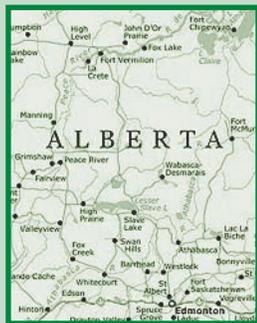


Shepherd's Care Foundation is the first Canadian CARF-accredited aging services network

THIS ISSUE



Shepherd's Care Foundation is the first Canadian CARF-accredited aging services network1

News from CARF3

Shepherd's Care Foundation holds the distinction of being the first organization in Canada to be accredited for its aging services network by CARF International. The accreditation is for three years, the highest level available.

CARF ACCREDITATION COVERS A CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

Shepherd's Care Foundation provides a full range of seniors care and service options, using an aging-in-place model, on eight campuses in the greater Edmonton, Alberta area.

"We chose CARF because its aging services network standards cover our housing, home care and assisted living services, as well as our long term care stream" explained Shepherd's Care Foundation President John Pray. "We believe it is important to demonstrate accountability and excellence for the organization as a whole, not just in one area. CARF's standards were designed for application in organizations like ours that provide a continuum of services to seniors."

CARF defines an aging services network as two or more entities that cooperate with each other in delivering multiple levels of care. The network entities might have formal contracts or be under common ownership. An organization must apply CARF's international standards for a minimum of six months before CARF conducts an on-site survey that may lead to accreditation.

CARF SURVEY PREPARATION BRINGS ITS OWN REWARDS

In their self-examination of conformance to CARF's aging services network standards, Shepherd's Care staff members discovered CARF standards resonated with their own organizational values.

"We viewed our survey preparation as a road map for quality improvement," explained Shepherd's Care Foundation President John Pray. "Preparing for the surveyors' visit supported one of our strategic directions—to focus on quality and excellence in all we do."

The aging in place model focuses on building relationships in a strong community and ensuring that individuals have access to the support they need, whether in a full care facility or an independent living community.

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“We deliberately sought out and then embraced the CARF standards because they are developed through a consultative, peer-review process that grounds them in provider realities,” Pray said. “Most important, the standards centre on the perspective of persons served, which aligns with the focus of our services.”

Shepherd’s Care’s Director of Quality Improvement Projects, Suzanne Maisey, praised the pre-survey consultation and support the organization received from CARF. “CARF staff provided persistent encouragement and practical ideas as we worked toward the survey itself,” Maisey said. “This individualized support is unique and appreciated.”

Pray added that “focusing on applying CARF’s aging services network standards and preparing for the survey visit didn’t seem like extra work as we used the process to help us move forward in areas we had already identified as important to Shepherd’s Care. Preparing for the survey ensured that our progress in quality remained our priority.”

SURPRISE REQUEST LEADS TO A POSITIVE RESPONSE

When the CARF survey team asked Shepherd’s Care Foundation to arrange site tours of a sampling of its campuses led by the residents themselves, the request surprised Pray.

“Compared to other accreditations we have experienced, it was an unusual request, but one that we were pleased to facilitate because what our residents think is truly important to us,” Pray said. “Five of our residents, honoured by the invitation to share their thoughts and opinions of their own homes with the visiting survey team members, agreed to be tour guides.”

The resident-led campus tours pleased Shepherd’s Care residents, staff members, and surveyors alike.

“Although the surveyors could have focused solely on organizational documents and policies, they instead

demonstrated what is unique to the CARF philosophy and is fundamental to Shepherd’s Care: Persons served mirror what is being done organizationally, and their voices need to be heard,” Pray said.

One volunteer tour guide, a resident of Kensington Village, Shepherd’s Care Foundation’s largest campus, told a survey team member, “I love it here because I’m given choices.”

Pray added, “Involvement of residents and families in the CARF survey visit also helped Shepherd’s Care reinforce that excelling in organizational business practices establishes solid foundations for building the well-being and satisfaction of the persons we serve.”

A Shepherd’s Care staff member said, “Having the surveyors on site seemed like a big splash, but we know that the real benefits began for us long before

they arrived and will continue long after they left. For us at Shepherd’s Care, this accreditation process is now just one part of our planning and quality improvement processes as we continue to reach towards our next vision of where developments need to occur.”

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STAFF MEMBERS IMPRESSED WITH CONSULTATION WITH THE CARF SURVEY TEAM

A team of two CARF surveyors arrived in June 2008. "I had heard that the CARF survey team would be consultative, but I had no idea how truly consultative until the surveyors were here," commented Director of Care Marian Anderson. "I was surprised at how willing they were to talk with us and share their own experiences and ideas in addition to listening to us and reviewing our documentation. We had experienced other types of reviews and audits, so we were not sure how much it would be possible to make a survey visit a consultative type of thing. The survey team accomplished that, though, and we were impressed and appreciated the opportunity to learn best practices from our peers. The consultative benefit of the survey experience is unique to CARF."

"The skill of the surveyors, both from the United States, being able to quickly grasp our system impressed us," Vice President Corinne Schalm added. "The surveyors absorbed a large amount of contextual information about our national and provincial healthcare systems that was essential to correctly applying the aging services network standards in our setting."

Based on the surveyors' observations, interviews, and documentation over several days, CARF awarded Shepherd's Care Foundation accreditation for its aging services network extending through June 30, 2011. CARF also accredited Shepherd's Care for three years for its conformance to governance standards.

By applying CARF aging services network standards, Shepherd's Care can better attain its vision to be a leader in providing innovative aging-in-place services with excellence. Pray concluded, "We are pioneering a new way of achieving benefits for our residents and clients that comes from participating in a quality-improvement-focused approach to accreditation."

For information about aging services network accreditation, visit www.carf.org/aging or contact CARF's Aging Services customer service unit toll free at (866) 888-1122 or by e-mail at as@carf.org.

Shepherd's Care Foundation's website is at www.shepherdscares.org. The head office is at 6620 - 28 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T6K 2R1, Canada, telephone (780) 463-9810. ■■

News from CARF

The Ontario [Canada] Ministry Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) has recognized CARF International accreditation as a choice for long-term care homes.

MOHLTC's recognition of CARF accreditation follows a year-and-a-half pilot evaluation project. The pilot project independently evaluated application of the CARF standards for Person-Centred Long-Term Care Communities in ten long-term care homes throughout Ontario.

The CARF Board of Directors elected Cathy Ellis, PT, to serve a one-year term as board chair for 2009. The board also elected seven individuals to serve on the board.

Ellis is the director of physical rehabilitation and the clinical director of the spinal cord program at the National Rehabilitation Hospital (NRH) in Washington, D.C.

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Al Whitehurst, EDITOR

Address correspondence to the editor.



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News from CARF

The Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), a leading advocacy organization for children, has accepted a seat on CARF's International Advisory Council (IAC).

AARP, America's leading advocacy organization for older adults, and the Children's Home Society of America (CHSA), whose member agencies are leading organizations serving children and families in communities throughout the United States, also recently joined the IAC. A list of IAC members is at www.carf.org/members.

The IAC comprises organizational and individual members who represent the spectrum of CARF's accreditation services. Members include persons receiving services, service providers, professionals in the field, governmental agencies, and purchasers. The IAC provides guidance on the development of the CARF standards and issues affecting fields in which CARF offers accreditation.

Leslie Ellis-Lang has joined CARF International as managing director of the Child and Youth Services customer service unit. In this position, Ellis-Lang plans and executes strategic activities related to development of CARF standards and accreditation programs.

Ellis-Lang's career spans more than 20 years in the behavioral health field with an emphasis on services for children and adolescents. ■■

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