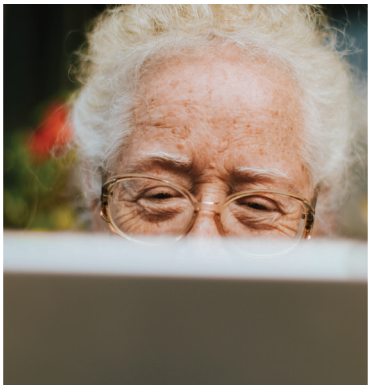
2019–2020 ANNUAL REPORT



The Ontario Centres for Learning, Research and Innovation in Long-Term Care

ONTARIO CLRI Centres for Learning, Research & Innovation in Long-Term Care

BAYCREST · BRUYÈRE · RIA

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The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the province.

A Message From the Ontario CLRI Host Organization Executives

Like many organizations in long-term care, the focus of the Ontario CLRI changed dramatically from the beginning to the end of the 2019–20 fiscal year. As we set out to implement our annual work plan, little did we know that COVID-19 would become a new reality for the long-term care sector. It is a new and different time for the Ontario CLRI and the long-term care sector; COVID has profoundly impacted residents, families and team members.

We recognize that it is an unusual time to release this report; the Ontario CLRI, along with its activities and initiatives, has had to accommodate changes in long-term care. Much of the work highlighted in this document spans the time before COVID-19, but we do touch on some of the ways the Program pivoted quickly during the early days of the pandemic, such as leveraging partnerships to meet the psycho-social needs of team members and creating easy-to-access resources for unique needs that emerged in long-term care homes. Although it is beyond the scope of this report, it is worth sharing that our response to COVID-19 has now grown to include plans for sustainable training and education materials using an innovative online platform grounded in simulation and game-based learning.

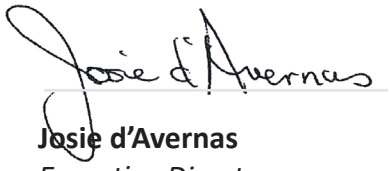
We want to thank and commend the Ontario CLRI managers and team members for their commitment to support the health and well-being of those who live and work in long-term care. The flexibility and focus they demonstrate daily allowed the Program to shift and adjust to the changes brought on by the pandemic. The Ontario CLRI managers were quick to seek insight and input from the sector and guided a response that continues to fulfill our mandate in the age of COVID-19: to be a resource program for the long-term care sector by addressing priority issues through education, innovation and knowledge mobilization.

We know that care homes are facing major challenges and that transformational and systemic change is more important than ever. The Ontario CLRI will be here to support this change. Our pre-pandemic accomplishments, including those described in this report, will be leveraged to build new supports where needed.

We will continue to move forward in helping long-term care homes and their committed teams not only survive the new normal, but to thrive in it, together.

Dr. David Conn
Vice President, Education
Baycrest Health Sciences

Heidi Sveistrup
VP, Research and Medical Affairs
Bruyère



Josie d'Avernas
Executive Director
Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging

Program Overview

The Ontario Centres for Learning, Research and Innovation in Long-Term Care (CLRI) enhance the quality of life and care for the 78,876 residents who live in the province's 627 long-term care (LTC) homes, as well as for the team members who work there.

The Ontario Ministry of Health and Ministry of Long-Term Care have mandated the Ontario CLRI to be a resource to LTC homes and stakeholders by providing continuing education and training and by sharing innovations and leading practices that improve the health and well-being of people who live and work in the sector.

Who We Are

The Ontario CLRI was established in 2012 at three host organizations in Ontario: Baycrest Health Sciences, Bruyère, and the Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging (RIA). The Program was made permanent in 2017, and the host organizations intensified the delivery of a co-ordinated provincial program to the sector. The collective expertise, resources, and partnerships of the host organizations continue to advance the Program's provincially mandated goals. Baycrest Health Sciences is a global leader in geriatric residential living, with a focus on brain health and aging. Bruyère is a multi-site academic health-care organization that delivers a variety of services on aging and rehabilitation, including medically complex, palliative, residential, and primary care to maximize quality of life. The RIA advances aging research, education, and practice to enhance the quality of life for older adults through innovation.

What We Do

The Ontario CLRI builds capacity in the sector through education, research, and knowledge mobilization. We partner with stakeholders across the province to train the workforce and share innovations and resources that address priority issues such as increasing care complexity, workforce excellence, and more recently, the need to equip those new to or re-entering LTC during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The work of the Ontario CLRI is guided by four desired impacts:

1. The current and future workforce is competent and engaged.
2. Research and innovation capacity is catalyzed, enabled, and promoted.
3. An active culture of collaboration and knowledge mobilization is fostered.
4. The Ontario CLRI is an accountable, effective, and sustainable resource.

MISSION: A long-term care continuum with capacity to support every life well-lived.

VISION: A provincial resource that in partnership builds capacity in long-term care through education, research and knowledge mobilization.

VALUES: Quality; Innovation; Collaboration; Accountability; Sustainable Change; Equity and Diversity

Flagship Programs of the Ontario CLRI

Living Classroom:
An experiential and inter-professional learning program that brings post-secondary students (personal support workers, practical nurses and others) into LTC settings to improve gerontology curriculum, instil greater confidence to work with older adults, and promote LTC as a career path.

Communication at End-of-Life:
Bilingual educational materials that provide LTC educators with tools for teaching palliative and end-of-life communication skills to team members by combining didactic, peer-to-peer, and experiential learning.

Team Essentials - Leading Practices for Long-Term Care:
A set of team-focused, experiential workshops, eLearning courses, follow-up visits, and leadership coaching that provide innovative educational solutions to priority care issues, based on leading practices.

Ontario eConsult Program:
A secure, web-based tool that allows physicians and nurse practitioners timely access to specialist advice for all patients and often eliminates the need for an in-person specialist visit. The Ontario CLRI is collaborating with the Ontario eConsult Program team to support integration of its services into LTC homes across Ontario.

Clinical Nursing Leadership Education:
A training program that builds leadership excellence among nursing leaders working in LTC. The goal is to enhance nurses' knowledge and skills in the areas of conflict resolution, communication, mentorship, and more.

Excellence in Resident-Centred Care:
A train-the-trainer certificate program designed for personal support workers to build practical skills using a person-centred approach, with 15 course modules, including Person-Centred Care, Oral Care and Skin Integrity, Working with Others, Infection Prevention, and Self-Care.

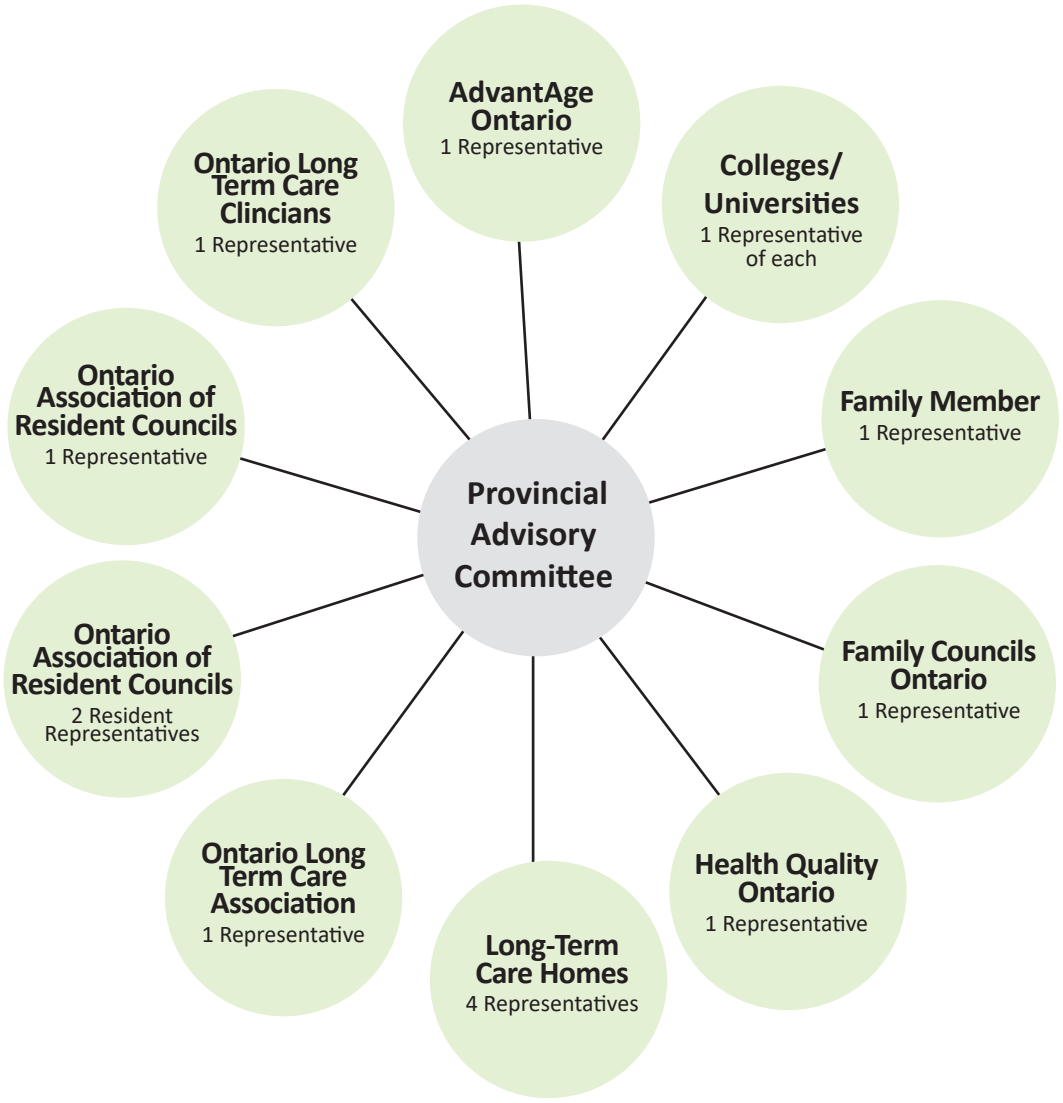
Inter-professional Summer Internships in Aging and Innovation:
This competitive summer fellowship for undergraduate students in the health professions fosters interest in seniors and LTC early in professional training and provides basic geriatric knowledge. The internships help create a career track for future leaders in the field of aging in Ontario

2019–20 Reporting

This report synthesizes the work of the Ontario CLRI program across the host organizations during the 2019–20 fiscal year (April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020) and is supported by quarterly and interim reports submitted to the government.

This report was written with input from the Ontario CLRI Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC), a 15-member committee made up of key stakeholders in LTC that are committed to advancing the mandate of the Ontario CLRI for the benefit of the sector as a whole. Members represent private, municipal and not-for-profit LTC homes, the health sector, education and research, residents, and family members. The PAC provides advice and guidance on Ontario CLRI initiatives, identifies priorities and challenges for LTC homes, and provides opportunities for collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Figure 1: Ontario CLRI Provincial Advisory Committee Membership, 2019–20



Overview of 2019–20 Impacts

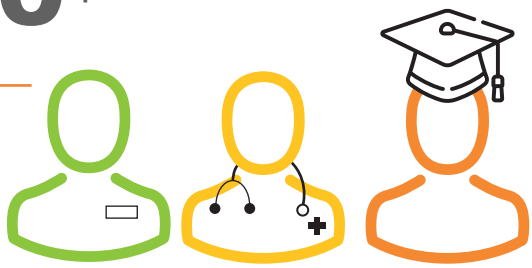
In 2019–20, the Ontario CLRI engaged with 518 (83%) of the 627 LTC homes in Ontario through our education and knowledge mobilization activities. This is on par with the 84% of LTC homes reached in 2018–19 and an increase from the 72% we reached in 2017–18. These numbers include engagement activities through the Personal Support Worker Education Fund for LTC (2017–20) and Communication at End-of-Life Fund (2018–20).

In 2019–20, the Program delivered 164,999 hours of training to 6,036 team members, clinicians, and students. We supported the development of 214 new resources for LTC, delivered 79 presentations, 31 webinars, and engaged with and supported the sector on 25 committees and working groups. Each of these activities allowed us to influence the delivery of care to more than 68,000 long-term care residents in Ontario.

2019–20 HIGHLIGHTS

164,900+
hours of training delivered

6,000+
team members, clinicians and students trained



210+
resources developed
(webinars, toolkits, etc.)

83%
of Ontario LTC homes reached

68,000+
Potential Residents Impacted

142 knowledge mobilization activites

including (but not limited to):

31 webinars

participation in **25** LTC sector commitees and working groups

79 presentations

Shift to COVID-19 Response

Near the end of this reporting period, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic created new, pressing priorities for the LTC sector. The Ontario CLRI responded rapidly, with input from LTC stakeholders, to initiate new collaborations and develop resources. We prioritized work that filled the needs/gaps in the sector and aligned with the Ontario CLRI mandate, stakeholder feedback, and available evidence. For example, initial feedback largely centred around the psycho-social needs of teams and residents; through the RIA host site, the Ontario CLRI formed a partnership with Homewood Health to make their services freely available to all members of the LTC sector in Ontario (homeweb.ca).

Throughout this Annual Report, there are references to how the evolution of COVID-19 affected planned activities and how the Ontario CLRI realigned in response. In the section titled "Early Days of Covid-19," we document additional details of the work done in 2019–20 to support the LTC sector during the pandemic.

Current and Future Workforce Is Competent and Engaged

A well-trained and engaged workforce is essential to the delivery of high-quality care to residents. Through evidence-informed training tools and education opportunities, the Ontario CLRI fosters a culture of learning in LTC homes to help ensure jobs are rewarding and team members have confidence to provide quality care — a vital part of attracting and retaining qualified and competent team members.

In 2019–20, the Ontario CLRI continued its focus on education and training in partnership with LTC homes, colleges, and universities. Despite the cancellation of several training sessions in many LTC homes due to COVID-19, the Program delivered 164,999 hours of training to 6,036 team members, clinicians, and students. In 2017–18, the Ontario CLRI delivered 122,708 hours of training and in 2018–19 we delivered 153,145 hours of training.

Training topics aligned with government and sector priorities and were guided by a commitment to person-centred care: communication at end-of-life, medication management, family engagement, acute deterioration, and inter-professional teams.

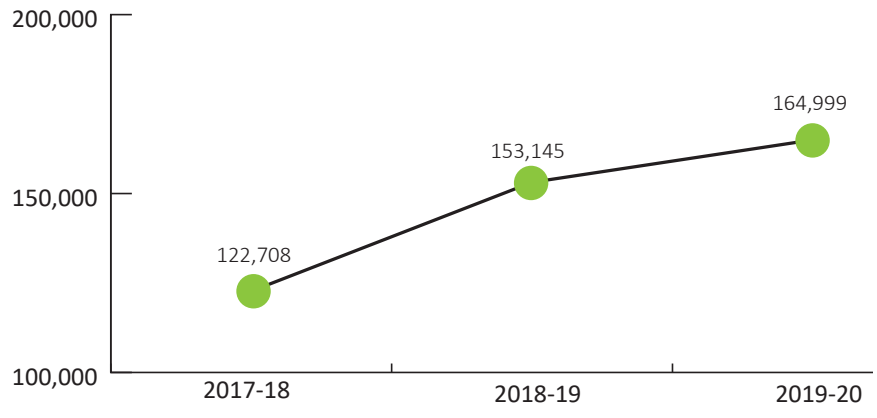
Table 1: Ontario CLRI Training Delivered, by Role, 2019–20

Role	Trained*	Hours of Training
Team Members	5,716	94,720
Students	201	70,160
Clincians	119	119
Total	**6,036**	**164,999**

"Clinicians" include physicians and nurse practitioners; "Team Members" include registered nurses, registered practical nurses, personal support workers, managers, members of the administrative, environmental and food services teams and others.

**Training delivered was also supported by funding through the PSW Education Fund for Long-Term Care and the Communication at End-of-Life Fund in the 2019–20 fiscal year.*

Figure 2: Hours of Training Delivered *(by fiscal year)*



The 2019-20 fiscal year saw a 35% increase in delivered training hours compared to two years prior (2017–18).

Education in the Midst of Workforce Shortages

To embed capacity within LTC homes and to stretch Ontario CLRI resources, some education (i.e, Excellence in Resident Centred Care and Communication at End-of-Life training) used a train-the-trainer model, where one or two team members from a home received education and follow-up coaching/resources so that they could become trainers for others across their entire LTC home. Feedback from participants shows the majority of trainers were confident they could teach what they learned (94%) and planned to pass on the training to their LTC homes (97%).

The Ontario CLRI continues to provide specialized programming to LTC educators and those who engage students and team members in training and skill development. We invest in capacity building for these vital roles to leverage their influence on the wider team in LTC homes and LTC programs. In 2019–20, the Ontario CLRI held another Educator Day for Innovation and Networking and a series of webinars for more than 400 formal and informal LTC educators.

The Ontario CLRI also explored and tested stakeholder engagement strategies to guide planning of LTC workforce recruitment and retention initiatives, various models of online education delivery, and learning preferences of LTC personal support workers.

> “I am already working on many of these topics, today has given me ideas/resources to build and enhance existing training and resources. Videos and tools will improve the content and delivery.
>
> Educator Day participant

Addressing PSW Shortages

In 2019–20, the Ontario CLRI contributed to sector initiatives to address the workforce shortage in LTC. We participated in the North East Local Health Integration Network Steering Committee and working groups and engaged in meetings with a collaborative of provincial stakeholders, including Ontario Association of Residents' Councils, Family Councils Ontario, Ontario Long Term Care Association, and AdvantAge Ontario. These engagement activities stimulated our work with a leading design thinking company to gather perspectives and innovative ideas on the workforce shortages. Using the design sprint process, we began implementing sprints across Ontario with PSWs and other care team members to gain their perspective on what was contributing to the workforce challenges and gather their insights into solutions that could support retention and recruitment of PSWs and other team members in LTC. Although at the time of this report the sprints are on hold until pandemic restrictions lift, the learnings from this initiative will be shared with the sector to help increase retention and recruitment in LTC homes.

Engaging the Future Workforce

In 2019–20, the Ontario CLRI increased efforts to engage secondary school and college educators and students to explore experiential learning opportunities that could not only benefit care homes, but also sow seeds for future workforce recruitment into LTC.

We took steps to learn how secondary school students acquire information on future career opportunities while at school and what experiential learning opportunities secondary schools offer. We used pre-established school board opportunities to run three events that encouraged students to pursue careers in LTC, including a cooking competition and an experiential Food Service Workers Day.

> A great experience for us students. Having never been in a long-term care home I had no idea what to expect but this has cleared a lot of anxieties that definitely would have kept me from going into this kind of setting. All speakers were lovely.
>
> Food Service Workers Day participant

Some planned events for secondary school students were postponed because of COVID-19 restrictions, but our engagement with school boards in planning these events facilitated new connections that will yield more opportunities to expand this work.

We also engaged 112 participants from the LTC sector through a key webinar: *Empowering Residents and Secondary Students Through Experiential Learning in Long-Term Care Homes.* We sent each LTC home in Ontario the *Experiential Learning in Long-Term Care: A Guidebook for Building Partnerships Between Secondary Schools and Long-Term Care Homes* (2018) and promoted the toolkit and complementary web resources that support these partnerships at LTC sector events.

Enhancing Gerontological Curricula

The Ontario CLRI collaborated with colleges and universities across the province to enhance the gerontological curricula in programs. Students continue to benefit from experiential learning through Living Classrooms, Team Essentials, GeriMedRisk, Interprovider Learning Units, internships, service-learning opportunities, and nursing leadership training. In 2019–20, 289 students received 119,684 hours of gerontology-specific training through placements and experiential learning opportunities. For example, the Ontario CLRI at Bruyère worked to enhance the gerontology content for the online learning module taken by University of Ottawa medical students before their mandatory service-learning placement.

> One of the things that I really love about being involved with the **Living Classroom** is that I can bring firsthand knowledge as a family member. I can enhance not only the hands-on treatment, but the fact that [students] get to know a family member.
>
> Family member,
> The Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre

Several sets of eLearning modules were developed throughout the year: Adult Learning Principles, Person-Centred Language for LTC Leadership, Person-Centred Language for LTC Team Members, Communication at End-of-Life, and Clinical Nursing Leadership. Family Fortune, a serious game for training family engagement to LTC team members, was finalized in 2019–20. In March 2020, two Ontario universities incorporated the person-centred language modules into their nursing programs.

Enhancing Care Through Collaboration and Knowledge Mobilization

The Ontario CLRI works to ensure LTC homes have the knowledge and skills they need to apply leading practices. We share ideas, innovations, and evidence so that LTC homes are able to implement evidence-informed programs. Through the development and identification of resources that respond to the needs of the sector, the Program empowers LTC homes and stakeholders to test, implement, or spread and scale leading practices and new knowledge.

A total of 214 resources were developed in 2019–20, including posters, drug summaries, mobile apps, eLearning modules, clinical practice tools, checklists, and more. The drive behind Ontario CLRI's resource development is strategic and builds on previous work, where appropriate. For example, the creation of the *Embracing Diversity: A Toolkit for Supporting Inclusion in Long-Term Care Homes* in 2019–20 built on Ontario CLRI webinars and presentations in the previous two years and leveraged the knowledge and lived experiences of partners from the LTC sector. The toolkit is a response to sector requests for practical strategies to nurture diversity in LTC settings and to enable cultural competence and sensitivity among team members. Existing Ontario CLRI resources that continue to be relevant in LTC are updated as needed and continue to be actively shared with LTC homes.

Why Knowledge Mobilization?

The Ontario CLRI also engaged the LTC sector through 142 knowledge mobilization activities, including 31 webinars, 79 workshops and presentations, engagement booths at 7 conferences, and participation in 25 LTC sector committees and working groups, an increase from 18 committees in 2018–19. Knowledge mobilization activities not only allow us to spread resources and support implementation of new programs in the LTC home environment, they also create opportunities to build relationships and foster engagement with our stakeholders. This engagement, in turn, ensures that we stay in touch with the needs of the LTC sector and helps shape our knowledge mobilization priorities. The Ontario CLRI has strategic partnerships with associations, post-secondary institutions and other groups who contribute to the development and spread of Ontario CLRI resources.

Table 2: Participants by Knowledge Mobilization Activity, 2019-20

Activity	# Activities	# Participants
Presentations/ Workshops	79	3,349
Booths	7	1,599
Working Groups/ Committees	25	N/A
Webinars/ Rounds	31	4,388
Total	**142**	**9,336**

Knowledge mobilization activities are selected examples to demonstrate breath of activities and participation, but do not reflect the full scope of knowledge mobilization activities that the Ontario CLRI leads or engages.

ECHO Care of the Elderly

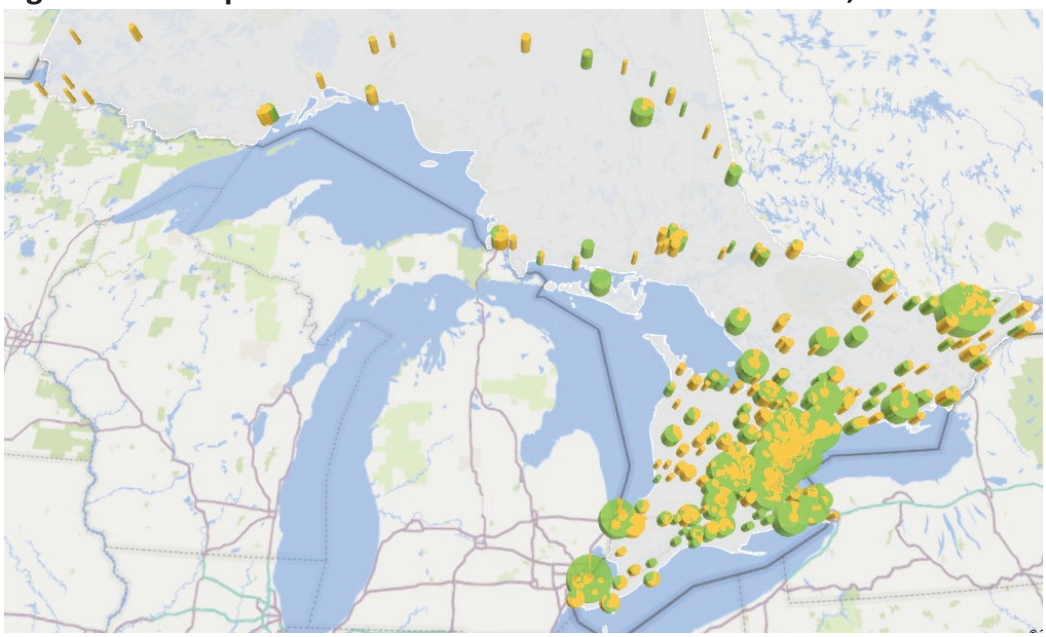
The Ontario CLRI partnered with Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes), a telehealth, case-based learning program run by Baycrest and the North East Specialized Geriatric Centre, to deliver an LTC-focused ECHO to improve the knowledge and skills of LTC primary care providers. After a successful 10-week trial of ECHO Care of the Elderly LTC in 2018–19 and interest from LTC providers, we ran another session last fiscal year to 27 LTC homes located across 11 Local Health Integration Networks. The sessions covered priority LTC issues such as behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia, wound care, acute deterioration, end-of-life/palliative care, falls/bone health, engaging families in care, sleep disorders, and polypharmacy. Participants reported increased confidence to apply new knowledge in the post-session evaluation.

> I really found the polypharmacy session very, very helpful and as I've been accepting some new patients [and] I've been going through the medication lists with a much more critical eye and seeing where I can take off things that are not helpful and modify what they're on … I've set up a meeting with the pharmacist so that we can start trying to look at these things together.
>
> ECHO Care of the Elderly LTC participant

Webinars

The Ontario CLRI co-ordinates its webinars across three host sites and leverages their expertise and existing partnerships to provide high-quality, online opportunities for the sector. Webinars are recorded and posted as resources on the Ontario CLRI website and published in a webinar catalogue to share at events. In the past year, new webinar recordings garnered more than 1,000 views. Webinar topics included person-centred language, resident mental health (outside of dementia), LTC educator skills, acute deterioration care, and diversity and inclusion.

Figure 3: Participation in Ontario CLRI Webinars and Events, 2019–2



In-person events are represented by green and webinars are represented in yellow.

What Webinar Participants Are Saying:

91%
Found it helpful to their role in LTC

92%
Would recommend it to others

92%
Plan to use what they learned

91%
Anticipate positive impacts

Supporting Research and Innovation

The Ontario CLRI catalyzes applied clinical and educational research and innovation for the development of evidence-informed practices and models of care. The Program connects researchers, LTC homes, and stakeholders to research that designs and tests innovative approaches to needs in the LTC sector. We regularly promote and incorporate research findings in our work. In 2019–20, we enabled the delivery of 4 research projects and catalyzed the work of 19 additional research proposals and ideas through consultations and letters of support. Here are the selected research highlights:

Accelerator for Learning Inter-Professionally in Healthcare App

The *Accelerator for Learning Inter-Professionally in Healthcare App (ALPHA)* is a simulation, coaching and community platform that provides a virtual space with simulated cases and a serious educational game for teams and individuals to practice caring for virtual residents. ALPHA was created to bridge the gap between academic and clinical learning, as part of an eCampusOntario grant awarded in 2017 to the Ontario CLRI at Baycrest, George Brown College, and Ryerson University. ALPHA can track learners' progress and allows instructors to customize and update learning objectives, content, and resources as needed. The Ontario CLRI is building on ALPHA work from 2018–20 to use this platform as a training and orientation resource for the LTC sector, both for redeployed and new-to-LTC team members brought in during COVID-19 and for homes, colleges, and universities to use as a supplemental training beyond the current pandemic. As well, ALPHA is being considered as a resource to augment virtual clinical placements for health-care students as clinical placements are expected to be extremely limited this fall.

The 2019–20 interns in the Summer Internships in Innovation and Aging at Baycrest, who came from a mix of undergraduate health-care programs, used ALPHA in order to develop their inter-professional competencies in gerontological care. The test run was successful and ALPHA was well received by all interns.

> "ALPHA was very helpful as a really good complement in sort of parallel to my clinical placements because it really broadened what I was learning at the time... with ALPHA, we were doing a whole bunch of different things, we were learning about geriatrics, we were learning about cultural competencies, the inter-professional teams.
>
> Ontario CLRI at Baycrest summer intern

eConsult

The Ontario CLRI has been collaborating with the Champlain BASE™ (Building Access to Specialists through eConsultation) eConsult services team and with the Ontario eConsult Centre of Excellence to enable physicians and nurse practitioners in LTC homes to readily access more than 100 specialty groups. During the 2019–20 fiscal year, the eConsult research team completed three projects and submitted accompanying manuscripts (full articles and summary infographics are available on the eConsult website):

- An evaluation of the feasibility of eConsult demonstrated the great potential for this service in LTC. Primary care providers described the service as easy-to-use and said that eConsult gave them increased access to specialist advice, helped avoid unnecessary resident transfers, and improved their ability to give residents care that aligned with their goals of care.
- An evaluation of the continuity of care during transitions into LTC found that few residents retained their original family doctor. The analysis found that resident health, LTC home geography, physician demographics, and practice patterns all influenced whether a resident retained their family doctor after moving to LTC.
- The development of an eConsult Cost Savings and Usage Estimator to help LTC homes understand the impact of eConsult for their residents in terms of cost and time saved.

The research team also began a study to evaluate the types and content of clinical questions asked by LTC providers through eConsult.

Family Engagement Study

The Ontario CLRI continues to build on the opportunity created through a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) grant to study resident- and family-led huddles as a vehicle for family engagement in LTC homes. Led by the University of Toronto, the Family Engagement Study is exploring the use of huddles to engage LTC residents, their primary family member, and the interdisciplinary care team in a collaborative approach to care decisions. The study was conducted with leadership teams and team members from four Ontario LTC homes across three intervention pieces: coaching for the leadership team, an education day for team members and leaders, and resident- and family-led huddles (15 minute meetings with 2–3 trained team members, to focus on communication and engagement, rather than on problem solving). Participating LTC homes received the full-day education session and leadership teams engaged in at least one coaching session with inter-professional educators from the Ontario CLRI at Baycrest. The filming of the family huddle training video was also completed. The CIHR study is currently on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, a first manuscript has been submitted for publication. In response to COVID-19, the team pivoted during the early spring to adapt the in-person huddle to online training for families speaking with team members over the phone.

RESPECT-LTC

A resident's present health and frailty status can inform goals of care discussions, but without accurate and timely prognostic information, physicians in LTC may have difficulties identifying whether a resident's care needs can be met with a palliative care approach or if end-of-life care should be provided instead. The lack of a clear prognosis may also leave the resident and their loved ones unprepared to make essential care decisions near the end of life. As a result, the residents' end-of-life care may not match their preferences. RESPECT–LTC was developed to help with these care planning challenges. Using existing RAI-MDS data, RESPECT–LTC informs care providers, residents and their families when the resident may be approaching the end of life by estimating their survival in days, weeks and months – a metric that is patient-oriented and meaningful for care planning. Piloting of RESPECT–LTC has started, in partnership with the LTC Clinicians' Community of Practice formed this year in the Champlain region, to evaluate its role in goals of care conversations and to support advanced care planning. This initiative was accelerated in March 2020 in response to the pandemic.

The Ontario CLRI Is an Effective Resource for the LTC Sector

The Ontario CLRI proactively engages with the sector to identify emerging needs and challenges when developing implementation plans for each fiscal year. The Ontario CLRI's priorities are shaped through our team's dynamic engagement with stakeholders as described in previous sections of this report, along with strategic visits/connections with LTC management chains/groups, LTC educators, and LTC homes.

Early Days of COVID-19

Perhaps the best example of the Ontario CLRI's responsiveness to the sector is our response to the changing priorities and pressing needs of LTC homes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We quickly curated existing internal and external resources deemed relevant to COVID-19 and housed them on a new, Ontario CLRI webpage dedicated to COVID-19 support for LTC homes. One of our new tools, *Boredom Busters* for recreation professionals, was downloaded more than 700 times in the five weeks after it was released in March 2020.

> Very helpful and informative. I have watched every one of these sessions and have found each one well done and very useful. I also appreciate that they were all recorded as I have been able to go back and review the information.
>
> ECHO Care of the Eldery LTC: COVID-19 participant

We also engaged our ECHO partners at Baycrest to open an ECHO session specific to COVID-19 in LTC in early April 2020, which has since been extended twice due to overwhelming demand. We relaxed the participation requirements for this ECHO to ensure that as many LTC homes as possible could take part in one or more sessions.

The Ontario CLRI also identified an emerging need to support the sudden transition of new team members to LTC homes. We were equipped to respond quickly thanks to our previous work to build capacity for an online learning environment, as well as the existing partnerships with stakeholders in a variety of sectors who could collaborate to develop or repurpose training resources for LTC. Work began on creating LTC-specific orientation material that would supplement what LTC homes could do to equip the influx of new team members, students, and hospital and military teams. Materials for LTC fundamentals and orientation for resident support aides and students were published on a new LTC Orientation page on the Ontario CLRI website, which was accessed more than 3,000 times in the two weeks after initial publication. Additional orientation materials and education to equip health-care professionals redeployed to LTC as PSWs, nurses, dietary and housekeeping aides were made available through partnership with the Ontario Covid-19 Education Task Force on covidcarelearning.ca and disseminated to LTC homes, hospitals and the military through various channels in April 2020.

Sustainability Across Centres

The Program's work is co-ordinated across our host centres through four working groups: Knowledge Mobilization, Integrated Learning Ecosystem, Evaluation, and Communication. The Ontario CLRI also relies on project-specific, multi-stakeholder advisory groups such as those for Supporting Diversity, eConsult, Deprescribing, and the Long-Term Care-Health Human Resources (LTC-HHR) Collaborative Working Group. The LTC-HHR Collaborative Working Group was established to continue the work that began when key associations were invited to the Ontario Association of Residents' Councils to discuss ongoing work related to the health human resource challenges faced in LTC.

In 2019–20, the Evaluation Working Group worked with the Ontario PSW Association to develop an LTC sector survey to ascertain learning preferences of PSWs. The survey was launched just days before the pandemic was declared; even in a short time, we received nearly 300 responses. We will re-launch the survey in 2020–21 to obtain a more accurate representation of learning needs and preferences of PSWs before using insights to plan and develop continuing education resources.

Fair Access and Provincial Reach

To ensure effective and fair access to resources and innovations, the Ontario CLRI delivers resources and knowledge in various formats (i.e., online, in-person, blended) and locations across the province. Figure 4 demonstrates that the geographical reach of the Program in 2019–20 covered much of Ontario.

Figure 4: Engagement With LTC Homes, Colleges and Universities by Location, 2019–20

LTC homes that engaged with Ontario CLRI initiatives (i.e., events) are pictured in green. Grey dots represent homes not engaged in 2019–20.

The Program's digital presence has raised awareness about the Program among LTC homes across the province. In 2019–20, the Ontario CLRI grew its online presence: the website garnered more than 35,000 visits in its first full year, while our social media accounts have grown not only in followers but in overall reach of our content (the current preferred way to measure growth in social media marketing). For example, our total reach for content we posted on our Twitter account in 2018–19 was 92,761 impressions; that reach increased to 468,200 impressions last fiscal year. The Ontario CLRI also launched a LinkedIn account in 2019–20. Our social platforms are the top referrers to the Ontario CLRI website event pages and resource cards.

The Ontario CLRI digital newsletter and email marketing campaigns continue to have an open and click rate above industry averages (42% opens; 25% clicks) and contribute to registration numbers for Ontario CLRI events. The more than 2,500 subscribers represent approximately 75% of Ontario LTC homes, in roles such as administrators, educators, managers, directors, nurses, and PSWs. Resources and events are also shared through LTC homes.net, AdvantAge Ontario, Ontario Long Term Care Association, Seniors Health Knowledge Network's Linkages, Family Councils Ontario, Ontario Association of Residents' Councils, the Ontario PSW Association, and other PAC member channels.

Conclusion

The Ontario CLRI has been effective in reaching Ontario LTC homes and enhancing the delivery of care of residents across the province. Since 2017, the Ontario CLRI has reached 97% of LTC homes through just over 400 knowledge mobilization activities and more than 590 developed or curated resources, in partnership with key stakeholders in the LTC sector. In the past three years, the Program has trained more than 21,000 team members, clinicians, and students through more than 440,000 hours of education and training.

As we look ahead, it is clear that the way we fulfill the Ontario CLRI mandate will continue to evolve in the changing climate of COVID-19 and its effects on the LTC sector. The Program has demonstrated flexibility and ability to quickly respond to sector feedback and needs as a result of the pandemic, but this work is far from finished. It is now more important than ever to share leading practices and innovations in this sector, particularly in the support of orientation for team members, volunteers, and family caregivers in LTC homes.

The Ontario CLRI is well-poised, in collaboration with partners and stakeholders, to expand our response in order to support LTC homes in facing ongoing, pandemic-related challenges and to fill resource and knowledge gaps that may appear as the sector changes in light of the new normal.

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