

**Homemaking Providers Sharing Session across OHE
Meeting Notes
30 May 2024**

Attendees:

Jennifer Lalonde, Chair & Nancy Hoang (OWCS), Sarah Hess (Carefor), Isabelle Chartrand (Carefor, EC), Joanna Chisnell (Marianhill), Val Bishop deYoung (VHA), Kayla Menkhorst & Makyla Gendron (Eganville Seniors.), Nathalie Bazinet & Aline Vlasceanu (EORC), Joanne King (BBAHS), Monique Thibeault-Laflamme (Montfort Renaissance), Michelle Hamilton & Sandy Woodhouse (Thrive Housing & Support), Charu Dave (Community Care Durham), Leiann Peart & Heather Mariotte (Community Care Northumberland), Catherine Pink (Community Care Peterborough), Debbie Couneya (Community Care Central Hastings), Tine Montgomery & Tracey Ferguson (Community and Primary Health Care), Suzanne Bourbonnais (Community Home Support Lanark County), Jen Postma (Care North Hastings), Laura McGugan (Prince Edward County Community Care for Seniors Assoc.), Nathalie Lafreniere & Chris Cobus (CCSN), Isabelle Meunier (HCCSS).

Purpose of this meeting:

To enable CSS Homemaking providers across the OHE region to meet one another, share information and ideas, and have an open discussion on topics of common interest.

1. **Introductions:** Jennifer Lalonde welcomed everyone in attendance and the group engaged in a round table of introductions. Participants were asked to share their name, agency, and in which sub-region (Champlain, Central, or South-East) they provided service. There were 10 agencies participating from Champlain, 4 from Central, and 5 from South-East.
2. **Topics raised:**
 - Provision of Homemaking comes with both rewards and challenges. While it is a service that means the world to those needing this help to age well at home, service expectations are not easy to fulfill, and in many cases, high demands exceed resources available.
 - Many different models of service were present to address the needs expressed in varied geographies and circumstances, e.g., paid staff, brokered workers, sub-contracts/outourcing, hospital to home programs, and within the context of respite or assisted living services.
 - Shortage of workers (paid/brokered) poses a HHR challenge both in urban and rural areas.
 - In rural areas, travel across substantial distances is challenging, especially if the agency is unable to cover travel expenses for workers. As a result, recruitment is usually done to enable matches between clients and staff/brokered workers living in the same vicinity (village, neighborhood, building). Some agencies unable to pay mileage, offer to sign a Revenue Canada for T2200 to enable them to claim travel/vehicle expenses on their income tax.
 - A minimum of 2 hours of service is required by many programs.
 - Waitlists vary, from very few to over 100.
 - Client fees vary. Providers indicated that prior to Ontario Health, there was a 'range' within which client fees could be set. Since the inception of Ontario Health, there have been no clear amounts indicated.
 - When agencies have both paid staff providing service and brokered workers, tasks are clearly delineated, and paid staff are often assigned to more vulnerable clients.

- While Ministry regulations currently dictate, in some circumstances (e.g., ALS, PSS), that there is to be no client fees or service maximums, resources available (or more so lack of resources available) tend to shape the nature of services available.
- Terminology is confusing, as different terms mean different things across our sector, e.g., Homemaking tends to be a service offered through various community agencies, while Home Help is often akin to municipal services. Yet, in another instance, Home Help means indoor housekeeping while Home Maintenance means outdoor yardwork/snow removal.
- Deep cleaning/response to hoarding situations falls into a category of its own and is usually offered at a higher cost by private (rather than not-for-profit) organizations.
- Some agencies are unable to offer Homemaking unless personal support services are also required by the person(s) inquiring.
- Some successful recruitment tips for brokered workers included: having local school principals send a flyer home with children, acknowledging the need to parents who may be interested in earning some extra monies while their kids are in school. Similarly, announcements through local churches, flyers at the Post Office, advertising among LTC retirees has been helpful.

3. Next steps:

The group was asked if they would have interest in meeting again in the fall to focus on some specific agenda topics. Interest was expressed in meeting again and perhaps breaking into smaller groups with providers offering similar service models, to dive deeper into how services are provided and brain-storm solutions to challenges faced.

In the meantime, to enable the group to have a better understanding about who offers what, to whom, and at what cost, across the region, it was suggested that a survey specific to Homemaking be circulated across the region for CSS Homemaking providers to complete.

Action: Those interested in meeting again were asked to send topics of interest for future agendas to Chris Cobus: ccobus@ccsn-rscc.org

Over the summer, CSSN shared resources will develop and circulate a survey specific to Homemaking (based on today's discussion) to obtain data for this group to review when they meet again. Anyone in attendance today, interested in helping with this effort, please contact Chris Cobus ccobus@ccsn-rscc.org