



VHA Voice

ISSUE 21 ■ WINTER ■ 2020

New VHA Website Coming Soon

VHA's website (www.vha.ca) is currently being redesigned to make it easier for clients and families to find the information they are looking for.

We hope you will find the new website easier to use and full of helpful information.

Keep watch for the new website in the coming weeks and we look forward to hearing what you think!



Nominate Your Amazing VHA Worker for a Client Choice Award!

It's time to nominate your spectacular VHA Nurse, Personal Support Worker (PSW), Rehab Service Provider or Client Service Coordinator for a VHA's Client Choice Award.

Every year we recognize some of our amazing staff and service providers for the wonderful dedication and care they bring to our clients and families. VHA is committed to involving our clients and families in all we do. And that is why we need your help to select our 2020 Client Choice Award winners.

Is there a VHA worker who goes above and beyond to support you or your loved one? Let us know by nominating them today!

How do I nominate my VHA worker?

There are three ways to nominate your VHA worker:

1. Go online at www.vha.ca/clientchoice
2. Call 416-489-2500 ext. 7007 or toll free at 1-888-314-6622 ext. 7007 and tell us the information below
3. Write us a letter and send it to:
Client Choice Awards at VHA Home HealthCare
30 Soudan Avenue, Suite 600
Toronto, ON M4S 1V6



**DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS:
FRIDAY, MARCH 20TH, 2020**

Tell us about how your VHA worker has truly made a difference in your life.

- Tell us your first and last name and phone number or email address.
- Tell us the first and last name of the worker you would like to nominate.
- Tell us why you think the worker should receive the award. Give an example or examples of what the worker does that is spectacular. The more details you give us the better.

Want examples of what to mention in your nomination?

Watch videos of last year's Client Choice winners at: <http://bit.ly/2019ClientChoicePlaylist>

**Join us Monday, April 6th, 2020 from 1:30PM—3:30PM
to Celebrate Unpaid Caregivers**

TELUS Harbour Building

25 York Street, 3rd Floor
Toronto, ON M5J 2V5

RSVP today at
www.bit.ly/VoiceHOHC2020
or 416-280-8353

Please note the web address above is case sensitive

On April 6th, VHA will host a special afternoon to recognize unpaid caregivers and their important role in the health care system and we hope you can join us. The afternoon will feature our Heart of Home Care Awards, which honour the incredible dedication and work of unpaid caregivers, as well as a panel discussion exploring what caregivers really need, how we can help make sure those needs are met, and what is being asked of caregivers participating in the transformation of health care in Ontario.

Let us know what you think!

We are interested to hear your feedback about this newsletter. Please contact Senior Communications & PR Manager **Tracey Turriff** at tturriff@vha.ca or 416-280-8426 with any comments or if you would prefer to receive this newsletter by email. Thank you!



Family Relief Award

Enter for a chance to win 50 hours of respite care!
Are you a Toronto-based caregiver for someone with dementia? Do you know someone who is?

VHA Home HealthCare has partnered with The Caregivers Club to provide two awards of 50 free respite care hours to Toronto-based unpaid caregivers. The winners will be announced at VHA's Heart of Home Care Awards on April 6th. For more information and to enter to win, complete the form at:

www.bit.ly/TCCAward

Please note the web address above is case sensitive



Dedication, Sweat and Flexibility:

Client partners play key roles on three steering committees improving services for clients and families

In 2015, VHA established three steering committees to create a roadmap for how VHA would deliver our services in three significant client population areas: Palliative Care, Children with Complex Medical Needs (CCMN), and Cognitive Impairment.

According to Catherine Chater, Chair of the Cognitive Impairment Committee and Professional Practice Specialist in Rehab, there were really two key objectives: "One being making sure the direct care that we provide as an organization is aligned to best practices. And then, because the caregiver has such a profound role, particularly for dementia and the community, being able to support the caregiver and what they're doing was a core component of the work."

Client partners were embedded with each committee and their lived experience with palliative care, children with complex medical needs, and cognitive impairment provided the committees with crucial lessons about what was needed in the field and developing practical solutions.

Client partners were key drivers of the work. "One of our client partners, Margaret Burrows, really advocated for the PSWs," said Professional Practice Specialist (Nursing & PSW) and Palliative Steering Committee Co-Chair Janet Chan. "She identified some gaps in preparing the PSWs for MAiD (Medical Assistance in Dying) and with her feedback, we were able to create an instructional video for the PSWs on what to expect." Another client partner, Zinta Erdmanis proved to be a key resource in creating the VHA Palliative Care website.

Mona Ismail had been a caregiver for two people with dementia and figured out a useful way to engage with PSWs. "She set up a communication log with the PSWs who were coming into her home, and that log is now part of the formal VHA activation toolkit," said Catherine. Elizabeth Hall is a nurse by training who also cared for someone with dementia. She scoured the papers looking for new approaches and discovered a program that is already changing dementia care in Canada: the Butterfly Model of Care. "With Brandi D'Souza's help, we were able to secure a \$35,000 grant from the Spark Initiative to build the Emotion-Focus Activation Program, which is our version of the Butterfly Model," says Catherine.

The collaborative spirit of the committees also had a positive emotional impact on members. "For Zinta and Tom (Cladd), who had just lost family members, finding the committee gave them new purpose again," said Janet. "Zinta was proud that she could show her daughter that life goes on and you can still contribute."

There is also satisfaction in knowing the work is going to persist. "What we've created as committees is now embedded within the organization and is certainly going to continue," says Matt Wong, CCMN Committee Co-Chair and Manager of Professional Practice and the Lead for Infection Prevention and Control. "Throughout the process, we embraced different voices and different points of view. "I'm so proud that everyone was really dedicated to doing this work."

Become a client partner and share your voice!

VHA is always looking to improve. Join the conversation. If you would like to share your thoughts and become a Client Voice partner at VHA, please contact ClientVoice@vha.ca or 647-460-8595 for more information.

