

# ONTARIO CLRI: EVALUATING THE ALLIED FOR INCLUSIVITY IN LONG-TERM CARE FORUM TO BUILD CONNECTIONS

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ONTARIO  
**CLRI**

Centres for Learning,  
Research & Innovation  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ontario CLRI at Bruyère and the Ontario CLRI at the RIA hosted the Allied for Inclusivity in Long-Term Care: A Forum to Build Connections virtual forum on April 13, 2022. Of 313 registrants, 133 attended the event live, and 81 completed the post-Forum evaluation survey. The purpose of this evaluation is to help the Supporting Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) team determine the effectiveness of the Forum as a learning event, improve future large-scale events, and identify further topic areas of interest around EDI in long-term care (LTC). Both process and outcome evaluation methods reflect on planning and implementation processes and the overall effectiveness of the Forum in meeting the intended outcomes outlined in the evaluation plan. The anonymous survey administered contained a variety of question formats, resulting in qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods (i.e., thematic analysis of open-ended questions and frequency counts for multiple choice and coded themes). Qualitative findings are presented using the ecological model, recognizing how participants' EDI learnings relate to the individual, interpersonal, and organizational levels. Participants and presenters had positive feedback overall about the Forum. The evaluation uncovered some recommendations for future events. The conclusion will discuss these areas in more depth, ending with some next steps for the EDI in LTC.

## BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Forum was to bring together representatives from the LTC sector and researchers to discuss the role of and implementation opportunities for EDI in LTC. The Forum aimed to 'demystify' EDI-related topics and provide practical strategies for participants to implement change within their organizations. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the existing challenges faced by those working in LTC - prior to the pandemic, workers were already overwhelmed, overworked, and experiencing high levels of stress (Braedley et al., 2017; MOLTC, 2020). The event organizers made several changes to ensure that the event would be successful given these circumstances. The original February 9 date was rescheduled to April 13 to accommodate participants due to the tremendous pressures LTC homes were under during the Omicron wave due to staff shortages and outbreaks. The half-day event was divided into sections: an opening keynote by Erin Beckwell (Social Worker, Consultant, and Educator), two blocks of presentations featuring LTC home representatives and researchers, 2 breakout room discussions on tangible and practical things anyone can do to be more inclusive and system-level approaches, closing with comments by Erin

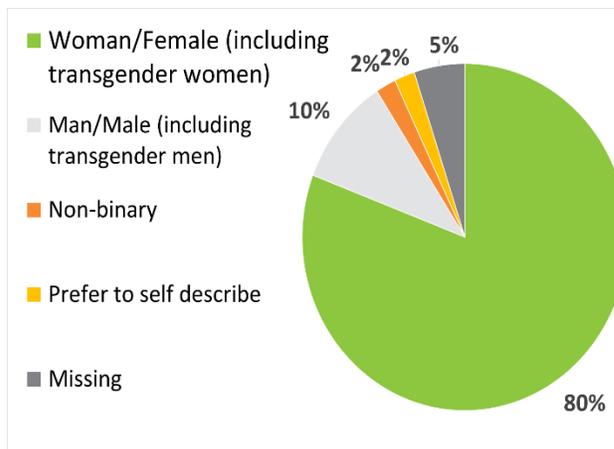
Beckwell. The presenters and their work can be viewed at <https://clri-ltc.ca/events/allied-for-inclusivity/>. The anonymous post-Forum evaluation survey was created to determine Forum effectiveness, areas for future improvement, and the current state of LTC homes on their EDI journeys. The findings from the evaluation survey will be used by the Supporting EDI team and Advisory Committee to help inform the planning of the EDI in LTC Community of Practice (CoP).

## MAIN FINDINGS

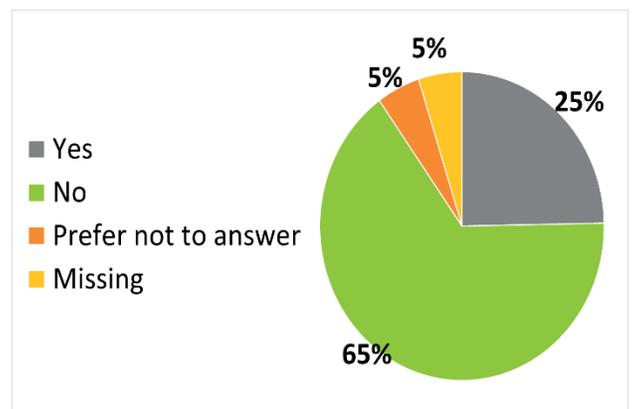
### REACH AND SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Of 313 registrants, the majority (202 of 313 (65%)) indicated that they are associated with a LTC home. Some of the other top organization types included post-secondary education (10%), provincial organizations (8%), and community organizations (6%). Formal leaders (e.g., administrator, clinical supervisor, human resources, IPAC, resident care) were identified as the most common role (40%). We also had registrants from roles that we do not usually reach, such as a LTC architect and a death doula. A total of 94% of registrants were from Ontario while 18 were out of province. Roughly half of the Forum participants indicated being located in the Golden Horseshoe with the majority joined from the Greater Toronto Area. Only 7 of the total 70 Northern homes in Ontario were reached, an area for improvement for future initiatives.

**Figure 1. Current gender identity**



**Figure 2. Equity-deserving community member**



Flanagan et al. (2021) explained that socio-demographic data can be leveraged for identifying and working to reduce inequities and health disparities among diverse population groups. The Forum evaluation included socio-demographic questions in an effort to contribute to the collection and analysis of this data. In Ontario, LTC staffing is

largely a female dominated profession (Storm et al., 2017). We suspect this was the reason that 80% of registrants identified as female. All of the survey respondents (n = 81) indicated that they speak English, around 14% were also bilingual English-French speakers, and 6% spoke another additional language. Around 25% of respondents (n = 20) identified as members of equity-deserving groups (e.g., BIPOC [Black, Indigenous, Person of Colour], 2SLGBTQI+ [Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and additional gender- and sexually-diverse communities], a person with a disability).

## PROCESS AND OUTCOME EVALUATION FINDINGS

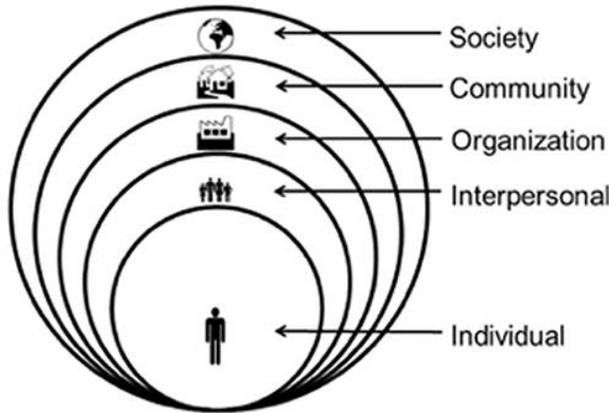
Overall, the Forum was very effective in meeting all the learning objectives (Table 1).

**Table 1. Participants' Feedback on Meeting the Learning Objectives**

Learning Objectives	% Agree/Strongly Agree
Learn 2 new strategies that can be incorporated into their practice	94%
Gain awareness of resources that are available to support their equity, diversity and inclusion journey	96%
Connect with other LTC homes and researchers that can potentially support their EDI work	84%

There were high levels of praise from the open-ended survey responses: “[This is] a well organized, timely and thought provoking event.” and “[I]t was very professional and polished, yet felt comfortable and safe to engage. Great balance.” The responses also indicated a desire for continued EDI resources and events, resource utilization (i.e., proper uptake and incorporation of EDI resources), staff training, and education opportunities to improve EDI practices within an organization. The indicators above show that the event was a success in meeting people’s expectations, the learning outcomes, and in creating further interest in future EDI events.

**Figure 3. Situating Forum Findings Using an Ecological Lens** (Fernandez et al., 2019)



The ecological model (Figure 3) is a public health and social model explaining the influence of environmental interactions on behaviour change (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Fernandez et al., 2019). The individual level reflects personal growth, the interpersonal looks at the interactions with others, and the organization level focuses on the influence of workplace leadership in creating meaningful changes.

This model was selected since it aligns with the processes of EDI initiatives involved in impacting change. When implementing EDI-related change, initiatives at the various levels can strengthen the impact and sustainability of the changes made (Truong et al., 2021).

**Table 2. Summary of Qualitative Evaluation Findings Mapped to the Ecological Model**

Level	Description of Findings
Individual	Reasons for attending the Forum at the individual level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming more mindful and open-minded while appreciating opportunities for supportive behaviour change</li> <li>• Learning practical EDI strategies for personal and professional growth</li> </ul>
	Practical strategies that apply to this level of change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning best practices to support EDI in one’s daily life (e.g., becoming aware of and confronting personal biases).</li> <li>• Accepting the responsibility to listen and learn what people need to feel safe since each person has a different definition of what it means to be accepted, belong, and feel safe.</li> </ul>

Level	Description of Findings
<b>Interpersonal</b>	<p>Reasons for attending the Forum at the interpersonal level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchanging EDI knowledge (to share what they know and to learn about what others are doing)</li> <li>• Learning about tangible practical strategies</li> <li>• Witnessing what initiatives are being done within the LTC sector</li> <li>• Building connections, expand their network, and develop or strengthen partnerships with others involved in the EDI journey</li> <li>• Learning leadership skills during the EDI journey.</li> </ul>
	<p>Practical strategies that apply to this level of change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting team members/residents with diverse backgrounds or identities.</li> <li>• Becoming better leaders and change agents.</li> <li>• Sharing learnings, being open and non-judgemental in all interactions, and focusing on appreciating all team members and residents.</li> </ul>
<b>Organization</b>	<p>Reasons for attending the Forum at the organization level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning practical EDI strategies that are tangible quick wins for LTC homes that are beginning or continuing their EDI journey.</li> <li>• Learning about possible changes for the structural level, workplace culture, management techniques, and improving quality of care for residents.</li> <li>• Informing education and training for team members in LTC homes and faculty and students in post-secondary institutions.</li> <li>• Seeing what research on EDI is available during COVID-19.</li> </ul>
	<p>Practical strategies that were mentioned for this level of change involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starting conversations about EDI to bring everyone on-board and move the conversation forward.</li> <li>• Fostering supportive workplaces by identifying champions/leaders to provide EDI-based events, education training, and bridge gaps.</li> <li>• Creating a safer space that is inclusive of residents and frontline team members who belong to equity-deserving communities.</li> </ul>

# CONCLUSION, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Supporting EDI team sought feedback from Forum participants and presenters (313) through an anonymous survey to assess how effectively the event was delivered and if goals and learning objectives were met. The findings from 81 respondents were used to answer the evaluation questions. Overall, the Forum was successful with strong levels of participant satisfaction and praise, and learning objectives were achieved.

## LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Start future sessions later because 8 am interfered with most people's schedules (e.g., residents' breakfast time, out-of-province presenters, and tech support check-in).
- Consider a full-day event or 2 half-day events a week apart. Participants are eager for more but also want time for reflection and discussion.
- A virtual event requires a significant amount of technological support that needs to be planned for leading up to the event and during the live session.
- The COVID-19 pandemic demands greater adaptability from everyone, but it is important to remain realistic and mindful of the team's capacity when changing plans.

## NEXT STEPS

The [Forum recording](#) (with ASL interpretation and closed-captioning) is available in English and will soon include French subtitles. Additional resources are the [Key Learnings](#) document (summarizing the main highlights from the Forum), resources to support LTC homes in their EDI journeys, posters from researchers, and a Q&A document with responses to questions that remained unanswered. We started an EDI in LTC quarterly newsletter for people to opt into when we started promoting the Forum: [Subscribe Here](#). This newsletter will be a key channel, along with the LinkedIn Group, to recruit members for the CoP that will begin in November 2022.

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