

## **Retirement Home Resident Network Meeting Synopsis**

Meeting #4 2021 – March 25 2021

### **Welcome**

The Resident Network meeting began with introductions and review of the agenda.

### **RHRA Awareness Campaign**

RHRA asked the Resident Network to provide feedback on the RHRA Awareness campaign and development of a Resident Newsletter.

RHRA explained that the purpose of the campaign is to inform current and prospective residents, their families and loved ones of RHRA and its role, responsibilities and available resources. RHRA presented key elements of the awareness campaign to the Resident Network including campaign results and examples of advertisements and articles. RHRA noted that they are now planning for the 2021-2022 campaign.

RHRA provided the Resident Network with information on [how to nominate](#) a retirement home resident for the RHRA Resident Champion Award. This award highlights stories of remarkable seniors who make a positive difference in their communities.

RHRA will also be starting a resident newsletter which will contain information that residents find beneficial.

RHRA emphasized that as residents, the Resident Network has firsthand knowledge and insight as to what current and prospective retirement home residents need to know about the RHRA.

*What do you think is most important for current and prospective residents to know?*

- Residents and their families are most concerned about safety, vaccinations and outbreaks in the homes when searching for a retirement home.

- Residents would like to know if retirement home residents and staff are vaccinated, when vaccinations happen and what residents are permitted to do following vaccinations.
- Residents stressed that information provided should reflect the current pandemic.
- Residents advised that receiving information about the RHRA and its role is important in the early stages of moving into a retirement home.
- Some residents received information about the RHRA, while some residents did not.
- Some residents did not learn about the RHRA until the first wave of the pandemic.
- Residents suggested that it is likely residents do not read information about the RHRA because their priority is settling into their new home.

#### Questions from the Resident Network:

- How long has the RHRA existed?
- Is information about the RHRA given to for-profit or not-for-profit homes?
- Is RHRA an avenue for us to give input to the ministry?
- Is the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility attached to any other ministry and how does it funnel its concerns?
- Are there any seniors involved in the decision-making process?

#### **Activities, Exercise and Entertainment**

RHRA highlighted that the [Retirement Homes Act, 2010](#) does not speak directly to activities, exercise and entertainment, but there are areas within the Act and [Ontario Regulation 166/11](#) that are relevant to these activities. RHRA explained the rules around activities under the Provincial COVID-19 Response Framework.

#### Feedback from the Resident Network:

- Residents feel that people have forgotten what residents have previously gone through and are currently experiencing.
- Residents are asking for opportunities to participate in in-person activities. They are not satisfied with virtual activities.
- Residents are waiting to see family members.
- Residents treasure the rare moments they can go for a walk or sign up for an activity in their recreational facilities.

- Some residents are able to move around the building with masks and social distancing.
- Residents feel they are going to be penalized if they do not receive the vaccine, when in some cases it may be for medical reasons.
- Some residents experienced a lockdown on a retirement home floor due to a staff member contracting a variant of concern.

Questions from the Resident Network:

- Are retirement homes still required to follow the rules in the Retirement Homes Act relating to the incorporation of activities and exercise into our routine/lifestyle?
- Why do retirement homes operate differently from one another during the pandemic?
- How are retirement homes able to control our lives?
- What part does RHRA play in making the rules for retirement homes during the pandemic?
- Are inspections still happening in person?
- Are inspection results available on the RHRA website?
- What are residents allowed to do in retirement homes?
- Can we have group activities or any kind of socializing because we are fully vaccinated?
- What did vaccinations buy us, and how did our lives change?
- Is it up to the local health units to make decisions as to what individual retirement homes can do?
- How do local health units make their decisions?
- Who is speaking up for retirement homes?
- We got vaccinated to protect the public health system, but now what?
- It may be true that we have all been vaccinated, but can we all be carriers?
- What about those of us that do not have the vaccine or who are not vaccinated?
- Health units give recommendations, but do they give instructions that must be followed?
- How many ministries are involved with seniors, seniors' care and their restrictions?
- Is the RHRA looking for more residents to participate in the Resident Network?

**Action Items for the RHRA**

- Provide the link to the Resident Champion Award Application on the RHRA website.
- Share the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility direct email with the Resident Network.
- Provide the Resident Network with a flow chart to show the lines of communications between relevant ministries for activities relating to seniors.
- Provide the link to RHRA's retirement home database.
- Create a poll with meeting options (dates and times) for the Resident Network.