

Celebrating excellent care: OLTCA's Quality Awards 2014

Since 2009, the Ontario Long Term Care Association has recognized excellence in long-term care through its annual Quality Awards program. Submissions go through a rigorous analysis by an external panel of judges with

expertise in quality from universities, government, and long-term care homes. *Long Term Care Today* asked the 2014 award winners to identify the factors that helped make their programs a success.

Culture Change Home of the Year: Grey Gables, Markdale

Residents are so thrilled with Grey Gables' culture change initiative that they nominated the municipal home in Markdale for the 2014 Culture Change Home of the Year award. It recognizes efforts to create a home-like environment, enhancing quality of life and honouring residents' choice and voice.

Administrator Jennifer Cornell says the nomination and recognition validate the concerted and dedicated team effort to make Grey Gables a vibrant place to call home.

Culture change is an evolution that requires a vision that everyone is part of and understands, Cornell says. The process for change began at Grey Gables in 2012, when the home engaged a leadership coach and began a visioning process. Focused conversations took place with residents, staff, families, volunteers, and "anybody who had an idea they wanted to share," Cornell says.

The team discovered that Grey County's newly developed tagline, "Colour It Your Way," matched closely to the findings from the visioning process. From there, they defined the Grey Gables "Colour It" vision (see below).

Each letter in "Colour It" represents a core value of Grey Gables:

Community

Opportunity

Leadership

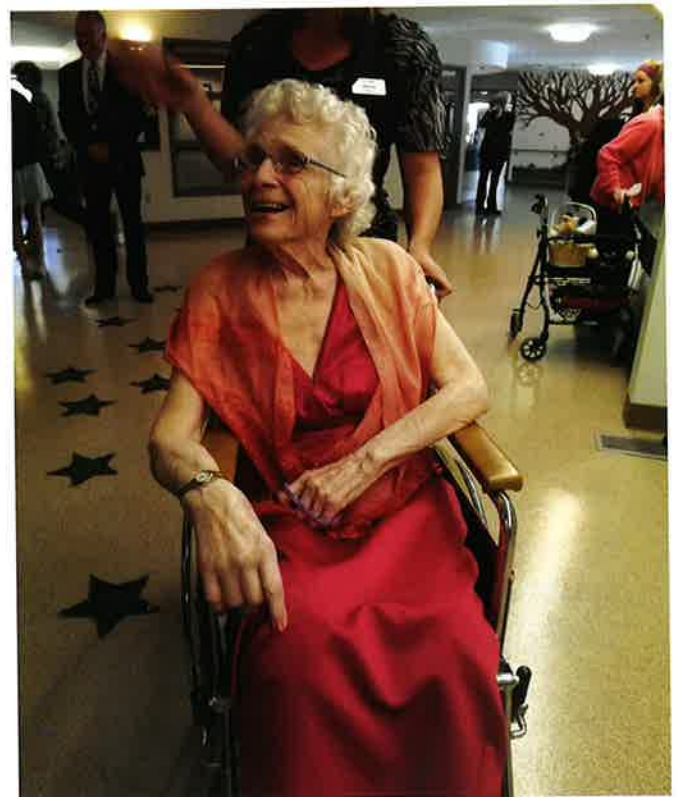
Organizational quality and safety

"U" are the centre of all we do

Relationships

Integrity

Tomorrow



A resident participates in the Grey Gables celebration.

"Our values guide us in the way we provide care and service, everything from the bedside care, the food we cook, to the programs we offer—all the things we do," Cornell says.

The Colour It culture focuses on ongoing relationship-building, celebrating successes, and learning from challenges. The close collaboration and high level of engagement generates widespread support and empowers people to act to perpetuate the positive culture.

"We always have this vision that we collaborated on together and can fall back on and say, 'What's the impact of this decision we're making? Is it going to Colour It the way we want?'"

For example, detailed job routines for care staff have been replaced by huddles at the start of every shift so personal support workers determine what they'll do each day to care for residents.

"This way, they can be more flexible, they can respond to an individual resident's changes or requests, and it honours staff's skills and knowledge because they know what to do," Cornell says.

It's a shift to a greater focus on care and service from being task-oriented, which is more meaningful and fulfilling for those giving and receiving care.

Grey Gables also modified its language to be more home-like; residents, for instance, are not admitted to the home but instead move in. A decorating committee is leading physical enhancements such as placing memory frames outside residents' rooms for cherished pictures.

The home also created a video about Colour It, which was inspired by success stories that residents and staff were asked to share during the change process.

"We started looking at what we knew we were already doing and that helped open the doors to what more was possible," Cornell says.

Culture change has generated many benefits, including more consistent, transparent, and inclusive communication, and more consistency in care and service delivery guided by residents' choices and voices.

"People feel more part of a team. Honouring the staff's knowledge and skills has had a positive impact, as people work together to find solutions," Cornell says.

Feedback from families has been positive and, in a recent survey of residents, 93 percent said they feel the support they receive helps them to live their lives the way they want.