

Peel partners with Registered Nurses Association to aim for best practices

By Bill Rea

Peel Long-Term Care has officially launched a partnership with the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO).

The aim of the partnership is to adopt best practices in long-term care.

Peel is among four long-term care providers chosen to be among the first to implement these best practices. This is part of the candidacy to become a Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO).

RNAO best practice guidelines are recognized nationally and internationally," commented Nancy Polsinelli, director of Long-Term Care for the Region. "They provide recommendations and tools that help health care teams to translate evidence-based practice and knowledge into clinical decision making and operation."

She also called the new partnership "another step in our quality journey," adding it will enable the Region to access a host of resources.

As a candidate for BPSO designation, the Region will adopt four best-practices guidelines as developed by RNAO over three years.

"We're going on a trip," Polsinelli told those on hand for the launch, representing administrators, supervisors and nurses from the Region's five long-term care centres. She likened the guidelines to the luggage, adding once they reach the goal, the learning never stops. "This process will not be easy."

The best practices will be in assessment and management of pain; prevention of falls and injuries in older adults; client-centred care; and recognizing, preventing and managing elder abuse.

Polsinelli also pointed out they will be able to share the experience and knowledge gained with other long-term care providers.

"I'm looking forward to taking this journey with all of you," she said.

Saima Shaik, long-term care Best Practice coordinator for the Mississauga-Halton Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) offered an overview of BPSO, pointing out the aim is to enhance the quality of care for residents in long-term care facilities by using guidelines from RNAO.

The partnership with RNAO will create a systemic approach to best practice implementation, with the sharing of resources and strategies throughout the sector.

She said the benefits will include improve quality of care, effective evaluation approaches, continuity and consistency of care, integrated and collaborative practice among health care teams, and learning and networking opportunities with other BPSOs.

Anna Bahl, supervisor of care at Sheridan Villa, commented there is already an excellent foundation and commitment to evidence-based practice.

"We have a great foundation at the Region of Peel," she said.

The challenges that have been faced include the fact that there was not an appropriate assessment tool that was used consistently.

Bahl added screening for pain didn't focus on recognizing non-verbal and behavioural indicators. She pointed out that with an aging population and more instances of dementia, some patients can't verbalize their pain, and it has to be recognized on a non-verbal level.

She said the goals include implementing a system that ensures appropriate assessment tools are used every time, making sure that residents who can't communicate are screened and assessed for pain and decreasing the number of residents exhibiting pain-related behaviour.

Regional Chair Frank Dale said he was inspired by what had been announced. He said he was confident the quality of life in these facilities will be improved, and he congratulated the Province for contributing to the effort.

"It's an excellent investment and a great strategy," he remarked.