

Green Initiatives in Mental Health High Support Housing

Each of St. Joseph's Care Group's high support homes have vegetable gardens that clients plant, nurture and maintain over the growing season. Now that the leaves have turned, the vegetables are ready for harvest. Clients are excited to try new recipes and old favourites featuring their bounty.

The gardens are growing friendship and community, with our high support homes gathering together to enjoy each others' company and the vegetables they planted, cared for, harvested and prepared.

What a beautiful season of growing and giving!



As we advance our vision of becoming a leader in client-centred care, we plan through the lens of Quality, Safety and Risk. Our Strategic Plan 2020-2024 will focus on four key Strategic Priorities:

Here for Our Clients

To address unmet needs through the provision of quality services.

Here for Our Partners

To transform the healthcare system.

Here for Our People

To support staff, physicians and volunteers to live our values.

Here for Our Future

To ensure continued organizational sustainability.

Here for Our Clients

St. Joseph's Care Group's Quality & Safety Framework Development

Recognizing the opportunity to enhance a consistent approach to quality across the organization, a Quality Steering Committee encompassing management team members from across the organization, physicians, client and family partners and an Elder held its' inaugural meeting on September 25th, 2023. The steering committee is intended to lead the implementation of activities to support leaders in embedding quality throughout our organization.

The first priority of the committee is to support the development and implementation of a Quality & Safety Framework. Committee members participated in an exercise using appreciative inquiry methodology to share stories of exceptional health care experiences. The findings from this session will be used to advance activities relating to quality improvement.

Strengthening a Palliative Approach in Long Term Care (SPA-LTC)

Strengthening the capacity of long-term care (LTC) homes to support early palliative conversations identifies and addresses end-of-life issues, decreasing stress on residents and families and avoiding costly hospital stays. The palliative approach empowers residents, families and staff to initiate timely discussions about palliative care and what to do in the event of a change in health status. The SPA-LTC program has a number of resources and tools created to support LTC in providing a palliative approach to

care to residents. In addition to the SPA-LTC toolkit, there are e-learning resources, podcasts and resource material available for free through the project website.

On September 11th, 2023, the Regional Palliative Care Program and Centre for Education on Research for Aging & Health hosted a hybrid lunch and learn session with Dr. Sharon Kaasalainen, project lead and researcher with the SPA-LTC program. Twenty-one people joined in person from LTC homes across the City of Thunder Bay and fourteen joined on-line for the presentation. To learn about the tools and resources available through the SPA-LTC program, click [here](#).

Here for Our Partners

North West Regional Leads Supporting Alternate Level of Care (ALC) Leading Practices

St. Joseph's Care Group's North West Regional Seniors' Care and Rehabilitative Care Program Managers are supporting the Ontario Health (OH) North West and health service partners across the region to complete the Alternate Level of Care (ALC) Leading Practices Self-Assessment. The regional managers has been asked to join the OH ALC Leading Practices Working Group as Subject Matter Experts, recognizing the work they have already done to support Best Practice in this area.

The self-assessment was conducted at St. Joseph's Hospital, and it identified many strengths supporting a senior friendly environment, geriatric standards of care and innovative programs such as Frailty Identification for Transitions. The self-assessment highlights areas for improvement and will guide quality improvement related transitions in care already in progress and spread of standards of care across all inpatient care areas.

Here for Our People

Client & Family Partner Retreat 2023

Client & Family Partnership is a gift to our organization: it's because our Partners share their experiences that we're able to make impactful change that is meaningful to clients and their families.

Held on September 15 at the Georgian Room, the 2023 Client & Family Partner Retreat focused on reigniting the spark. Sessions included practicing yoga and self care (along with some spontaneous dance moves), hearing a client's journey to becoming a certified peer counsellor, spending time with SJCG's leadership team, and contributing to the early foundations of our Quality framework.



Advances Clinician Practitioner in Arthritis Care (ACPAC) – Rheumatic Diseases Program

Over the past year, St. Joseph's Care Group (SJCG) has partnered with the Ontario Rheumatology Association to seek funding for an innovative model of care to integrate ACPAC Clinicians to support local and visiting Rheumatologists and improve access to rheumatology services in our region. In preparation for this anticipated new model of care, Erin Puhalski, Physiotherapist in the Rheumatic Diseases Program successfully completed the Advanced Clinician Practitioner in Arthritis Care (ACPAC) education through the Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto, in June 2023.

Erin is excited to use her ACPAC training to help clients in Northwestern Ontario with suspected inflammatory arthritis receive the right care, at the right time, with the most efficient use of our limited health human resources.

Celebrating Our Volunteers!

Volunteer Services staff were thrilled to celebrate the Ontario Volunteer Service Awards in person for the first time since 2019! The Ontario Volunteer Service Awards recognize volunteers across the province who have achieved milestone years of service.

Five volunteers from St. Joseph's Care Group received awards on August 21st, 2023, in a celebration at Fort William Historical Park. Those recognized included:

- Theresa Matijasic (30 years of service)
- Valerie VanDiest (15 years of service)
- Dean Storry (15 years of service)
- Kristine Quaid (10 years of service)
- June Wozny (five years of service).

Thank you all for your many years of dedication.



Welcome Back Students!

Seniors' supportive housing has again welcomed Support Service Worker, Recreation Therapy and high school co-op students, who began their placements in September. St. Joseph's Care Group has been successful in recruiting graduates who completed placements at PR Cook Apartments, Sister Leila Greco Apartments and Willow Place. Supervisors and Managers engage and communicate with the students, provide an overview of the program and on occasion, interviews for employment opportunities are scheduled during the final days of the placement. Front-line staff function as preceptors to promote working in Seniors' Supportive Housing and are providing a memorable placement for approximately 60 students, building a solid foundation for recruitment and retention, and in turn supporting future staffing and our clients.

Program Evaluation of the Youth Live-In Addictions Treatment Programs

St. Joseph's Care Group received a summary of the findings from the program evaluation efforts of the Youth Live-In Treatment Program at the Sister Margaret Smith Centre, stemming from research made possible by a grant awarded from the Frayme Learning Institute.

Phase 1

Quantitative data from 34 youth clients was collected over multiple treatment blocks. An analysis relating to character strengths and general, overall happiness demonstrated a significant increase, including identifying personal strengths at post-treatment compared to pre-treatment.

Phase 2

The qualitative data report indicated that the program had been helpful overall, with one commonality among responses captured the theme of self-exploration and development during treatment, and meeting their tangible treatment goals. Youth were also asked how connecting to their culture through treatment programming had supported them on their healing journey.

Our youth clients benefits from engagement in the program while identifying a greater number of personal strengths and feeling an overall happiness. Qualitative feedback spoke to the importance of these two themes, in that many youth found their strengths to be self-fulfilling, and that various activities in treatment contributed to a positive experience and increased happiness. Connecting to one's culture, engaging in work that aligned with their treatment goals, and opportunities for self-improvement were endorsed during this research as meaningful components of the program.