress, there will be opportunities for staff, residents and families to provide input.



Infection Prevention and Control



The cold months are almost behind us as we look forward to spring and summer. The past few months carried high activity in our community of respiratory viruses (COVID-19, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus) as well as gastrointestinal viruses such as norovirus. As a result, we saw an increase in infections and outbreaks in our long-term care (LTC) homes. The LTC homes monitored this activity closely and implemented measures as needed to help mitigate the spread of infection. Some homes implemented universal masking for staff and visitors to help keep our residents, staff and visitors safe during these times of higher infection rates and outbreaks. We thank you for your diligence in wearing a mask and staying home when ill to keep everyone safe.

Wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is also an important measure if you are visiting a loved one who is ill or in isolation. If you see PPE outside of your loved one's room, please ensure you wear all the appropriate PPE that is listed on the sign attached to the resident's door. This will help keep yourself and others around you safe. If you have any questions regarding the PPE required, please speak to your home area's Registered Practical Nurse or Registered Nurse when visiting.

Candida auris

What is it?

Candida auris (*C. auris*) is a fungal pathogen that is often resistant to several different treatments and disinfectants. *C. auris* can infect any body part, including the blood, a wound and be found on an infected person's skin. Signs and symptoms depend on the location and severity of the infection, but may include chills, fever or extreme lethargy.

Cases of *C. auris* have increased in many different parts of the world, including the United States. Cases in Ontario remain low at this time, however due to the increase in cases seen in other parts of the world, Ontario has designated *C. auris* as a disease of public health significance. Cases will continue to be monitored closely with our local public health unit.

As an added safety measure, our four long-term care homes will be screening new admissions and re-admissions from other health care facilities (i.e., a return from hospital) for *C. auris*. If a resident fails the screening tool, then contact precautions of personal protective equipment may be initiated, along with a test performed to rule out *C. auris* infection.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your home's Infection Control Practitioner.



Caring Connections Durham update

Exciting update: Launch of the "Change Ideas" phase for Caring Connections Durham at Lakeview Manor

We are excited to announce the launch of the "Change Ideas" implementation phase for the Caring Connections Durham Pilot Project at Lakeview Manor this February. This marks a pivotal moment in our project as we shift from planning to action.

In January, Beaver River staff participated in a two-day training session designed to equip them with essential tools and strategies to enhance the social and emotional well-being of our residents. This training will lay the foundation for the changes we are now implementing.

Our approach involves rolling out two change ideas per week. This allows the project team to gather valuable feedback from staff, residents and families, enabling us to adjust before introducing changes to other resident homes.

In February, we've already rolled out several key initiatives, including:

- **Noise Reduction and Stress Management:** A focus on reducing noise and stress in the dining room to create a calmer, more comfortable atmosphere.
- **Engagement Enhancements:** Introducing activity placemats to support residents who benefit from additional engagement before meals.
- **"All About Me" Form:** A newly updated version of this form is now in use, helping staff better understand the unique preferences and needs of each resident.
- **Community Connections:** We're excited to connect our residents with local schools and organizations in Beaverton through intergenerational programming.

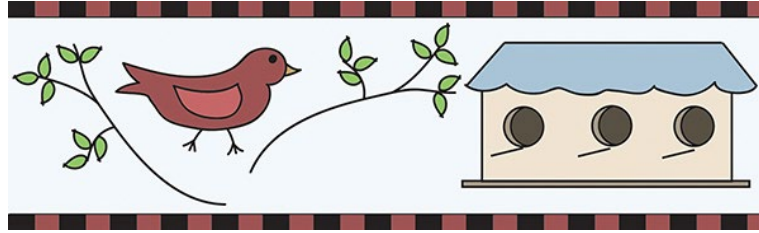
Looking ahead, the project team will soon focus on:

- A new resident orientation program.
- Job opportunities for residents.
- An early breakfast dining initiative.
- Environmental enhancements, including personalized doors and the addition of vibrant murals.

The project will continue to evolve as we incorporate ongoing feedback from staff, residents and families to assess the impact of our new care model. In the coming months, we will expand training and project implementation to the entire home, and we're eager to witness the positive effects this initiative will have on our residents, families and staff



Hillsdale Estates news



Residents' Council

Residents' Council aims to empower residents living in long-term care homes to participate in the operations of their homes and be involved in decisions that affect their lives. The Council is run for residents by residents and meets monthly.

The next Residents' Council meeting will be held on March 25 at 2 p.m. The meeting is open to all residents at Hillsdale Estates and if residents are interested in participating, the Recreation staff on their home area can assist.

Congratulations to the 2025 Residents' Council Leadership Team: Kelly Cachia, Gerard MacNeil and Alan Passant.

Family Council

The Hillsdale Estates Family Council is a voluntary, self-governing advocacy group – comprised of families, friends and caregivers of residents – who strive to attain the highest quality of life for residents. Their work helps to ensure that residents are treated with respect and dignity within a comfortable, safe and secure environment.

The Family Council aims to:

- Inform and educate caregivers/families.
- Arrange for guest speakers on topics of interest to caregivers/families.
- Advocate on behalf of all residents and caregivers/families.
- Serve as peer support for all residents and caregivers/families.
- Collectively share ideas and engage in problem solving.
- Support events at Hillsdale Estates, oftentimes alongside Residents' Council and staff.
- Maintain open communication between caregivers/families, residents, staff and administration.
- Work collaboratively to improve quality of life and care of residents.
- And much more.

The Council meets in person and typically on a monthly basis. The next meeting will take place on Saturday, March 29 at 10 a.m. in the Auditorium.

Those interested in becoming involved with Family Council are welcome to attend any upcoming meeting, as well as connect with any member of the Family Council Executive.

There is a Family Council Suggestion Box at the Reception Desk, as well as an information board in a shadow box behind Reception. As well, you may contact the Family Council Executive at the dedicated email address of: hillsdalefamilycouncil@gmail.com.

Our Social Worker, Erika Gilbert (ext. 6323), is the Family Council Assistant, and acts as the liaison between the home's Family Council and administration.

Please consider becoming involved. The Council has outstanding support from the leadership team at Hillsdale Estates and endeavour to have topics of interest presented at the meetings.

Volunteer Corner

Spring is right around the corner, which means that it's time to get involved with your community! Come and volunteer to gain great experiences and new friends along the way!

Thinking of becoming a volunteer?

Visit durham.ca/LTCvolunteer to download a volunteer application or email it to your preferred home that you would like to volunteer at. You could also drop off your completed application to our front desk. We are currently looking for volunteers to fill the following positions: gift shop assistant, special events and outings, daily program assistant, mail delivery and one-to-one visiting.

Volunteering is very rewarding and enriches the lives of our residents. Join us today—we need your help! As always, if you have any suggestions, questions or concerns, you can email Cladell Rock at cladell.rock@durham.ca or call her at (905) 579-1777 extension 6332.

National Volunteer Appreciation Week

Did you know that April 27 to May 3 is National Volunteer Appreciation Week? We are very thankful for the wonderful volunteers we have at Hillsdale Estates. They give their time and caring to so many of the residents who live in our home. **A big, warm thank you to you all!**

Nursing



In January, the Estates welcomed Jenny Little into the role of Director of Care. Jenny started at Hillsdale Estates in 2008, later transferred to Fairview Lodge and has returned Home to the Estates! Jenny brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience along with her great sense of humor! Please join us in giving her a warm Hillsdale welcome!!

Social Work Week spotlight

Each year, communities and organizations across Canada take time in March to recognize the hard work, dedication, resilience and compassion of social workers. In Ontario, we honour these caring professionals during the first week of March (March 3 to 9). Social workers are on the frontlines of our recovery, providing vital support and guidance to those dealing with burnout, stress, trauma and anxiety.

Resident sign-out and sign-in process

On February 12, a standardized process was put into place for when residents leave the home area. If you are taking a resident off the home area, please use the “sign-out and in” binders located in every home area nursing station. Individual resident sheets are arranged in alphabetical order.

The person who signs the resident out of the home area, takes full responsibility for the resident until the resident is signed back in.

We ask that you continue to inform any home area team that you are leaving with the resident, so that pertinent information can be shared prior to departure.

Environmental Services

Earth Day is April 22 and the theme for 2025 is Our Power, Our Planet™.

Have you ever wondered how Earth Day started? This observance arose from an interest in gathering national support for environmental issues. In 1970, San Francisco activist John McConnell and Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson asked Americans to join in a grassroots demonstration. Today, Earth Day continues to be celebrated throughout the world. 2025 marks the 55th anniversary of Earth Day.



Spring cleaning



Spring is in the air! The weather starts to warm up, grass starts to grow, the birds fly lower, and we no longer need those heavy winter clothes that take up all the space in your closets and drawers. Over the next few weeks, please consider packing away clothing articles that are no longer needed for the new season. We encourage residents to have these items stored with their families.

Please remember all new clothing items need to be labelled so it will always be returned to you after it has been laundered.

Furniture and supplies in resident rooms

Residents are encouraged to keep and display personal possessions, pictures and furnishings in their rooms. This is your home and, as in any home, it is important to have personal items around that are special to you or make you feel more comfortable.

Prior to bringing in any **electrical items or furniture**, please contact Environmental Services at extension 6326. The Environmental Services team will ensure your items are in good working order to ensure the safety of everyone living in the home.

Please note that extension cords are not to be used in any resident room. Power bars with built-in breakers that are CSA-approved are the best option.

Please be aware that air purifiers, humidifiers and aerosols are not permitted in any resident rooms because they interfere with the facility's Heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system and Fire Suppression System.

Food Services

National Nutrition Month



March is officially Nutrition Month across Canada and the theme for 2025 is "Food Connects Us." National Nutrition Month started in 1973 as National Nutrition Week, and it became a month-long observance in 1980 in response to growing interest in nutrition.

Hillsdale Estates has two registered dietitians on staff, as well as food service supervisors, chefs and trained food service aides to support residents and maximize their well-being.

Administration

From the Business Office

The Business Office will be closed Good Friday (April 18) and Easter Monday (April 21). If you require funds from your account, please see the Business Office by Thursday, April 17.

2024 income tax

Don't forget it is tax time! If families require a rate reduction, taxes need to be completed on time to get the notice of assessment back. The tax filing deadlines for all Canadians is April 30, 2025, for the 2024 tax year.

Please connect with Mary-Anne Finlay or a member of the Business Office for further information.

Free Tax Clinic at Hillsdale Estates

We are excited to partner again with the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) through Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to host a free Tax Clinic at Hillsdale Estates. With last year's successful partnership, we are happy to host this clinic again this year. Tax returns will be completed by trained volunteers. Residents and caregivers are both welcome to access this free tax clinic, as long as they have a simple tax situation.



To register, please contact Mary-Anne Finlay (Senior Accounting Clerk) at ext. 6317 or email mary-anne.finlay@durham.ca by March 10. Please note, registration is mandatory.

If you have any questions or concerns, please connect with our social workers:

Trillium Trail, Pineridge Place and 3rd Floor:

Sherin Surenthiran ext. 6441 or sherin.surenthiran@durham.ca.

Apple Blossom, Moonlight Bay and 4th Floor:

Erika Gilbert ext. 6323 or Erika.gilbert@durham.ca.

The Tax Clinic will be held in April, and specific date and time will be shared after March 10.

Regular visiting hours at Hillsdale Estates



We do not have official visiting hours because this is a home, and you may visit when it is convenient for you. Visiting is most popular between 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., as we normally have reception and staff to assist you. When entering the home between 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., you just need to enter the door code at the main entrance.

If you are visiting the home after 8 p.m., you will need to use the call bell or the phone in the main entrance vestibule to contact Nursing, who can then open the door for you; or directly call the Nursing station and a nurse will come down to the front entrance to let you in.

Visiting after 10 p.m.:

Please note that we have a significant reduction of staff by 10:30 p.m., so if you are planning to be in the building after 10 p.m., we ask that you clear this with a senior manager so we can plan your visit accordingly, unless you are visiting a resident who is at end of life.

Whenever you are leaving the home, the exit code on the keypad to the left of the main entrance door will work to allow you to exit.

If you have any questions, please connect with us directly.

Attending Physician Blueberry Hill

Effective March 1, Dr. Ripple Dhillon, Medical Director, will take over care for residents residing on Blueberry Hill.

Daylight Saving Time

March brings with it the promise of gardening and warmer sunny days, as the earth turns its frostbitten cheek to winter and springs forth from the vernal equinox. March is the first month of spring, which begins on March 20.



Don't forget to "spring forward" and set your clocks one hour ahead on March 9, as it is the start of Daylight-Saving Time, which begins at 2 a.m.

Fun facts

April showers bring May flowers (proverb). This rhyme was originally a short poem and has meaning behind the words, as well. "April showers bring May flowers" is a reminder that even the most unpleasant of things (in this case, the heavy rains of April) can bring about very enjoyable things, such as an abundance of flowers in May.

St. Patrick's Day

March 17 is St. Patrick's Day! According to folklore, folks wear a shamrock on St. Patrick's Day because the saint used its three leaves to explain the Holy Trinity. Please keep watch on the calendar for upcoming recreation events.



Electronic greeting cards

This is a reminder that family and friends can still send electronic greeting cards to their loved ones in any of the Region's long-term care homes. To send an e-card, visit durham.ca/LTC and click on the Long-Term Care Homes tab on the left side. Then:

1. Click "Send a greeting card to your loved one in long-term care."
2. Fill out the resident's information.
3. Select the type of greeting.
4. Send message.

Messages will be printed and delivered to residents during the week. Senders should consider these messages like an electronic postcard, as the contents of the greeting will not be private.

The Regional Municipality of Durham
Social Services Department
Long-Term Care and Services for Seniors Division

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