

*Enhancing Life*

# When Mealtimes don't Live up to Expectations

Moral Distress Think tank

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# Dining in Residential Care Team

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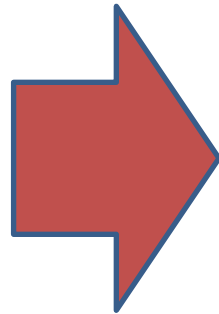
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council  
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines

## Mealtimes ...

Promote  
Connections

Support our  
identity

Help us cope  
and adapt



**Well-being  
&  
Sense of Belonging**

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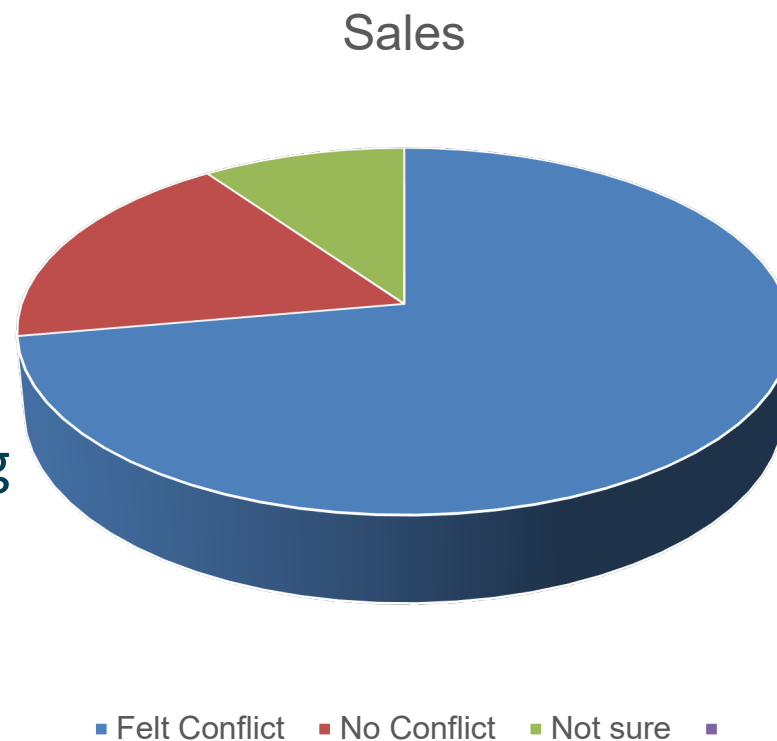
Phase 1 of pandemic March  
September 2020 Dietitians  
worked remotely for homes in  
Ontario



## Staff Experienced Moral Distress

Survey of > 1000 seniors living providers in Canada and US

Almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  felt conflict between balancing safety and relationship-centred care for residents at mealtimes



Keller et al., 2021

## Staff Expressed Distress (Dakkak et al., accepted)

In-depth interviews with 22 staff providers;  
various roles in the dining room

Saw mealtime experience as compromised

Managing resident distress

Attempting to 'stay afloat'



*“When we’re short staffed, ... the workload is increased. They’re [staff] stressed and everyone else can kind of feel that stress, especially the residents...they can see their caregiver stress and they kind of feel the stress too, so that impedes on things.” (P3, Dietitian).*

*“Oh my goodness, the residents were so depressed, they were crying, they were scared.” (P11, dietitian).*



# Family and Resident Distress


(Keller et al. submitted)

In-depth interviews with 17 family and 4 residents

Compromised mealtimes = compromised community

Family caregivers are essential

Dangers of eating alone



*“sharing food and drink... They couldn’t share with other residents -- they couldn’t share with family. And that really bothered [brother-in-law] that it was so isolated, and that he couldn’t share with anybody else” (CP13, sister-in-law).*

*“Nobody told me [my mother] no longer wears dentures and now she’s eating puree” (CP10, daughter).*

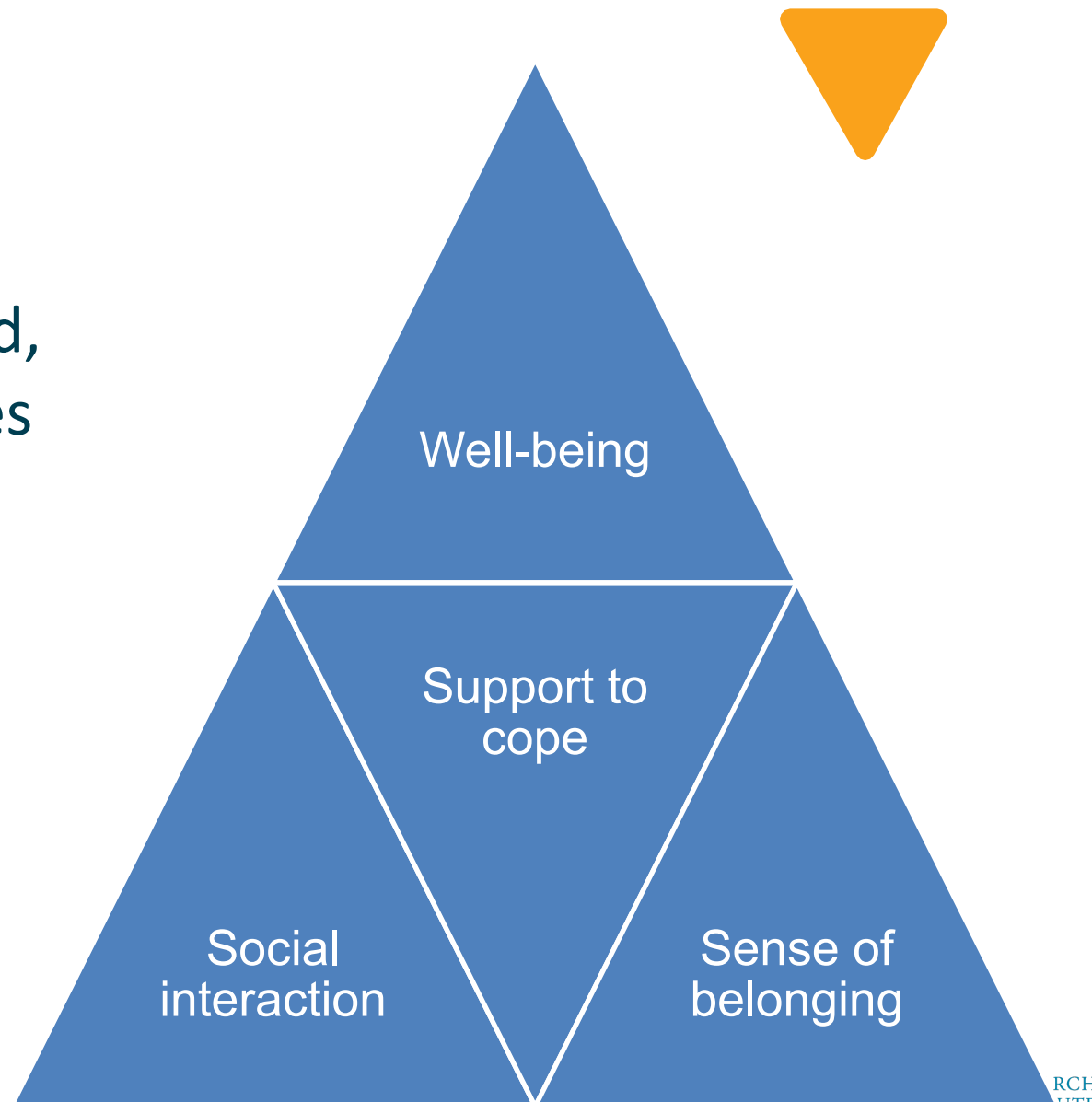
*“Yeah, you know, like just toss the bone into my cage ... it's not supposed to be a social, enjoyable.” (R20, female).*

*So, in total isolation- every meal, same thing – on the table, no tablecloth, nothing to make it pretty or inviting, whatsoever. It was – you get your dish, you – then they came in and took it away, and that was it. That was, that was mealtime. It was deplorable. I mean, uh, I think prisoners eat better, in better conditions than that. It – I cannot say how that must have been so discouraging and no wonder people didn’t eat. No wonder that residents lost weight. (CP13)*

## Mealtimes are a microcosm of seniors living

When residents and staff are distressed, this is revealed in mealtime experiences  
\*how you do anything is how you do everything

Can we use mealtimes to reduced distress?





# Knowledge Mobilization: CHOICE+ Education

- **Appetizer: Principles**
- **Mains:**
  - *Virtual tour* of dining rooms to see how principles are being implemented in homes
  - *e-Learning course* for leaders in senior living to support adoption of the principles.
- **Chef's Special:**
  - *Instagram channel* (choice.ria)
- **Desserts:**
  - Freely available checklists and other resources.



## Appetizers CHOICE+ a good start

CHOICE+ is an innovative program that aims to improve the mealtime experience for residents in long-term care. By bringing leaders, team members, residents and family to the table, the program focuses on relationship-centred practices and enhancing the dining environment.

### *The Program is made up of six principles*

#### **Connecting:**

*having meaningful conversations and socializing*

#### **Honouring Dignity:**

*respecting decisions, choices and preferences*

#### **Offering Support:**

*supporting residents based on individual needs*

#### **Identity:**

*knowing and accepting residents as unique individuals*

#### **Creating Opportunities:**

*supporting active mealtime participation*

#### **Enjoyment:**

*creating a warm and welcoming dining environment*

## Mains

### CHOICE+ à la carte

#### **Best Practices Virtual Tour**

Enjoy a virtual walk in one of our three dining rooms to see how CHOICE+ best practices are being implemented.

Harvest Dining Room > [TOUR NOW](#)

Lilac Dining Room > [TOUR NOW](#)

Eloise Dining Room > [TOUR NOW](#)

Download more CHOICE+ best practices [HERE](#)

#### **Champions for Change E-Learning Course**


The CHOICE+ Champions for Change course is for leaders who, having recognized that a pleasurable dining experience is meaningful for residents, team members and family, want to implement long-term change in their homes.

This e-learning course provides a CHOICE+ work plan to:

- Build team interest in making improvements
- Engage stakeholders from the team
- Identify areas of focus
- Develop an improvement plan
- Measure success and ongoing goals

[LEARN MORE](#)

#### **Chef's Specials**

You'll be glad you tried these Insta-worthy morsels 

[the-ria.ca/choices](https://the-ria.ca/choices)

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