

New Directions

Winter 2020

GUELPH
Independent LIVING

Quarterly Agency Newsletter

www.guelphindependentliving.org



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Mark it in Your Calendar!

Saturday May 16

On Golden Pond

Hamilton Family Theatre, Cambridge

Thursday June 11

St. Jacobs Market

St. Jacobs

Thursday July 9

Annual Agency Picnic

Riverside Park, Large Shelter, Guelph

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK...

Welcome to 2020!!

Hope everyone was able to enjoy time with loved ones over the holiday season. A heartfelt *'thank-you'* to all GIL employees who worked over Christmas and New Years to assist clients with their daily routines.

Since our last newsletter, there have been many developments within the health care system. In November, the Ministry of Health began to announce the first Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) as part of the Ontario government's plan to build a connected health care system centred on patients, families and caregivers. OHTs are being introduced to provide a new way of organizing and delivering care that is more connected to patients in their local communities. Within OHTs, health care providers (including hospitals, primary care, and home & community care providers) will work as one coordinated team; no matter where they provide care. Please see details later in the newsletter regarding the announcement for the Guelph and Area team.

At a province-level, Ontario Health announced the move to cluster the 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) into five (5) interim and transitional geographic regions in December. This change is a means of streamlining the regional oversight as an interim measure as the government continues to work toward moving home and community care supports out of bureaucracy to integrate them with Ontario Health Teams. Further, there will be no impact to patients' access to home and community care or long-term care placement as Ontarians continue to receive the care they need from the care providers they have built relationships with.

As part of this next step to cluster the LHINs, the number of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) positions has been reduced to five to ensure alignment and

to eliminate duplication of roles and responsibilities. These five CEOs will serve as interim regional leads with responsibility to support the work required to transition LHIN functions into Ontario Health or to Ontario Health Teams, and to ensure patient services continue uninterrupted. The CEO for Ontario Health West encompassing the geography from Guelph to Windsor is Bruce Lauckner, the former CEO of the Waterloo Wellington LHIN.

The Board of Directors at Ontario Health hired Matthew Anderson as their new President and CEO, effective February 1, 2020. Bringing extensive team-building, system change and health care experience to Ontario Health, Mr. Anderson will play a key role in helping to transform Ontario's public health-care system as Ontario Health continues to support the government's priority of ending hallway health care.

One of the next steps for Ontario Health is to recruit Patient & Family Advisory Council (PFAC) members. These members will be collaborative individuals with lived experience as a patient or caregiver in the health care system and with knowledge of government decision-making processes, health system priorities and patient and family engagement best practices.

And at GIL, our partnership with Bishop Macdonell's Co-operative Education program concluded at Willow Place. These enthusiastic students worked diligently from September to January to complete many projects including three unit turnovers, bathroom and kitchen renovations in the staff office, replacing LED bulbs in the common areas, painting touch-ups and wall repairs. The tenants and employees are appreciative of all their hard work. Check out the photos later in the newsletter.

Janet

GIL BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

GIL Board of Directors met on November 26, 2019 and January 28, 2020; highlights include:

- Approval of Health and Housing financial statements through December 2019;
- Approval of the following for Housing portfolio (238 Willow): contracts for cleaning, stairwell refurbishment, flooring and elevator maintenance, 2020-21 DRAFT budget, 2020-25 5-year Capital Plan, and market rent increase of 2.2% effective April 1, 2020;
- Presentation and tour from Dale Thomas, Bishop Macdonell teacher, highlighting the projects completed at Willow Place by the Co-operative Education renovation class;
- Approval of Conflict and Complaint Resolution policies for operational and board levels;
- Membership for Governance, Performance and Property committees; and,
- Executive Director's report which included updates on employee training, implementation of a client database and scheduling tool, participation in stakeholder meetings, computer upgrades, and changes in Administration team.

DISCOUNTED GUELPH STORM TICKETS

GIL is selling tickets for the following games in the 2019-2020 Guelph Storm season:

Friday March 13 vs Windsor, 7:30pm

Sunday March 15 vs London, 2:00pm

Friday March 20 vs Sarnia, 7:30pm

Ticket prices are \$15 (Regularly \$29)

Cash sales only. Accessible seating tickets are available.

Tickets should be purchased 2 weeks prior to game to ensure availability.

Contact Rowena at (519) 836-1812 ext. 249 to purchase tickets.



GIL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS!

Employees and clients participated in a number of festive celebrations including:

- Agency/Client Christmas party at the Elliott on December 12th complete with a delicious turkey lunch, penny table of treasures, and entertainment by the Royal City Ukulele Ensemble;
- Potluck meals at various program meetings; and,
- Team donations to Adopt-a-Family.



CHANGES TO GUELPH TRANSIT

On January 17, 2020 Guelph Transit launched its new **OnYourWay** fare card which features a reloadable ‘tap and go’ fare for ensuring faster, easier and more secure bus transportation around the city.

The *OnYourWay* card replaces the use of paper tickets, monthly passes and cash; although, cash payment will continue to be an option for customers. As a result, Guelph Transit will begin to phase out traditional monthly passes and tickets.

Beginning February 21, adult fare cards can be purchased at Guelph Public Library branches, the Guelph Museum and select authorized retailers. Adult and Reduced fare cards can be reloaded at any City facility or select retailers.

Please keep in mind, if you are buying a reduced fare card (Youth, Senior or Affordable Bus Pass), the first

card must be purchased at a City facility including ServiceGuelph at City Hall, Guelph Transit, Evergreen Seniors Community Centre, West End Community Centre or Victoria Road Recreation Centre.

When purchasing your new card, make sure to specify the correct fare category to the person assisting you.

For more information, please visit: guelph.ca



GUELPH RANKED TOP CITY TO LIVE

Reader’s Digest ranked 43 Canadian cities with populations over 80, 000, based on family friendliness. Guelph ranked the third best city in Canada to raise a family and the top 2 places were Sherbrooke, Que, and Ottawa-Gatineau.

Information was gathered from Statistics Canada Childcare Resource and Research Unit, city workers, city websites, municipalities and meetup.com. Transit, median age, daycare, cost of food, mom groups, intimate-partner violence, child and youth victims of crime and libraries were used as indicators.

“Numerous mom groups, easy access to public transit, and among the lowest food costs in the country,” put Guelph at number 3 says Reader’s Digest.

The top 10 cities were:

1. Sherbrooke
2. Ottawa-Gatineau
3. Guelph
4. Windsor
5. Calgary
6. Montreal
7. Vancouver
8. Toronto
9. Hamilton
10. Peterborough



WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE HEALTH & SAFETY

Support Hose (i.e. Compression Stockings)

A reminder to all clients who use or may be prescribed support hose that the risk of injury is high for both client and workers when support hose are not custom measured and/ or used incorrectly. GIL workers are not able to assist with over-the-counter support hose products which have not been properly assessed, measured, and approved by your doctor or Health Care Professional (HCP).

Once clients have been prescribed and properly sized for support hose, training for workers can be arranged with an HCP (Health Care Professional) to ensure they do not cause injury to clients or themselves.

Please contact your Program Coordinator with any questions.

Glove Use

Workers have been reminded that 'double gloving' (i.e. wearing two vinyl gloves on one hand) is not

recommended when assisting clients with personal support tasks. This practice is actually less effective than wearing one glove per hand. 'Double gloving' causes the glove material to break down more easily due to stretching and the wearer's sweat as well as decreasing the overall sensation needed to accurately perform tasks.

Wearing one glove per hand per task and Routine Practices provide optimal protection. Routine Practices include washing one's hands after removing gloves or use hand sanitizer (if liquid soap and paper towels are not available).

To assist workers in providing the best care possible to you, GIL asks that you provide vinyl gloves, liquid soap and paper towels at all times. Vinyl gloves are available for purchase through GIL at a cost of \$18.00 per box of 300.



FALLS PREVENTION

Part of delivering quality support services is to identify client risk and provide recommendations and/or implement changes to mitigate those risks. Falls are a significant risk to health of GIL clients. By tracking incidents of falls, GIL can identify root cause, provide supports, referrals and/ or educational resources to clients to help increase awareness and maintain independence.

GIL is pleased to report another **decrease in reported client falls in 2019** compared to 2017 and 2018. Falls reported occurred across all programs, involving 11 different individuals (there were 15 clients last year). Approximately 25% of this year's falls resulted in clients needing medical attention; with two involving a broken bone and/or hospitalization. The root causes were identified as unsuccessful independent/unsupervised transfers, loss of balance, tripping hazards and equipment failure.

Although GIL recognizes our clients' right to live with risk; we wish everyone to remain healthy and safe

in their homes; so once again we remind clients to please:

- Contact employees for assistance with transfers if possible or wait until someone is present;
- Use accessibility equipment as required or work with your Occupational Therapist when changes to equipment is identified;
- Remove all tripping hazards and clutter within your home;
- Always move in a forward direction to ensure good sightlines;
- Use a personal alarm device (e.g. Lifeline) so help can be summoned quickly should an accident occur; and,
- Scan the environment when you are moving about in your home or the community.

GIL will continue to track incidents to determine when additional supports or strategies can be implemented to keep everyone safe!

DENTAL CARE FOR ELIGIBLE SENIORS

The Ontario government is investing approximately \$90 million annually for the new Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program (OSDCP), which will provide free routine dental care for eligible low-income seniors across the province.

It is reported that preventable dental issues, such as gum disease, infections and chronic pain lead to more than 60,000 emergency department visits, mainly by senior patients. By implementing this program, the government expects to reduce the number of emergency dental department visits; one strategy in the goal to end hallway health care in Ontario.

Ontarians qualifying for the program must be aged 65 and over with an income of \$19,300 or less, or

couples with a combined annual income of \$32,300 or less, who do not have dental benefits. Eligible seniors can apply online or by picking up a paper application form at a local public health unit.

The new user-friendly web portal can be found at: ontario.ca/SeniorsDental

"The well-being of all Ontario's seniors is a top priority for this government", said Minister Cho. "This new dental care program will help eligible seniors receive the quality dental care they deserve. By keeping seniors healthy, we can also help avoid emergency visits to the hospital, prevent chronic diseases, and increase quality of life for seniors across the province".

The full article can be accessed at: news.ontario.ca

ASSISTANCE WITH MEDICATIONS

Since the inception of Guelph Independent Living's medication policy, we continue to track all reported incidents of medication errors to see where improvements to procedures and education can be made. Reported errors are categorized into those made by clients, employees and/or Regulated Health Care Professionals (RHCPs) like doctors, Pharmacies and hospitals.

GIL is pleased to report there was further reduction in 2019 in the number of reported errors, as there was in 2018 over 2017. Of these incidents, the following details were noted:

1. Root cause of errors was related to employees two-thirds of the time
2. Pharmacies made up almost 20% of the reported errors
3. No incidents occurred where a client required further/ immediate medical attention
4. Incidents were across all programs

Employee errors were related to medication:

- not assisted with at scheduled time/day;
- left behind in blister pack or
- given but not signed for.

Client errors included:

- not being home for scheduled bookings/ assistance;
- not picking up medications from Pharmacy (blister pack ran out) or
- medication dropped on floor and not retrieved.

RHCP errors included:

- unsuccessful Pharmacy deliveries;
- medications not poured correctly in blister pack or
- blister packs not dated correctly/ overlapping dates.

Ongoing employee training is one mechanism to ensure accurate assistance with medications. In November, all front-line employees refreshed their knowledge by completing the online training module and testing on GIL's policy. GIL will continue to provide education and monitor instances with the goal to eliminate/ minimize employee errors.

If you have any additional questions or concerns about how GIL assists with your medications, please contact your Program Coordinator.



CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION PROJECTS

In addition to their classroom instruction while onsite weekday mornings at Willow Place from September 2019 to January 2020, this eager group of 14 co-op students from Bishop Macdonell and their teacher, Dale Thomas, completed the following projects:

- Replaced all the florescent lighting in common areas with LED bulbs
- Completed repairs and painting in three unit turnovers
- Repainted all the exterior doors and railings
- Repainted all the curbs and curb-cuts
- Repaired walls and touched up paint in the

building hallways

- Renovated the GIL staff office kitchen and bathroom
- Painted the GIL staff office and two bathrooms adjacent to the Activity room
- Repaired/ built kitchen and storage cupboards as assigned by the Superintendent

On their last day, GIL Attendants and several tenants gathered in the Activity Room to express their thanks and gratitude to the students for all their hard work. Check out the cake made by Sherry, one of the Willow tenants!



CLIENT MEMORIALS



Ruby Carmichael was a client of the Guelph Independent Living (GIL) Outreach program for a very short time; she passed away on November 19, 2019 at the age of 97.

Ruby was a lifetime member of the IODE, a national women's charitable organization who working together in local chapters to improve the quality of life for those in need.

Ruby was also involved with the Owen Sound Kiwanis Music Festival and volunteered at various activities including Meals on Wheels and other services supporting shut-ins. She enjoyed playing cards, knitting and sewing.

Thank you to Ruby for allowing GIL the privilege of supporting her during her final weeks.



Reba Castillo was a client of the Guelph Independent Living (GIL) Seniors Assisted Living program for 10 years; she passed away on January 29, 2020 at the age of 73.

She was born in Cape Breton and trained as a Registered Nurse before moving to Ontario. Once her family settled in Guelph, she worked at Guelph General Hospital and LaPointe Fischer for many years.

Reba loved to spend time with her family and friends, including her four precious grandchildren. Her hobbies included watching sci-fi movies and hockey on television, always cheering for the Toronto Maple Leafs. She was also an animal lover; especially fond of her last dog, Shadow.

Thank you to Reba for sharing her feisty personality and kind heart with all who knew her at GIL.

ADAPTIVE CLOTHING EMPOWERS PEOPLE

When fashion designer Mindy Scheier's eight year old child, Oliver, came home one day and told her he wanted to wear jeans like everyone else, she realized he was more like her than she thought - he too cared about fashion.

Born with a rare form of Muscular Dystrophy, Oliver struggles with everyday tasks, such as dressing himself, resulting in sweatpants and t-shirts being his go-to outfit. His request to wear jeans meant a new challenge but Mindy wanted him to fit in and wear what all his friends were wearing. She stayed up all night modifying a pair of jeans to meet his needs. She removed the zipper and fastened an elastic closure with a rubber band; a common trick among pregnant women who need a little more space. She cut the side seams of the jeans and added peel-and-stick Velcro to allow them to close over his leg braces. When Oliver put on her creation the next day, he beamed and held his head high. The jeans gave him a new confidence and sheer joy from being able to wear what the other kids were wearing.

This was Mindy's first introduction to the world of adaptive fashion, clothing created or modified to fit people with disabilities or seniors. Although adapt-

ive clothing was available, it was very functional and medicinal; it was missing a mainstream fashion component. Mindy stated *"What you wear matters, clothing can affect your health and self-esteem"* and set out to problem solve clothing design. She remembers Oliver saying he often felt like he was dressing *"disabled"*. This opened her eyes to a bigger issue; realizing that millions of other people in the same situation were also struggling to find clothes they wanted.

In 2013, *Runway of Dreams Foundation* was launched, with the goal to make clothing more accessible and fashionable for people with disabilities, a group that make up 15% of the global population.

Mindy conducted extensive research for possible modifications including alternate closures such as magnets, adjustability of waistbands; an internal hemming system for pant and sleeve lengths; and alternative ways to get in and out of clothing. Once she had prototypes developed, she hit the fashion big leagues.

Runway of Dreams partnered with a major fashion brand, launching the first mainstream adaptive collection and making fashion history.



UPDATES ON ONTARIO HEALTH TEAMS



On November 29, 2019 around 70 people packed into the emergency medical services building on Claire Road to hear the Honourable Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, announce that the Guelph and Area Ontario Health Team (OHT) would be among the first 24 teams in the province. Local health care leaders like Ross Kirkconnell, CEO of Guelph Family Health team, and Marianne Walker, CEO of Guelph General, called it a “*significant day for health care.*”

The Guelph and Area team is made up of many health and social service organizations, at different levels of “*partnership.*” The “*core partners*” include Guelph General Hospital, the Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington, Traverse Independence, and the Guelph Family Health Team; while the Alzheimers Society, Guelph Independent Living, and Guelph Wellington Paramedic Services are examples of “*community partners.*”

While the province has told health care providers where they want the system to be, they’re not telling them how to get there. It’ll be up to the teams to identify what’s important to the local community; there will be different issues for each team. In Guelph and Area, palliative care and mental health & addictions have been identified as key issues.

Partners of the Guelph and Area OHT are thrilled to have the opportunity to lead this transformation and to continue to work together to dramatically improve how residents experience and benefit from our local health care system.

The initial transformation work is grounded in “*Integrated Primary Care Teams*” (IPCTs) which when fully developed will deliver all primary care to patients (in-home and in-office). Providers on each IPCT will share a coordinated care plan and use digital health tools to deliver care and communicate with their

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patients and each other. Each patient will have a trusted “go-to” person on their IPCT to help manage and coordinate their care. As needs change, providers with the required skills and expertise will be invited to join the patient’s care team, ensuring the patient gets the care they need in the most coordinated and timely manner.

A number of working groups have been developed each focusing on a specific area. The groups include:

- Communications
- Digital health
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Privacy
- Quality Improvement
- Patient Partnership & Community Engagement.

Additional details can be found at: <https://guelphandareaohrt.com/who-we-are/>

PROGRESS UPDATE ON ACCESSIBILITY

The province of Ontario continues to work toward an inclusive and barrier-free society where everyone can fully participate in their community.

Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility, announced *Advancing Accessibility In Ontario*, a cross-government framework that will help focus the province’s work in four key areas. Recommendations for the framework were made by Honourable David C. Onley in his review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), as well as input from key partners, organizations and persons with disabilities.

The four key areas are:

- breaking down barriers in the built environment;
- government leading by example in its role as a policy maker, service provider and employer;
- increasing economic participation; and,
- improving understanding and awareness about accessibility.

The first area in *Advancing Accessibility in Ontario* shows how government is working with partner ministries and businesses to reduce barriers and improve accessibility in the built environment and housing.

For example, the Ontario Building Officials Association is receiving funding from the government’s Enabling Change Program to enhance its curriculum and training about accessibility. By making building officials more aware of the challenges persons with disabilities face in accessing buildings and training about where improvements can be made, new (and existing) buildings can be designed and built to be more accessible.

“We know that making Ontario accessible is a journey that cannot be completed overnight or alone. The Advancing Accessibility in Ontario framework will support our work with all of our partners across government and beyond to remove barriers for people with disabilities,” said Minister Cho. *“Our government created a dedicated Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility because we are working towards a more accessible and inclusive province today and for future generations.”*

The full article can be accessed at:

<https://news.ontario.ca>



MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN DYING

Further to the Summer 2019 New Directions article, there are changes being proposed by the federal government to Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) legislation.

The current legislation, passed in June 2016, sets out eligibility criteria for those who wish to apply for MAiD; specifically that competent adults suffering intolerably, from grievous and irremediable medical conditions, have the right to end their life with medical assistance provided by a Physician or Nurse Practitioner. It also sets out safeguards that doctors and nurse practitioners must follow when deciding if a patient qualifies for MAiD, in particular to make sure that the person requesting MAiD is fully informed and has given their consent freely.

Evolution of MAiD in Canada

During the development and implementation of MAiD in 2016, many Canadians voiced their support for broader access. As a result, the Government of Canada committed to study a wider variety of medical circumstances where a person may want to access MAiD by 2021. In preparation, the Government asked the Council of Canadian Academies to study three complex issues including requests for MAiD by mature minors, advance requests, and requests for people where mental illness is the only reason for requesting MAiD.

Additionally, an online questionnaire was offered to Canadians in January 2020 to allow the opportunity for people to share their views with the Government of Canada on this deeply personal and very important issue. The over 300,000 responses will help inform the Government's next steps in responding to recent court rulings regarding the medical assistance in dying framework. A summary report on the results of the public consultations will be made avail-

able once the received feedback has been analyzed.

Context and objectives of the questionnaire

The basis for the questionnaire stems from a Superior Court of Québec decision (*Truchon v. Attorney General of Canada*) in September 2019 which found that it was unconstitutional to limit access to MAiD to people nearing the end of life. The case was brought by two persons living with disabilities, Mr. Truchon, who has lived with cerebral palsy since birth, and Ms. Gladu, who has lived with paralysis and severe scoliosis as a result of poliomyelitis. Practitioners who assessed these two individuals were of the view that they met all eligibility criteria for MAiD, with the exception of nearing the end of life. The Court declared the “reasonable foreseeability of natural death” criterion in the federal *Criminal Code*, as well as the “end-of-life” criterion in Quebec’s provincial law on medical assistance in dying, to be unconstitutional.

While this ruling only applies in the province of Quebec, the Government of Canada has accepted the ruling and has committed to changing the MAiD law for the whole country. The Court’s ruling will come into effect on March 11, 2020, unless an extension is granted by the Court.

Since MAiD has been legalized, more than 7,000 Canadians who were suffering unbearably have chosen to die peacefully with the help of a physician or nurse practitioner. Our health care system has become more familiar and comfortable with providing MAiD, and Canadians have also learned a lot about circumstances where MAiD is not allowed.

As the Government of Canada prepares to launch the full review of the MAiD law this summer, they are moving quickly to help inform their response to the recent Quebec court ruling. Updating Canada’s MAiD

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law will expand eligibility for MAiD beyond people who are nearing the end of life, and could possibly result in other changes once the review is complete.

GIL continues to welcome any client feedback about MAiD legislation as it relates to service delivery. Please contact your Program Coordinator or Janet

Redman, Executive Director, for more information.

Please see the following link for more information: <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cons/ad-am/index.html>

HOLIDAY CHEER BROUGHT TO SENIORS

While Kayla McQueen visited her grandmother at Riverside Glen, an assisted living facility in Guelph, she noticed some residents didn't receive any visitors. Concerned that many were without company, especially around the Christmas season, Kayla turned to social media and began posting comments on Facebook. Quickly afterwards, she began brainstorming with Kyla Rowntree and Sabrina Thompson, who had voiced similar concerns. The result was "Adopt-A-Senior" a gift-giving program that ensures local seniors receive "something special from someone who cares," said Thompson.

Last November, the founding trio invited residents of Guelph's retirement homes to anonymously submit wish lists and used social media to call upon potential donors, who were then assigned a senior to shop for. The city's fire department invited donors to drop off gifts at the fire station where volunteers assisted in wrapping them. Riverside Glen offered space to store many gifts; covering the floors of two empty

apartments! The wish list items included everything from vintage games, sweets and Johnny Cash calendars to warm socks and toiletries.

"We thought if we get 50 donations, we'll be happy. Then it got to 80. All of a sudden, we had 250 gifts," says Rowntree. A local high school football team was recruited to help distribute the bounty. *"For us, the biggest reward was being able to make the seniors feel special,"* McQueen says. *"There's no reason one person should wake up on a big holiday and feel lonely. That's not acceptable,"* stated Rowntree.



"Adopt-A-Senior" has caught the attention of many Ontario communities with people reaching out for advice on launching their own gift-giving programs. In the meantime, the trio is staying focused on the Guelph community, where their goal and mission remains the same.

The full article can be found at: <https://www.press-reader.com/canada/readers-digest-canada/text-view>

2020 LEISURE EVENTS

Date	Event
Saturday May 16	On Golden Pond Hamilton Family Theatre Cambridge
Thursday June 11	St. Jacob's Market Shopping for local foods
Thursday July 9	Agency Picnic Riverside Park, Large Shelter
August Date to be determined	Grand River Boat Cruise Caledonia
Thursday September 3	St. Jacob's Market Shopping for local foods
Monday September 21	Grand River Raceway Elora
Thursday November 19	Conestoga Mall Shopping Waterloo

*Additional details, including times and pricing, will be available soon. Please watch for details.
Contact **Kathleen** at **519-836-1812 x220** with any questions or to pre-register for an event.*

