

# OMNIway

When LTC and Government Work Together,  
Good Things Happen . . . pg. 3

Bringing Hope & Humanity to health care

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## Baking Up a Storm

Country Terrace life enrichment aide Carol Cherry and resident Evelyn Vandenberg are seen here preparing cake pops. The home has launched a “travelling bake cart” program that allows residents to bake treats in their rooms.

## 2015 Will be a Chance for OMNI to Showcase its Quality Focus

*Mandatory public reporting will increase transparency*

By Deron Hamel  
PETERBOROUGH, Ont.  
– Enhancing quality will continue to be top priority as OMNI Health Care moves ahead in 2015, and the mandatory public reporting being introduced by

the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in April will help the organization showcase its positive results, says Patrick McCarthy. McCarthy, OMNI’s president and CEO, says when public reporting

becomes mandatory April 1 it will also increase transparency because anyone will be able to see care statistics and quality improvements plans online. OMNI and its 18

See ‘Public’ page 2

## People and Communities Among Top OMNI Strengths

*Operating long-term care homes is more than a business*

By Deron Hamel  
PETERBOROUGH, Ont.  
– Dedication to its people and communities is among OMNI Health Care’s greatest strengths, and this attribute will be built upon in 2015, says Patrick McCarthy. McCarthy, OMNI’s

president and CEO, notes that 2015 will see the organization build upon staff members’ existing strengths through educational programming. An example of this is an online learning management tool created by See ‘OMNI’ page 2

## Know How to Reduce Your Alzheimer’s Risk

*Campaign highlights preventative measures*

Alzheimer’s disease is the most common form of dementia and, according to the Alzheimer Society of Canada, 72 per cent of the people affected by the condition are women.

The good news is people can do many things to mitigate their risk of being

affected by Alzheimer’s. According to the Alzheimer Society, people can maintain or even improve brain health by taking these precautions:

- Quitting smoking
- Being physically active
- Keeping blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar

See ‘Campaign’ page 4

## Riverview Manor Movember Fundraiser Surpasses Goal

*Home raises \$1,600 for prostate cancer research, doubling last year’s total*

Riverview Manor’s third Movember fundraiser for prostate cancer research brought in nearly twice the donations of last year. Movember team captain Adam Wicklum says he had a personal reason for ensuring this year’s fundraiser was such a success.

“This year raising funds

was more important to me because my dad had prostate cancer,” the life enrichment aide tells The OMNIway. “Fortunately, it was caught early and the operation (was) done soon (afterward). He doesn’t need any more extra treatment and is doing very well now.”

See ‘Fundraising’ page 2



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## Webcam Wedding

*Pleasant Meadow Manor resident Gerry Farrow got to watch his granddaughter's wedding in Mexico with a webcam on Feb. 9.*

## Streamway Villa Changes Fundraiser in Wake of Outbreak

*Home's commitment to raising funds, awareness for Alzheimer Society continues despite setback*

By Deron Hamel

An outbreak may have changed Streamway Villa's plans to fundraise for the Alzheimer Society of Canada but it was not a deterrent.

Initially, the home was planning to do a Coffee Break fundraiser in January, which was Alzheimer Awareness Month. Coffee Break is a fundraiser where companies and organizations sell coffee at their workplace to raise money for local Alzheimer organizations. The events also raise awareness of Alzheimer's disease and dementia, which affects an estimated 747,000 Canadians.

Life enrichment coordinator Christina Verleysen says the Coffee Break fundraiser would have been open to residents, their families and staff members. In past Coffee Break events, residents and staff members have donated baked goods to help raise money.

However, because of the

outbreak, that event has been called off. Instead, Verleysen has organized a simple fundraiser where staff members can donate in the staff room.

It might not be the same as a Coffee Break, but it's still a way to donate to a cause that's important to Verleysen.

"(The Alzheimer Society) is my No. 1 charity to donate to," she tells The OMNIway, adding that about 90 per cent of the 59-bed long-term care home's residents are affected by some form of cognitive impairment.

The Alzheimer Society estimates 747,000 Canadians — many of whom live in long-term care homes — have Alzheimer's disease or dementia and the number is expected to climb to 1.4 million by 2031.

Visit [www.alzheimer.ca/](http://www.alzheimer.ca/) the72percent to learn more about the campaign.

## Public Reporting Welcomed

*Continued from page 1*  
long-term care homes, he adds, are ready for the change.

"We realized several years ago, when we were building a quality program, that you build a solid foundation first. We have been building a solid foundation and we are really at a good place in terms of moving forward with quality," McCarthy says.

"We have really strong metrics that we can compare, so we're really excited about the quality programs. In April 2015, we get an opportunity to start posting our quality improvement plans. It now allows us to tell the story of what we're

doing, whereas before there were just statistics."

Quality, McCarthy says, refers to the experience residents have living in OMNI's homes. An example of a quality measure is restraint reduction. Restraints can be physical, such as wheelchair lap belts, or chemical, such as antipsychotic medication.

OMNI homes are trying to eliminate both as part of the organization's overall quality plan.

Wheelchair lap belts are most often used at a resident's family's insistence. Their fear is that without the restraint, their loved

one will be at greater risk of suffering a fall.

However, statistics indicate that such restraints do not reduce falling risk, and the ministry's new reporting will be a forum where long-term care homes can provide proof of this.

"Now we have more statistics that show . . . how (restraints and falling risk) interconnects and it doesn't necessarily mean that we will have more falls because we have other measures that we can use as we reduce our restraints and, at the same time, we are still providing a comfortable, safe environment," McCarthy says.

## Fundraising Doubled Annually

*Continued from page 1*

Of the \$1,600 raised, \$1,000 was brought in by Wicklum.

The Movember tradition, which began in 2004 in Melbourne, Australia, and has grown to become a global movement, sees more than one million men worldwide grow moustaches throughout November to raise money for prostate cancer research.

At the Peterborough long-term care home, Wicklum, along with three other staff members and residents Robert Peltz, Rick Long and John Shoute, didn't shave their upper lips during Movember. They far surpassed the team's fundraising goal of \$1,000.

The Riverview Manor team has doubled funds raised every Movember since 2012. In the inaugural year, \$415 was raised. The team raised \$834 in 2013.

Wicklum notes that he



*Riverview Manor PSW Nick McIlwain (left) and life enrichment aide Adam Wicklum show off the moustaches they grew in support of the Movember fundraiser.*

and personal support worker (PSW) Nick McIlwain both "spirit led" the 2014 fundraiser and had a friendly competition to get the most donations. Nutritional care manager Adam Brand and physiotherapy assistant Jesse Fraser were the other staff members participating in the event.

On Nov. 26, residents had a fun time enjoying

potato chips, pop and beer at the Movember pub night; female residents had the opportunity to wear fake moustaches with moustache decorations surrounding them in the dining room.

Since 2011, Canada has been the world leader at raising money for Movember. During this past Movember, Canadians raised \$21,910,189. — DH

## OMNI Homes Have Strong Community Relationships

*Continued from page 1*  
Surge Learning Inc.

The system provides easy-to-access educational kits for staff members to continuously upgrade their skills and knowledge. The education offered includes courses mandated by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care as well as those provided by OMNI and Surge Learning.

"Education will be available online so we can ensure that the information and the tools get out to our staff and homes to help enable the provision of care to our residents," McCarthy explains.

A long-standing source of pride for OMNI is the fact the majority of its 18 long-term care homes are in small, rural communities.

McCarthy notes that homes

have many relationships with the people and organizations within their communities, such as hospitals and other health-care resources. As the health-care system continues to evolve and change, those relationships are "a real strength for us," he adds.

"(Community relationships) are developed home by home with other agencies (and) with other parts of the

community in which we live and work, so we've got that great strength of knowing all the communities in which we operate."

The personal and community strengths are important because, for OMNI, operating long-term care homes is more than a business, McCarthy says.

"We operate homes in which your father lives, or

you live, and we operate homes in which staff members work every day," he says. "(Staff members often) spend more time with the residents than with their family, and that becomes such a compelling story, so our ability as an organization is really dependent upon the abilities of the people who make up the organization," he says.

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## EDITORIAL

## When LTC and Government Work Together, Good Things Happen

Ontario's long-term care providers and the provincial government share a common goal: to enhance the experience of people living in the province's more than 600 long-term care homes.

But how can home operators and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care work together better to achieve that goal?

*It's important for providers and government to collaborate to take positive resident experiences to the next level.*

In April, Ontario long-term care providers will be required to publicize their in-home standards reporting. These standards include areas such as restraints, antipsychotic medication usage and continence rates, among many others.

This change is an opportunity for OMNI Health Care and other long-term care providers to increase their transparency and showcase the good work that's going on in the sector.

But it's important for providers and government to collaborate to take positive resident experiences to the next level. And it can start with basic changes.

For example, ministry home inspections can become opportunities to

create positive change in the relationship between long-term care providers and government. Long-term care homes work hard to comply with regulations, and they are held to a high standard.

There are a lot of regulations homes must comply with. But is every one of these regulations geared towards enhancing the resident experience? If not, can providers and government collaborate to create regulations that truly help bring forth better quality of life?

When government and the long-term care sector work well together, favourable results follow. For instance, the province's Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) initiative, which aims to alleviate agitation in seniors living with dementia through educational programs for caregivers, has been met with much fanfare from the long-term care sector since it was launched in 2011.

OMNI homes using interventions learned through BSO training, such as Montessori methods, have seen significant decreases in resident agitation.

Decreased agitation results in enhanced quality of life.

The long-term care sector and the ministry have a good relationship. Strengthening that relationship and finding new ways to work together can only make things better for residents.



### Pyjama Day!

*Pleasant Meadow Manor residents and staff decided to keep their pyjamas on all day on Feb. 10 as part of a program to help fend off the winter blues.*

## Ethical Questions on End-of-life Care the Focus of Information Session

*Dr. Robert Butcher encourages LTC caregivers to reflect on their work*

By Deron Hamel

PETERBOROUGH, Ont. — People working in the long-term care sector deal with a wide range of “philosophical puzzles” every day that require judgement calls on ethics and values — but those values aren't always clear.

This was the focus of a presentation from Dr. Robert Butcher, an ethicist consulting on health-care issues, during a Jan. 22 Four Counties Long-Term Care Palliative Network meeting in Peterborough.

In his presentation to more than 80 caregivers, including staff members from several OMNI Health Care homes, Butcher spoke about some of the current issues faced in end-of-life care in Canada, such as the right to die and challenges facing residents with cognitive impairment.

His informative presentation tasked caregivers to think about their work in a way that centres on what's always best for the person being cared for. But what happens when, for example, what's best for the resident conflicts with what their family wants for them?

For instance, a long-term care resident who has dementia may start a relationship with another

resident — much to the chagrin of their spouses. How should caregivers handle these situations? Have they explained to the families that there's a difference between their loved one now as opposed to how they were before their cognitive impairment? Do the families understand the negative impact that could result from the two residents being separated?

This is one of the themes Butcher asked caregivers to ponder.

“My purpose here . . . is to try to get people reflective of what they're doing,” Butcher says. “What does this stuff mean? What are the implications of doing ‘this’ rather than ‘that’? Why do we do ‘this’ rather than ‘that’? People (need to be) more self-aware and more aware of the choices that we make as we provide that care.”

Butcher says what gives him hope that the caregivers attending will take time to consider the ideas put forth is the fact they're working in a profession that centres on doing what's best for others.

“There will be nobody in this room that picked their profession for the money; they pick their profession because they want to do the

best that they can for the people that they care for,” he says. “That's the most hopeful part, there's no question about that. If they think about things on the drive home and think about different ways of



*Ethicist Dr. Robert Butcher is seen here speaking to members of the Four Counties Long-Term Care Palliative Network during a Jan. 22 meeting in Peterborough.*

approaching questions or puzzles in their practice, then that would be great.”


The Four Counties Long-Term Care Palliative Network consists of representatives from long-term care homes in Peterborough, Haliburton and Northumberland counties, as well as the City of Kawartha Lakes. Members meet regularly to discuss issues and best practices related to palliative care.

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## Administrator Hopeful About Rejuvenated Burnbrae Family Council

*April Faux says changing the wording of invitations made the difference*

By Deron Hamel

Burnbrae Gardens, like many Ontario long-term care homes, has struggled to maintain a family council. But when administrator and life enrichment co-ordinator April Faux recently changed the wording in a recent invitation to a family council meeting, she was surprised by the interest it garnered.

*“I think that by giving that little open agenda, it helped raise interest.”*

— April Faux, administrator and life enrichment co-ordinator, Burnbrae Gardens

In the notice, she included a structured list of the reasons why family councils are important. She also underscored the fact that family council meetings should not just be viewed as a forum to voice concerns — they also provide opportunities for families to meet one another and provide support in a social setting. She also explained that those attending could use the space to talk about anything they wanted to discuss.

Often, no one shows up. Sometimes one family

member drops by. But on the evening of Jan. 15, three family members attended the most recent council meeting, a success Faux chalks up to changing the theme of her invitation, which she says was a “huge” success.

“I think that by giving that little open agenda, it helped raise interest,” she tells The OMNIway, noting attendees were attentive and taking notes. “It turned into more of a support group. They talked about having more fire drills, a recent ministry visit and how to have better visits with residents who have dementia.”

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care requires long-term care homes to hold spaces on a regular basis for family councils to meet. While homes comply with this requirement, many find that family members do not show up.

The Campbellford long-term care home’s next family council meeting is in May. What’s giving Faux the most hope about the future of the home’s family council is the fact that those attending the latest meeting have committed to recruiting one more family each, she says.

## Campaign Focuses on Women

*Continued from page 1*

levels and weight in check

- Eating healthy
- Doing “brain exercises,” such as reading, games or learning a new language

“You can lower your risk — even later in life,” the Alzheimer Society says on its website. “Eat a healthy diet. Do more physical activity. Challenge your brain. Stay connected with family and friends. Quit smoking. Keep your diabetes and blood pressure in check.”

January was Alzheimer Awareness Month in Canada, and the focus of this year’s campaign was on women.

The campaign took the

opportunity to educate women in their 40s and older about Alzheimer’s disease, its warning signs and what the Alzheimer Society can do to help them.

The Alzheimer Society estimates 747,000 Canadians — many of whom live in long-term care homes — have Alzheimer’s disease or dementia, and the number is expected to climb to 1.4 million by 2031. — DH

Visit [www.alzheimer.ca](http://www.alzheimer.ca) to read more about how to mitigate the risk of Alzheimer’s disease and to learn more about this year’s campaign.



## Dancing the Afternoon Away

*Members of the Hy-Liners, a dancing group, are seen here performing for Almonte Country Haven residents and staff Jan. 22. The group stopped by the home to show everyone dance moves and teach a few tricks.*

## Village Green’s Winterfest Fends Off Cold-weather Blues

*Home’s annual winter event brings together the most important aspects of programming*

By Deron Hamel

The Village Green life enrichment staff once again did its part in helping blow away the cold-weather blues when the team hosted its annual Winterfest Jan. 18-24.

Most importantly, the resident-favourite event addressed several crucial aspects of life enrichment, including sensory stimulation, reminiscing, and physical and cognitive exercise, says Karen Coulter, the Greater Napanee long-term care home’s life enrichment co-ordinator.

Some of the events for this year’s Winterfest included “slap-shot hockey,” wheelchair races, Styrofoam snowman-building, activities on the home’s Nintendo Wii and, the residents’ favourite, snow-taffy making.

“Residents love the taffy-making,” Coulter tells The OMNIway, adding that for many, making snow taffy brings back old memories.

Another favourite activity is the chili contest, where the home’s staff members and families enter their homemade recipes. Residents, staff and family members sample each chili entry then vote for the recipe they like best.

Coulter won this year’s contest.

“This is the first year



*From left to right, Village Green personal support worker Deb Wales, life enrichment aide Vicki Hartin and resident Mable Martin take a timeout to enjoy refreshments during Winterfest.*

I won, but it was pretty close,” she says, noting that maintenance manager Brian MacPherson’s recipe, which often wins top honours, was the second-place winner.

Another benefit to Winterfest is the event’s engagement level. Coulter says most of the home’s 66 residents will spend at least one day participating in activities.

Of course, Winterfest also encompasses OMNI Health

Care’s value of “fun and laughter.” OMNI’s website explains the importance of this value.

“We nurture an atmosphere that is filled with fun and laughter, warmth and enthusiasm — an atmosphere that emphasizes the brighter side of life,” the site says.

“Where we can share with others the zeal for life’s small joys, together we can partake in those moments that recognize how vital life is.”

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