

Central West LHIN

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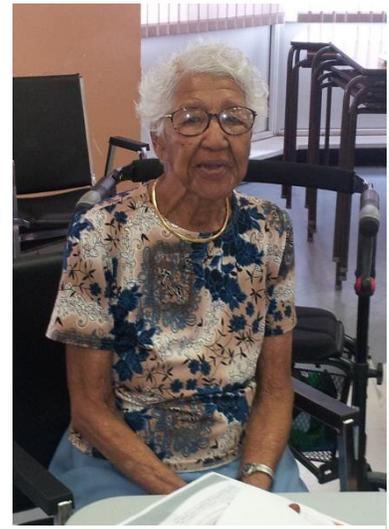
Assisted Living's Fountain of Youth

Living independently is the key to a long life. Just ask Amy Porter, who is 98-years old and prefers to live on her own with a little support from the CANES Community Care Assisted Living program.

The program is delivered by CANES and is one of three programs funded by the Central West LHIN. The intent is to provide seniors with a little support so they can live independently. Personal support workers provide daily visits and perform a variety of tasks depending on individual needs.

Some seniors require services such as laundry, grocery shopping, meal preparation and light housekeeping. Others need help with personal care such as bathing and getting dressed, medication reminders, security checks and an escort to medical appointments. In some cases, seniors are equipped with a personal help button that provides lifeline monitoring and access to 24-hour emergency response.

According to Maria Britto, Board Chair of the Central West LHIN, "Assisted living programs are very cost effective and support seniors to live independently in their homes. We will continue to invest in assisted living programs across the Central West LHIN as an identified best practice in seniors care."



Amy Porter

Amy Porter was happy to talk about her experience with Assisted Living in a recent community engagement session held by the Central West LHIN. Amy lives in a Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) building in Rexdale and has been with the program for 14 years.

"Amy is one of our first clients," says Jyoti Brar, Senior Director, Client Services at CANES Community Care. "She is very independent and walks over to the mall with her walker to get her hair done on a regular basis."

According to Jyoti, Amy left the retirement home at one point to live with her daughter. But she wanted to remain independent and moved back. She relies on CANES Assisted Living program for support and says she has no complaints. "I look forward to their visits," she says. "They spend one hour a day with me and I'm very happy."

Amy is one of 70 clients at the R.J. Smith TCHC building in Rexdale who benefits from CANES Assisted Living program. Many of these seniors attended the engagement session to tell the Central West LHIN how pleased they were with the services. Living independently is important for them. They socialize with one another and receive the supports they need to stay healthy.

Mrs. Muthurajh is another client who, along with her husband, has been with the Assisted Living program since 2009.

CANES' support services plays an important role in helping Mrs. Muthurajh with daily tasks after her surgery last fall, and provided support when her husband suffered a stroke in 2009. Whether it's help with breakfast or getting groceries, Mrs. Muthurajh values the daily support she receives. "I'm very happy with the Assisted Living Program," she said.

At the engagement session, Mrs. Muthurajh learned about Lifeline and how she can access 24-hour emergency response services, after it was recommended to her by Jyoti. "I resisted at first," she said. "But now I am happy with it."

The Assisted Living program also offers help to Ronald Matthews who needed support after previously suffering a stroke and heart attack. With the aid of personal support workers, Ronald takes a proactive and positive approach in maintaining his health and well-being.

"I try to take care of myself by exercising, dieting, walking. I find it helpful not to just sit and think about what happened but focus on how to enjoy a day, a month", says Ronald.

Ronald is especially pleased with the attention and care receives from the personal support workers. "They answer my questions and check on me if they don't see me during their visit." So now, he makes a point to let them know when he plans to go out.

During the session Assisted Living client Brian Dunford, said he was very impressed with the diabetes course offered by CANES as part of the program. "It helped me manage my diabetes better," he explained.

Jyoti who has been working for CANES for 14 years, is convinced that Assisted Living is the right remedy to keep seniors from hospitalization. "When I reviewed our Assisted Living client charts to determine the high users of health care I noticed that the clients who receive services from the program have least hospital visits," she says.

The Assisted Living program enables frail seniors and people with disabilities to safely age and remain at home. CANES has provided Assisted Living services since 1999 and currently offers homemaking, personal care and emergency response services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at four different locations.