



# OMNIway

Media Could Positively Impact  
Long-term Care Sector . . . pg. 3

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## Keep on Truckin'

Pat Taylor is seen waving from the cab of an 18-wheeler. The Almonte Country Haven resident had her wish of riding in a rig come true through the home's Never Too Late to Realize Your Dreams initiative.

## Results of BSO Program 'Incredible'

Documentaries deliver hope for long-term care leaders

By Jeanne Pengelly  
Behavioural supports, including Montessori activities, are making a huge dent in challenges presented by long-term care residents who have increasingly complex health needs, and the statistics are proving it. Results of initiatives in three homes were highlighted in video documentaries presented by OMNI Health Care

during the managers' retreat at Fern Resort in Orillia. The videos highlighted Forest Hill, Riverview Manor and Streamway Villa, each of which submitted behaviour support programs to the Ontario Long Term Care Association's (OLTCA) annual award program. "The long-term care population is becoming increasingly complex," says

OMNI president and CEO Patrick McCarthy. "As a sector, we need to respond with carefully planned, innovative measures that are focused on improving quality of life for our residents. "What we see from these videos is that engagement in behavioural supports is making a big difference, not  
See 'Community' page 2

## Best Retreat Ever: Staff

OMNI leaders want to share learning with staff members in their homes

By Jeanne Pengelly  
ORILLIA, Ont. - This year's managers' convention at Fern Resort in Orillia left a unanimous sentiment in attendees: this was the best Fern retreat ever.

The content, delivery and atmosphere at the leadership event delivered a wide range of experiences, from

serious process-mapping exercises and accreditation preparation to a hilarious parade of costumed "Oscar" attendees and a karaoke night extravaganza.

"What impressed us most was the way in which the senior staff mixed and mingled among the teams

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## Forest Hill Honoured by OLTCA for Restraint Reduction

Home sees restraint use decline 61.9%; falls decline 44%

By Deron Hamel  
TORONTO - Forest Hill was honoured by the Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA) for the home's success reducing restraints and preventing falls.

In 2012, Forest Hill saw physical restraint usage decline from 84 residents to

32, or 61.9 per cent. Adding to the success is that falls declined by 44 per cent.

Administrator Susan Bell says the Forest Hill team was motivated to reduce restraint usage after a report showed the number of residents at the home using restraints

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## Sector Addressing Aggressive Behaviours, Caregiver Burnout

Proactive approach should be brought to public's attention, says administrator

By Deron Hamel  
The long-term care sector is working to address important issues in homes, such as preventing aggressive resident behaviours and caregiver burnout, as well as enhancing palliative care. This should be brought to the public's attention through media coverage, says Maureen King.

King, the administrator at Springdale Country Manor in Peterborough, says proactive approaches made possible through initiatives like the Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) program are proving successful at addressing these issues and the public should know this.

In January, OMNI Health  
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Postage paid  
Publications Mail  
40036450



Garden Terrace resident Roy Smith stands next to a life-size cut-out of Marilyn Monroe, whom he met in 1952.

## Resident Reflects on Meeting Marilyn Monroe

*'She was a nice gal. She really was,' says Roy Smith*

By Deron Hamel

We all have a favourite story from our youth we love to tell, but when you can say you once rubbed shoulders with Marilyn Monroe as a high-school student, it's safe to say you've got most people beat.

*"She'd say, 'would you get me a little coffee, Roy?'"*

— Roy Smith, resident, Garden Terrace

Meet Garden Terrace resident Roy Smith. Roy grew up in Niagara Falls, Ont., and as a teenager in the early 1950s he was working as a busboy in the Rainbow Room at the General Brock Hotel, which later became the Crowne Plaza.

In 1952, Monroe, then a 26-year-old actress, was in town filming her upcoming movie, *Niagara*, with co-stars Jean Peters and Joseph Cotton. For seven weeks the stars stayed at the hotel and

ate dinner in the Rainbow Room. As a busboy, Roy got to know the cast, particularly Monroe.

Roy recalls how the actress got to know him on a first-name basis and would regularly call him to her table.

"She'd say, 'would you get me a little coffee, Roy?'" the resident says, jokingly imitating Monroe's voice. "She was a nice gal. She really was."

Roy has been a fan of Monroe's ever since. Recognizing Roy's admiration for Monroe, Garden Terrace staff recently took a photo of him posing with a life-size cut-out of the actress his wife, Natalie, bought for him.

Natalie chuckles at her husband's brush with the film legend, noting the couple's home always had a lot of the actress' memorabilia.

Natalie says her husband's love of Monroe never bothered her.

"It's just a good story, so it never made me too jealous," she laughs.

## West Lake Terrace a Family, Not a Facility, Says Family Member

*'If I need a nursing home, that's where I want to go,' says Bonnie Purdy*

By Deron Hamel

Seven years ago, Bonnie Purdy was faced with a difficult decision: whether or not to have her mother placed in a long-term care home.

Initially, Purdy felt the best thing would be for her mom, who is living with dementia, to move into their Belleville home where Purdy and her husband could provide care.

After Purdy discussed this with her siblings, the decision was made to instead move their mother into a long-term care home.

In May 2006, Purdy's mom moved into West Lake Terrace. Purdy admits to feeling guilty about the situation.

"I felt horrible about it, because I was her power of attorney and I just wasn't sure it was the right thing," she tells the *OMNIway*.

"Because she has dementia,

she doesn't speak up, she doesn't say, 'I have a headache' or 'this hurts.' I wasn't questioning their care, but I just wasn't sure that she would ask for what she needed."

Immediately, Purdy says she noticed the warmth and love staff members have for residents. She felt relieved by the compassion and care she saw her mother and other residents receive.

"From Day 1 they were absolutely wonderful," she says.

Purdy says the Prince Edward County long-term care home's staff members understood her concerns and anxieties and were always supportive.

"I spent a lot of time down there, watching what they were doing, and I must have asked a million questions," she says. "Not once did anybody say, 'Just go home.' The staff were

absolutely wonderful, and they were always on hand."

Purdy says West Lake Terrace's team has always treated her mother like family, noting every time she visits her mom she is always with someone, if not a staff member, then another resident.

Purdy has seen the same treatment afforded to other residents and their families, too.

"The word on the street is that anyone who goes to a long-term care facility is just dumped there and left; watching all the programs that they have for the people there and how they care for people, I've truly become an advocate for the home," she says.

"I've told West Lake that they can put me down on their list, because if I need a nursing home, that's where I want to go."

## Community Engagement a Product of BSO

Continued from page 1

just for our residents, but also for employees."

He adds that community engagement is another product of the program.

"You can see with each home that the program not only engages all levels of staff but also the community — something we are always striving toward."

At Forest Hill, reducing restraint usage resulted in fewer falls and decreased agitation and anxiety.

At Streamway Villa, using Montessori activities with residents who have dementia helped reduce as-needed use of psychotropic drugs from 63 per month to one.

And at Riverview Manor, a combination of Montessori activities and a fully developed behavioural support program helped drop agitation and responsive behaviours by half.

Riverview Manor administrator Mary Anne Greco says the qualitative results are "incredible."

"We have stories to tell about residents who were experiencing serious

dysfunction to the point of disruption of the home," she says. "By employing the behavioural support program and all its tools, we have enhanced knowledge and understanding of our residents."

At Riverview, the behavioural support program involves a process by which new or escalating behaviours are noted, investigated, analyzed, addressed with supportive measures, and monitored.

From January to December 2012, new or escalated behaviours dropped by 30 per cent; use of as-needed medications to reduce behaviours dropped by 50 per cent.

Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO), a \$40-million initiative to help enhance quality of life for seniors affected by dementia and other conditions that cause agitation, provided funding to a selection of Ontario long-term care homes in 2011.

The funding was earmarked for behavioural supports that would enhance quality of life in long-term care homes, particularly with a

growing population with complex needs.

Kylie Szczebonski, administrator at Streamway Villa, says her home may have been the most challenging of those in the Central East Local Health Integration Network that received the first round of funding. An older home with the fewest beds, she says the drop in use of as-needed medication for responsive behaviours from 63 per month to one was "remarkable."

She credits a new employee, Sarah Wilson, with leading the BSO initiative in the home.

"Without Sarah, I don't think we would have had the results we had," Szczebonski says. Wilson is a registered practical nurse responsible for managing behavioural supports at Streamway.

At Forest Hill, the results were equally significant. The use of restraints across all five units dropped by 38 per cent last year, and fall rates actually decreased 48 per cent — a result that provided a serious "a-ha" moment for staff.

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The Forest Hill team poses with their OLTC award honouring the home for reducing restraint usage.

## Recognition a 'Great Honour' for Staff

Continued from page 1  
was “significantly higher” than the provincial average.

*“I think (earning the award) gives them encouragement, and the staff really deserves the recognition . . .”*

— Susan Bell, administrator, Forest Hill

The restraint reduction team, a subcommittee of Forest Hill’s quality improvement team, developed strategies to reduce restraint usage, with staff and family education being a top priority. Often, family members and staff mistakenly believe restraints will keep residents safer, notes Bell.

One-to-one sessions educating families about

restraint alternatives helped reduce the number of current and new residents using restraining devices. The restraint reduction team also presented an educational session during a family council meeting.

Front-line staff members also enhanced monitoring of residents not using restraints, with small groups of residents intensely scrutinized.

Falls prevention also played a major part in reducing restraints.

“Most of these residents had restraints because they were a high risk for falls, so we really needed to look at falls prevention — when we remove these restraints, how are we going to prevent these residents from falling?” explains Bell.

Bed alarms, increased monitoring and moving residents closer to nursing

stations are some of the interventions the team successfully developed to prevent falls.

Representatives from the Kanata long-term care home were in Toronto April 8 to receive the award during the OLTC/Ontario Retirement Communities Association (ORCA) 2013 Together We Care Convention and Trade Show awards luncheon.

Bell says receiving the recognition was a “great honour” for staff members.

“It was great to recognize the staff — particularly the front-line staff at Forest Hill,” she says. “I think (earning the award) gives them encouragement, and the staff really deserves the recognition in playing a key role in providing continued quality care to our residents on a daily basis.”

## Media Needs to Focus on LTC Successes

Continued from page 1  
Care homes received funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for staff education that was used in several ways. The money, which had to be used by March 31, was spent training staff in palliative care and non-violent crisis intervention, and working with residents affected by agitation.

The training is helping enhance resident care and providing tools to prevent caregivers from becoming overwhelmed.

In particular, King cites the BSO initiative as a “tremendous” help addressing caregiver burnout, which can be brought on by working with residents who exhibit

aggressive behaviours.

If you prevent aggressive behaviours from happening, you prevent the stress that stems from addressing the situation in a reactive way, she says.

“We’re giving staff the tools to do this (work, because) if we don’t start approaching this stuff differently who is going to care for these people if we’re burned out and done?” King tells the *OMNIway*.

King says it’s important the public be made aware of the strides long-term care is making to prevent aggressive behaviours, in light of recent negative press the sector has received.

“We’re not unaware that (aggressive behaviours)

exist, but with the negative publicity what happens is (the media) fractures the industry,” she says.

BSO is a provincial initiative aimed at addressing aggressive behaviours in people with dementia. At \$40 million, BSO is a relatively cost-effective program which delivers high-calibre training, says King.

“If the media highlighted how innovative long-term care has been, and how we’re really solving our own problems without demanding more money, how long do you think it would be before the public wanted the other health-care sectors to be as transparent (and) as innovative?” she says.

## Media Could Positively Impact Long-term Care Sector

Long-term care homes are places where extraordinary things happen; staff members embrace innovation, homes become centrepieces in communities and residents’ lives are changed for the better.

Ask anyone working in a long-term care home and they will tell you these are happy places where residents see enhanced quality of life and families feel at ease knowing their loved ones are in good hands.

*When an adverse event happens, it needs to be reported on — but in a fair and balanced manner, with everyone affected engaged.*

Unfortunately, mainstream media rarely touches on the success stories we see every day in long-term care, but the moment something negative happens in a home it often becomes front-page news.

When an adverse event happens in a long-term care home, news agencies have a responsibility to their audience to report on what happened — no one is questioning that.

However, journalists also need to be looking at the underlying causes that lead to adverse incidents. Media agencies also need to realize the detrimental effect not telling the whole story can have on staff when a culture of blame ensues following

negative media reports.

The media needs to offer a more balanced perspective and give equal time to the strengths and successes seen in the sector. When an adverse event happens, it needs to be reported on — but in a fair and balanced manner, with everyone affected engaged.

Many long-term care home staff members see their work as part of a greater social mission. It’s challenging to work in long-term care, and caregivers work in the sector because they’re driven by the challenge to make a difference.

“Trust me, you don’t come here and work every day in this type of environment that’s so challenging if you’re not the type of person who wants to come to work and make a difference in someone’s life,” Springdale Country Manor administrator Maureen King recently told the *OMNIway*.

When media attention is negative it adversely impacts staff members who are already doing a difficult job.

So, what if the media was more balanced in reporting on the long-term care sector? What if media looked more closely at the sector’s strengths?

King says the result would be higher overall morale.

“Everybody responds to a job well done,” she says. “And do you know who else it would make care better for? The residents. And everything we do is for the residents.”



OMNIway news is published daily at [www.omniway.ca](http://www.omniway.ca) and distributed bimonthly in print to the long-term care community.

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Top: Residents Ron Read and Carol Patterson exchange vows during their April 13 wedding ceremony at Country Terrace. Bottom: Carol Patterson feeds her new husband Ron Read a piece of their wedding cake during their reception.

## Resident Couple Weds at Country Terrace

Ron Read and Carol Patterson tie the knot after two-year courtship

By Deron Hamel

When Ron Read and Carol Patterson met at Country Terrace two years ago they never guessed they would one day be walking down the aisle in the Komoka long-term care home's chapel.

But that's exactly what happened April 13, when the couple exchanged wedding vows in front of their friends, families and fellow residents in what has so far been the home's social event of the year.

Staff members were there every step of the way from the time their engagement was announced, working with the couple and their families to help organize the big day, which was marked by a wedding ceremony and reception.

Ron and Carol say they are appreciative to Country Terrace staff members for helping make their wedding special.

"Everything went off smoothly; we had a really

good wedding and party afterwards," Ron tells the OMNIway, adding that most of his family and friends attended.

Carol agrees.

"The day was wonderful," she says, tipping her hat to staff members for their work decorating the home for the ceremony. "We had our own decorations and it was just amazing."

The wedding even had a few humorous moments, most notably when Carol threw her garter into the crowd.

"One of my good buddies caught it," Ron laughs.

"You should have seen the look on his face — he said, 'What the hell am I going to do with this.'"

All residents were invited to the wedding, with about 20 attending, and the chapel was at full capacity as Ron and Carol exchanged their vows.

"It was a great turnout," says activity director Veronica Couto.

## Evening of Excellence Highlights Outstanding Staff

Continued from page 1 of the various homes so that everyone felt valued. They did this at meals, at evening parties and even at the training sessions," says Almonte Country Haven administrator Marilyn Colton. "Secondly, the team building that we experienced was phenomenal. As a result, next year, all my managers will be attending because everyone needs to hear the messages about our mission, values and quality initiatives."

Colton's sentiment was echoed by many as the event wrapped up May 2.

"Everyone needs to hear how senior staff appreciate each of us and what we are accomplishing in our

homes. The senior staff made our learning fun, which is how it should be, in our opinion," Colton adds.

She pointed to attention to detail — even the decorations at the Evening of Excellence were expertly chosen. The tables were adorned with black-and-silver glitter and a bowl of black-and-white jelly beans to reflect the black-tie affair known as the Oscars.

Each morning was energized with "great music and videos," which Colton says is just another example of how senior staff attended to details.

The Evening of Excellence was OMNI Health Care's first internal recognition

awards ceremony — an event that included red-carpet interviews against a stunning Academy Award-like backdrop. Photographs, videos, introductions, acceptance speeches — even the awards themselves — reflected the spirit of excellence that evening was meant to inspire.

"Wow, I am still feeling the swagger of that evening," Colton says.

Among the award recipients was Riverview Manor director of care, Kaitlyn Cavanagh who was recognized with the Elizabeth Hinton Memorial Award.

As well, 17 "inspired leaders" were recognized, one from each home.

## It was 'Ferntastic'!

The OMNIway asked those attending the recent managers' forum at Fern Resort what they liked best about the event. Here's what they had to say:

### Q: What struck you most about the managers' gathering at Fern?

#### A: Maplewood

- A lighter, friendlier atmosphere.
- A lot of appreciation and respect from home office for what we do.
- Conversations with other managers from other OMNI homes
- Jane Harvey (always a hit)

#### A: Garden Terrace

I guess what stands out the most was our fantastic Quality Awards night — it was incredible to see every manager there enjoying themselves and taking part, celebrating the quality people and the quality initiatives that OMNI has to offer and is dedicating to our sector.

#### A: Almonte Country Haven

What impressed us most was the way in which the senior staff mixed and mingled among the teams of the various homes . . . so that everyone felt valued.

#### A: Rosebridge Manor

This was the best retreat ever. As well as a great educational event, it was also great networking, lots of peer support, strengthening as a team; increasing communication and co-operation; getting a new manager on board and up to speed quickly; ensuring that our strategic plan is understood, updated and bought into by everyone; training a lot of people in new skills; increasing organizational and team spirit; increasing enthusiasm and energy, especially about our Quality program; communicating financial and operational challenges, opportunities and results; introducing new products, policies and procedures, and probably the most overlooked reason, celebrating accomplishments with OMNI awards.

