



For immediate release

Working together to prioritize older adults' health needs

New Community Geriatric Nursing Specialists (CGNS) coming to Durham Region

As the Durham Ontario Health Team (OHT) has prioritized older adults living with complex and chronic health conditions including frailty as its target population, a new Community Geriatric Nursing Specialist (CGNS) project will be implemented in early Summer 2021. The project, developed in partnership with older adult/caregiver representatives and providers will see two community-based nurses deliver rapid front-line interventions to this target population. Their goal is to prevent avoidable health-related events that may occur due to lack of pre-emptive action.

Having CGNS nurses available to clients of Community Support Services (CSS) organizations provides unique advantages. Community-based care providers have in-depth knowledge of their clients. Through the support of the CGNSs, clients living in the community and care providers will have access to clinical experts who are able to make timely interventions that could prevent:

- Loss of independence;
- Emergency Department visits;
- Avoidable hospital admissions;
- A premature move to a long-term care setting for an older adult.

The CGNS nurses will also develop the appropriate linkages to other resources including Primary Care, Geriatric Assessment & Intervention Network (GAIN), Home and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS), Primary Care Collaborative Memory Clinics/MINT (Multispecialty Interprofessional Team) Memory Clinic, Community Support Services (CSS) as well as other health and social services.

Initial project services and partners include:

- Adult Day Programs provided by the Alzheimer Society of Durham Region, Les Centres d'Accueil Héritage, Community Care Durham, and Oshawa Senior Community Centres;

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- Supportive Housing and Assisted Living Services provided by Community Care Durham, March of Dimes and Victorian Order of Nurses.

Strategic investments in specialized community-based nursing, such as the CGNS project, propose to create tangible improvements to the health care system to achieve better health outcomes, better care experiences, better client, caregiver and provider engagement in care and better value and efficiency.

The project launching in early Summer 2021 will initially focus on supporting Oshawa-area older adults. Lessons learned through the project will inform future expansion in Durham Region.

For more information about the Community Geriatric Nursing Specialist (CGNS) project, please contact James Meloche, JMeloche@communitycaredurham.on.ca

For more information about Durham Ontario Health Team (OHT), please visit <https://www.lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/aboutus/durham-ontario-health-team.asp>