

# New Directions

**FALL 2019**

GUELPH  
Independent **LIVING**

Quarterly Agency Newsletter

[www.guelphindependentliving.org](http://www.guelphindependentliving.org)



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Please join us on  
**Thursday December 12** for the  
GIL Christmas Turkey Luncheon  
12-3pm at the Elliott Community.



On **December 3**  
celebrate  
*"The Future is Accessible"*  
in recognition of  
**International Day of  
Persons with Disabilities**

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK ...

It has been a busy few months at Guelph Independent Living with:

The ongoing process of recruitment wherein GIL has been fortunate over the past year to hire many talented and compassionate workers to compliment the great employees we already have. Challenges in hiring continue across the province with community agencies like GIL experiencing the shortage of consistent, reliable employees to provide client care. Please know we continue to brainstorm new ideas to ensure our clients receive high quality care which enables them to remain at home, maintain their independence, health and wellbeing.

A partnership with the Wellington Catholic District School Board and Sutcliffe Homes, a local contractor, to offer a setting (Willow Place) for hands-on learning for Co-operative Education students interested in the construction industry. Look for details later in the newsletter about the projects these eager young people have been working on.

The participation in discussions with other agencies regarding the development of Ontario Health Team within the ongoing health system transformation. As part of the Ontario Association of Independent Living Service Providers, I participated in a morning teleconference where we shared information about our individual roles in the development of Ontario Health Teams across the province. GIL is a collaborative partner in the Guelph and Area team, whereas other providers may be core partners and/ or part of multiple teams. Additionally, we discussed our efforts to ensure that the Independent Living philosophy and services for adults with physical disabilities are top-of-mind during the health system transformation. The Guelph and Area team was chosen as

one of the first 31 areas to submit a full application which was due to the Ministry of Health by October 9, 2019. Next steps in the province's plan will be announced later this year.

Finally, I was able to attend two conferences which support the agency's work:

- Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA) whose theme was *Community Connect 2019!* Gathering with like-minded community support agencies provided a great opportunity to hear about what others are doing across the province. Session topics included collaboration, navigating change, improving health and safety, cybersecurity, and equitable service delivery for adults with physical disabilities. The Honorable Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and, Susan Fitzpatrick, interim CEO of Ontario Health, spoke to the group about the ongoing transformation of the provincial health system.
- Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association (ONPHA) conference titled *Owing Our Future!* Social housing providers and Board members from across Ontario joined together in Toronto to learn and share ideas about how to increase the rental housing stock, navigate end of mortgages, legislative changes, partnerships, and funding opportunities.

With snow flurries in the air this week and the holiday schedules posted, our thoughts turn to the upcoming festive season. We hope to see you at the GIL Christmas party on December 12.

Janet

## GIL BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The GIL Board of Directors held their first meeting of 2019-2020 on September 24, 2019; highlights include:

- Welcoming four new Board members: Leslie Eckel, Kala Flannery, Pamela Polfuss-Schmidt and Lindsay Sieben;
- Information from Ross Kirkconnell, Executive Director of the Guelph Family Health Team, about the Ontario Health Team application of Guelph and Area;
- Approval of Health and Housing financial statements through August 2019;
- Approval for renovations to the Willow Place staff office kitchen and bathroom;
- Updates about the student research project for GIL through the University of Guelph Business program; and,
- Executive Director's report with updates on upcoming employee training, summer student activities, implementation of a client database and scheduling tool, and participation in various stakeholder meetings.

## CLIENT REMINDER

If you need to cancel a booking, please call your Program Coordinator with as much advanced notice as possible so the agency can plan accordingly. Sometimes this means that another client's services may not need to be cancelled, rescheduled or reduced.

*Thank you*

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES - DECEMBER 3

*"I'm officially disabled, but I'm truly enabled because of my lack of limbs. My unique challenges have opened up unique opportunities to reach so many in need." – Nick Vujicic*



# MEET THE BOARD - LINDSAY SIEBEN

Lindsay moved to Guelph two years ago and almost instantly the community felt like home. She wanted to give back to the community and found the GIL Board of Director posting through Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association, an organization she belongs to through work.

Working in the public sector for almost 20 years, Lindsay currently works for Peel Living supporting the Board of Directors. Her knowledge of processes supporting business from the Director's perspective and experience in non-profit housing will be an asset. Having the pleasure of working in six different departments, she says she feels most at home in housing. Housing is so vitally important to an individual, while being a serious challenge to our society due to affordability. She enjoys working in a field that, although challenging, has huge rewards.

Professionally, Lindsay is most proud of seizing opportunities and taking chances. Her experiences have allowed her to learn a great deal from many perspectives and she finds the best teams are made up of diverse skills and beliefs, allowing for creative solutions.



Lindsay feels her greatest accomplishment to-date is her family. She and her husband are proud parents of a four year old son, two year old daughter and a beagle, Penny, who they rescued earlier this year. Lindsay enjoys trying new things with hobbies including choir, tap dancing, knitting and yoga.

# MEET THE BOARD - PAM POLFUSS-SCHMIDT

Working with GIL for much of her career, Pam stated it is with absolute pleasure to give back to the organization where she worked for over 20 years. Joining the GIL Board provides Pam an opportunity to reconnect with clients and employees, and be involved as the organization moves forward.

Pam's work as a front-line Attendant provided her with a thorough understanding of the essential services they provide. Additionally, her experience from an Administrative, Management and Human Resources perspective, including fiscal management, legislation and strategic planning will be an asset to the Board position. Knowledge of the Willow building, along with recent experience working in energy conservation, will be beneficial when considering the housing portfolio.

Pam identifies her family as her greatest accomplishment; both two and four legged members! Pam and her husband have two wonderful young adult children (Tanya and Terry) who continue to inspire them every day. And this year they raised a litter of eight Blue Picardy Spaniel puppies that have gone to live with loving and adoring families across Canada, the United States and even Mexico!



Outside of work, Pam enjoys gardening, walking/hiking, following fastball and OHL hockey, raising and training their pack (especially in agility) and most recently she has started practicing mindfulness.

# ONTARIO INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SAFETY (ICS) TRAINING

One strategy initiative in the health system is to improve population health for the self-identified Indigenous residents throughout Ontario. The first step in providing a safe cultural experience for these individuals is to ensure that those providing care have strong cultural awareness and are informed on relationship building.



Ontario Core ICS Health training offered through the Ontario Indigenous Cultural Safety Program is designed to raise awareness of anti-Indigenous racial discrimination and bias which have profound negative impacts on the health and wellness of Indigenous communities. The program is part of the overall

health system transformation underway in Ontario with a goal of improving healthcare experiences and outcomes through increasing respect and understanding of the unique history and current realities of Indigenous populations.

A number of GIL's management team completed this training through funded spaces offered by the WWLHIN. Online discussions between peers and the facilitator, interactive activities and videos provided rich learning opportunities to expand and share information, with the goal to create organizational change and improve health service delivery to Indigenous populations.

## DISCOUNTED GUELPH STORM TICKETS

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

**Friday January 3 vs Peterborough, 7:30pm**

**Sunday February 23 vs Niagara, 2:00pm**

**Friday March 6 vs Oshawa, 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.



## LEISURE EVENT UPDATE

Please note the date has changed for the Conestoga Mall Christmas shopping and Gift of Lights leisure event to **Wednesday November 27**. Contact Kathleen at 519-836-1812 ext 220 with any questions.

## UNITED WAY FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN



We are pleased to announce GIL has raised \$1366 to-date for our 2019 United Way fundraising campaign. Our goal is \$2000.

We kicked off the campaign with a Halloween party and Bake Sale. Many thanks to all in attendance who enjoyed a pasta meal and purchased some home baked treats. A total of \$626 was raised at this event.

Our annual Employee Raffle raised \$480 and ongoing payroll deductions another \$260. Funding from the United Way supports GIL's Recreation and Inclusion program.



**United Way**  
Guelph Wellington  
Dufferin

## SOCIAL PROGRAM AT McDONALD'S

Jennifer Antolin and her husband, Trevor Westerhoff, own four McDonald's in Guelph. After the success of other social events such as Family Nights and Coffee with a Cop, they created an ongoing event geared toward seniors.

The idea was suggested by a customer who felt seniors might enjoy an event using art as an ice breaker. Antolin hosted the first Senior Social event this spring which included crafts, socializing, fresh pastries and coffee, tea or a cold beverage. It went so well, Antolin decided to host the event on an ongoing basis at the McDonalds on Stone Road W.

*"We're always looking for new ways to contribute and give back to our community because everyone has been very gracious and welcoming,"* says Antolin who

moved to Guelph with her husband three years ago.

She says the event is something that they have never tried before and it seemed to resonate with the crowd; while it's geared toward seniors, everyone is welcome.

Her employees are very guest-focused and the younger generation have a real passion to make a difference in the world. *"It really has given my team a lot more pride and value in what they're doing because it's not just 'I work at McDonald's' you know, it's 'I work at Jennifer and Trevor's McDonald's and we really are trying to give back to the community.'"* says Antolin.

For more information call (519) 763-8842.

## CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

Guelph Independent Living is pleased to announce a partnership with the Wellington Catholic District School Board and Sutcliffe Homes Inc to renovate the staff office bathroom and kitchen at Willow Place, plus additional work within the building.

Since September 23, sixteen (16) students from Bishop Macdonell High School and their teacher, Dale Thomas, have been on-site weekdays at 238 Willow Road from 7:30-11:30 am as part of the school board's Co-operative Education program.

The Co-op program provides students with the opportunity to work hands-on with skilled tradespersons; learning valuable skills in plumbing, electrical and carpentry. Construction in the staff office will take approximately 6-8 weeks to complete.

The students are also assisting with painting, unit turnover preparation, installation of new LED fluorescent lighting in common areas, and other general construction tasks. They will be on-site through the end of the semester in late January.



# WHY ACCESSIBILITY IS IMPORTANT



Engage with persons of all abilities



Understand equity, fairness, and diversity



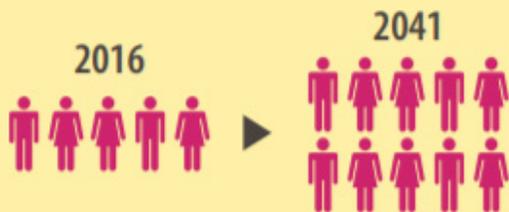
Advocate for inclusion in communities

## Why Is Accessibility Important?

**1.65 million**  
people in Ontario have a disability



### Changing Demographics



The number of seniors aged 65 and over is projected to more than double by 2041<sup>1</sup>

### Economic Benefits



**\$25 Billion**

Value of consumer spending base represented by persons with disabilities in Canada<sup>3</sup>

### Employer Benefits

Employers report performance rating of average or above average for



**90%** of employees with disabilities<sup>3</sup>

**86%** of employees with disabilities



have average or above average attendance records<sup>3</sup>

## SUPPORTING INCLUSIVE HIRING

In October 2019 Daisy Wai, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility, announced the Ontario government’s investment of \$100,000 in an inclusive hiring project with the Retail Council of Canada, through the EnAbling Change Program. The funding will support and promote accessible recruitment and retention in retail businesses and educate retailers on the economic advantages of hiring people with disabilities.

*“Our government knows the value of hiring people with disabilities, and the talent they bring to all workplaces,” said PA Wai. “This funding will go a long way in helping all retail businesses be more inclusive and accessible for everyone. It is especially exciting at this time, during National Disability Employment Awareness Month, to highlight the importance of hiring people with disabilities, which enables them to*

*reach their full potential, and helps businesses reach their economic goals.”*

The Retail Council is using the funding to:

- Create four webinars to promote the importance of hiring people with disabilities, including tips on how to make the hiring process more inclusive and to provide information on how to remove the stigma around mental health for employees and customers in retail stores.
- Develop a guidebook that helps retailers make their stores more accessible.

The full article can be found at:

<https://news.ontario.ca>

## FREE ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES ONLINE

The [“Accessibility in Ontario: Information for Businesses”](#) resource, a free online platform for businesses and communities, is now available to help businesses be more accessible and inclusive.

Here are some examples of what business owners and employers can find on this practical and easy-to-use web page:

- Tips on how to remove barriers for customers and employees.
- Information about programs and resources that help connect employers with the skilled yet underused talent pool of people with disabilities.
- Practical and simple tips to help make buildings, spaces and events more accessible.
- Testimonials of how businesses, big and small,

recognize the benefits of hiring people with disabilities

*“This is another example of the actions our government is taking to support people with disabilities to fully participate in their communities and the economy,” said Minister Cho. “It is especially important, during National Disability Employment Awareness Month, to promote these valuable resources that will help make it easier for businesses and communities to get useful information to be more accessible – in one convenient place online.”*

The full article can be found at:

<https://news.ontario.ca>

# MAKING EDUCATION MORE ACCESSIBLE

*“Students are our future, and every Ontario student deserves to learn and develop in an environment that is accessible and inclusive,” said Minister Cho. “Our government is making real changes that will help all students and their families today – and for future generations to come.”*

On September 30, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility, and Minister of Education announced key actions the government will take to help make schools more inclusive and accessible for everyone. These actions align with recommendations made by David Onley in his review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act earlier this year.

The following are some key actions the government has taken to improve accessibility:

- Updated elementary Health and Physical Education curriculum reflects the diversity of Ontario students of all abilities. Teachers are provided with sample prompts and examples to con-

sider when designing and engaging students in physical activities, which will help students of all abilities to take part.

- Providing \$1.4 billion in funding for the 2019-20 school year to help school boards provide safe and healthy learning environments for students, such as installing accessibility features like elevators and ramps.
- Clearer and more transparent processes for families requesting service animals accompany their children to school, no matter where they live in Ontario.
- Work by the Education Standards Development Committees to provide feedback and advice to government on how best to address barriers in education.

The full article can be found at:

<https://news.ontario.ca>

## ATTENDANT SERVICES DAY - OCTOBER 25



As part of Community Support Month, Attendant Services Day is celebrated. This day shows our appreciation for all the vital and important work our employees provide as Attendants in client homes and in the community. GIL's Management team delivered a small gift of reusable produce (fruits & vegetable) bags to all of our front-line workers to personally thank them for the quality care provided, every day, to our clients.

## PREVENTING CRIME, PROTECTING PEOPLE

Crime Prevention Week takes place each year during the first full week of November and is supported by the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, the Ministry of the Solicitor General and Police Services across the province. The week-long campaign reminds citizens about how they can help prevent crime, while also urging them to stay vigilant and cautious of fraud.

*“While the police work hard to prevent crime and protect the people of Ontario each and every day, crime prevention does not rest on their shoulders alone. Everyone has a role when it comes to community safety,”* said Sylvia Jones, Solicitor General. *“Crime Prevention Week provides an opportunity to increase awareness about how each of us can help prevent crime and keep ourselves and our communities safe.”*

With the recent increase in reports of telephone scams across the province, help protect yourself by:

- Taking strict measures to keep personal information confidential and never sharing details like credit card and bank account numbers, or any other payment information over the phone or text.

- Using caution when clicking on links from unknown senders sent to you via text or email.
- Having conversations with friends and family who are more vulnerable and more at risk to fraud, such as elderly adults or teens.
- Hanging up immediately if you receive a suspicious call and contacting police to report it. You may also contact the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre toll free at 1-888-495-8501.
- Not responding to text messages from incomplete cell phone numbers or without verifying who the sender is.
- Not calling a number texted to you from an unknown person.
- Using caution around free offers or notifications of winning a prize. If the offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

For more information visit:

<https://news.ontario.ca>



## GUELPH TRANSIT MOBILITY UPDATE

It is now easier and more convenient to book a trip on mobility buses. In addition to calling, you can schedule a pickup online or with the new app.

Booking online at <https://book.guelphmobilityplus.com/#/> is a flexible option as you can schedule your trip in advance or nearly on demand when it's most convenient for you 24 hours/seven days a week. Once registered, you can also confirm your booking, make a cancellation, and track the bus for its

estimated arrival time at your location.

Using the free Guelph Transit Mobility Bus app has the same benefits as booking online, but allows you the convenience of booking a trip through an app on your mobile phone. Download and install the app from App Store or Google Play.

For more information call:  
Guelph Transit Mobility Services  
519-822-1811 extension 2801

# HEALTH CARE TRANSFORMATION UPDATE

The Ontario government continues to transform the provincial health system through the development of local Ontario Health Teams (OHTs). The goal of these teams is to provide integrated care delivery by each area's health care providers (doctors, hospitals, home and community care, etc.) by working seamlessly to deliver care to patients, as they move through the health care system.

The Guelph and Area team was invited as one of the first 31 teams across the province to complete a full OHT application. Building on a strong history of collaboration and commitment to serve our communities, Guelph and Area OHT partners worked closely and intensively to inform and develop this proposal. In this work the team actively engaged patients, caregivers, front-line staff and community partners to set a direction that, we believe, will better serve people in the Guelph, East Wellington and Puslinch area.

This comprehensive proposal includes information about:

- area population;
- the proposed team;
- the commitment to transforming care;
- how we will work together;
- how we will learn and improve;
- the implementation plan and risk analysis; and



- year one focus areas on improving palliative care, mental health and addictions care and more integrated home care.

The application was submitted by the October 9, 2019 deadline. On November 1, four representatives from the Ministry of Health (MOH) met with the Core Partner Group. The purpose of the visit was to validate the Ministry's assessment of the Guelph and Area OHT application and to explore areas for clarification. It was also an opportunity for the MOH to engage in dialogue and learn what the team will need to be successful. Joining the conversation was the Board Chair of Guelph General, a physician from the Guelph Family Health Team and a community representative/ patient.

It is expected that the outcome of the evaluation and next steps will be known by the end of November. In the meantime, the Guelph and Area OHT continues to work diligently to advance their plans towards becoming a fully designated Ontario Health Team.

Need extra help with baking, decorating or wrapping gifts for the Christmas Holiday season? Please contact your Program Coordinator for details.





# Merry Christmas!

Join us to celebrate the Holiday Season  
with a Turkey Lunch!

<b>DATE:</b>	Thursday December 12
<b>TIME:</b>	12:00-3:00pm
<b>LOCATION:</b>	170 Metcalfe St The Elliott Community Room
<b>COST:</b>	\$5 for GIL clients; \$15 for guests

- Lunch will be served at 12:30pm

There will be live entertainment and a penny table for everyone's enjoyment!  
Additional raffle tickets will be available to purchase for specialty items.

Please RSVP to Kathleen by November 28  
519-836-1812 ext 220

# NOVEMBER IS FALLS PREVENTION MONTH

Falls are the main reason older adults lose their independence

Things you can do to prevent falls:

1. Exercise daily to build strength and improve balance.
2. Wear safe footwear.
3. Have regular eye check-ups.
4. Make your home safer by :
  - Removing clutter and tripping hazards.
  - Adding railings on all stairs and grab bars in the bathroom.
  - Having good lighting, particularly on stairs.
5. Talk to your healthcare provider to learn more about your risk.



Answer the statements on the following page to assess your risk.

Take this form to your healthcare provider to discuss your risk factors.

More information available from:

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (CDC) <http://www.cdc.gov/injury/>

Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/index-eng.php>



## HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

Please note the GIL Administration Office will be closed:

**Tuesday December 24 at noon through Thursday December 26,  
Tuesday December 31 at noon and Wednesday January 1**

# Am I at risk of falling?

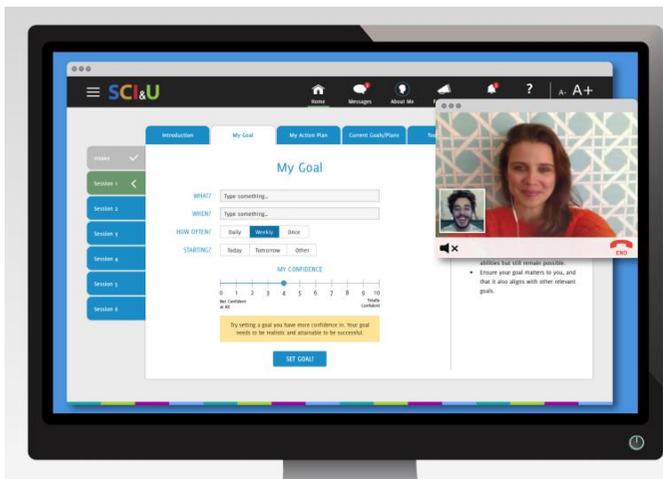
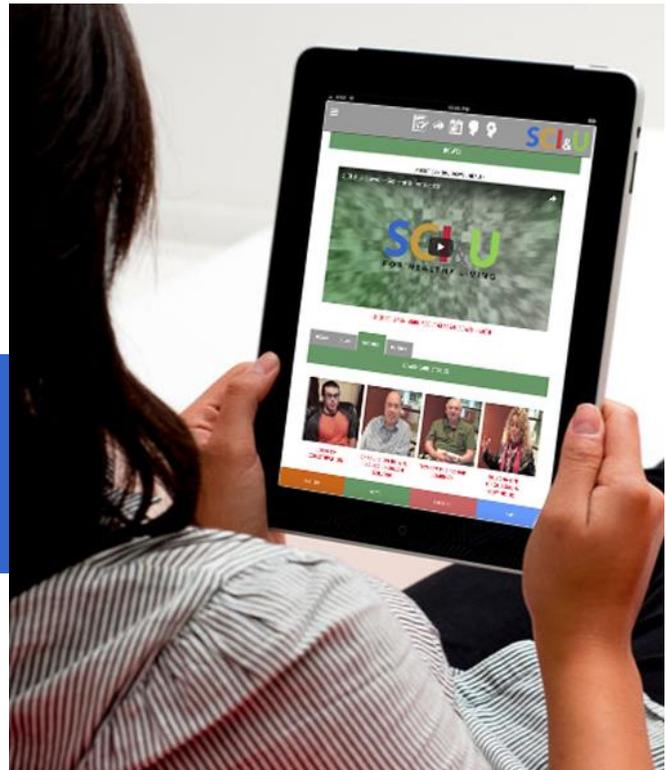
**Instructions:** Circle “YES” or “NO” for each statement below. Add up the total number of points for each “YES” answer in the box.

CIRCLE “YES” OR “NO”		HELPFUL TIPS
I have fallen in the past year.	YES 2 NO 0	Learn more about reducing your fall risk, as people who have fallen are more likely to fall again.
I use or have been advised to use a cane or walker to get around safely.	YES 2 NO 0	Talk with a physiotherapist about the most appropriate walking aid for your needs.
Sometimes I feel unsteady when I am walking.	YES 1 NO 0	Exercise to build strength and improve your balance.
I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home.	YES 1 NO 0	Do balance exercises every day. Remove hazards at home that might cause a trip or slip.
I am worried about falling.	YES 1 NO 0	Knowing how to prevent a fall can reduce fear and promote active living.
I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair.	YES 1 NO 0	Strengthening your muscles can reduce your risk of falling and being injured.
I have some trouble stepping up onto a curb.	YES 1 NO 0	Daily exercise can help improve your strength and balance.
I often have to rush to the toilet.	YES 1 NO 0	Talk with your doctor or healthcare provider about treatment options.
I have lost some feeling in my feet.	YES 1 NO 0	Talk with your doctor or podiatrist, as numbness in the feet can cause stumbles and falls.
I take medication that sometimes makes me feel light-headed or more tired than usual.	YES 1 NO 0	Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about medication side effects that may increase the risk of falls.
I take medication to help me sleep or improve my mood.	YES 1 NO 0	Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about safer ways to get a good night’s sleep.
I often feel sad or depressed.	YES 1 NO 0	Talk with your doctor or healthcare provider about how you are feeling. Ask for help if you need it.
<b>If you scored 4 points or more, you may be at risk for falling. Discuss your risk factors with your healthcare provider.</b>		<b>TOTAL SCORE:</b> _____

# Online Peer Health Coaching

For people with spinal cord injury

**SCI&U**  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING



Living a healthy life with spinal cord injury (SCI) can be challenging. **Our health coaches are people who live with SCI, so they “get it.”** They have been trained to help you develop your skills in **problem-solving, goal setting and action planning**, so you can manage your health more effectively.

## Interested in participating?

Contact the project team at [SCl andUstudy@utoronto.ca](mailto:SCl andUstudy@utoronto.ca).

**Eligibility:** you have been living in the community with SCI for at least **1 year**, and are **18 or older**. You will be asked to take part in a **6-session pilot** in late 2017. Participants will receive an honorarium.

A partnership of the **University of Toronto** and **GF Strong Rehabilitation Centre**, with funding from the **Rick Hansen Institute**

Version 1: June 23, 2017



For any interested parties please use email provided for more information