

## Community of Practice for Pain and Palliative Care: A Success Story

By: Laurie Wheeler RN

### Chelsey Park LTC Home, London

It was the winter of 2013, when a group of long-term care (LTC) health care providers attended the “CORE Learning Essential Approaches to Palliative Care” in London, Ontario. The group realized they shared common concerns in managing resident’s pain and in providing palliative and end-of-life care. The idea of a LTC Community of Practice (CoP) for pain and palliative care was born.

The group wanted a forum for LTC homes to discuss evidence-based practices; learn from each other; and exchange ideas on meeting the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007 legislative requirements. They set goals to identify the learning needs of the LTC staff and to review key best practice guidelines from the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario (RNAO); the *Assessment and Management of Pain* and the *End-of-Life Care during the Last Days and Hours*, 2011. The vision of the CoP was to become a network with as many LTC homes and community partners as possible.

Laurie Wheeler, Quality Nurse Coordinator at Chelsey Park LTC home and Janette Byrne, Nurse Educator and Palliative Pain and Symptom Management Consultant with St. Joseph’s Health Care took the lead. At the start, seven LTC homes signed on. Now, the CoP has increased to 18 LTC homes and meets once a quarter. Community partners include a pharmacist, a Western University Faculty of Health Sciences professor, a chaplain, a volunteer/marketing coordinator, a social worker and the region’s RNAOs LTC Best Practice Coordinator.

In 2014, CoP members completed the *Quality Palliative Care in LTC Competency Assessment Checklist*. The results of the survey revealed there were gaps in many homes on how they provided spiritual care at end of life. This resulted in the Spiritual Care sub-committee developing an “End of Life Spiritual Care Toolkit for LTC staff.” The plans are to share this resource with other LTC homes in the Southwest Local Health Integration Network (SWLHIN).

Response to the CoP is positive. It enjoys the support from the LTC home administrative teams and the palliative pain and symptom management consultation program. “The SWLHIN is pleased with what the CoP has achieved,” Byrne states. “I want to tell you, this group is making headlines in the nursing home world. I heard from a colleague, she had a request from a home in her region to start such a group with them. How does it feel to be on the cutting edge?” remarks Byrne.

The Pain and Palliative CoP celebrates over six years of success. Further proof to the success of the CoP is when Laurie Wheeler RN, received the Nursing Leadership award in 2018 from the Ontario Long Term Care Association. The CoP will present a poster on their work at the Hospice Palliative Care Ontario annual conference in 2019.

#### -About Chelsey Park LTC Home –

*Chelsey Park is a 247-bed for-profit long-term care home located in London, South West Ontario.*



This work is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. All work produced by RNAO is editorially independent from its funding source.



London/Middlesex  
Long Term Care  
Pain & Palliative Care  
Community of Practice

Membership includes personnel, Pain and Palliative Care team members from Long Term Care facilities in London/Middlesex. Some members have had additional palliative care education including CAPCE, LTC LEAP, and Fundamentals of Hospice Palliative Care.

Spiritual care subgroup members include *chaplains* from various long term care facilities.

Community partners include:

*Nurse Educator with Palliative Pain and Symptom Management Consultation Program*

*Clinical Pharmacist Consultant with Medical Pharmacies*

*RNAO*

*LHIN*

*Western University*



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Butterfly pictures courtesy of  
Quality Palliative Care in Long Term Care  
Alliance Toolkit: [www.palliativealliance.ca](http://www.palliativealliance.ca)

**London/Middlesex**

**Long Term Care**

**PAIN**  
**&**

**PALLIATIVE**  
**CARE**

**Community of Practice**



**London/Middlesex  
Long Term Care  
Pain & Palliative Care  
Community of Practice**

**Purpose:**

**To provide a forum for communication, best practice and networking with representatives from Long Term Care homes in London/Middlesex regarding pain management, palliative and end of life care.**



**London/Middlesex  
Long Term Care  
Pain & Palliative Care  
Community of Practice**

**Functions**

1. Develop a network utilizing the pain and palliative care memberships from Long Term Care homes in London/Middlesex for issues related to pain management, palliative, and end of life care.
2. Engage members to identify, assess, prioritize, evaluate and respond to needs and gaps in pain management, palliative, and end of life care delivery in Long Term Care.
3. Provide a forum to facilitate and standardize policies, procedures and practices in pain management, palliative, and end of life care in Long Term Care.

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**Functions continued**

4. Facilitate and participate in educational opportunities and share educational material for Long Term Care staff and volunteers.
5. Increase awareness of pain management, palliative, and end of life care strategies in Long Term Care in London/Middlesex.
6. Develop workable strategy for provision of spiritual care in long term care through Spiritual Care Subgroup.
7. Develop and maintain relevant pain management, palliative and end of life care resources in London/Middlesex.





# London/Middlesex Long Term Care Pain & Palliative Care Community of Practice



Laurie Wheeler, RN; Janette Byrne, RN, BScN CHPCN(c)

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