

The Pulse



The Community Wellness Hub — *Supporting Local Seniors*

In this issue

Page 2

- Community Wellness Hub Survey Highlights
- Meet Jennifer Johnstone, Hub Community Connector

Page 3

- Donna Meloney shares her experience as a Community Wellness Hub Member

Page 4

- What Hub Residents and Providers have to say
- Highlights of a VIP Tour

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In 2019, the Community Wellness Hub ([the Hub](#)) started as a pilot at Wellington Terrace, a Burlington senior's apartment building that provides rent geared to income, to provide health and social services to residents. The aim was to offer publicly funded health and wellness care and social supports to help residents lead healthy, happy lives, reduce their need for hospital care, and help them live independently for as long as possible.

It worked!

The [Community Wellness Hub](#) is a partnership of local health care, social services, and housing. It's an alliance of 15 local health and community providers including a Community Connector who coordinates the services required by residents who are Hub members in designated senior's residences.

Benefits of the Community Wellness Hub



Live happily and healthily at home

Focus on staying well and reduce the risk of going to the hospital

Build social connections

Improve teamwork among your circle of care

The Burlington OHT surveyed Hub members in 2023

More than 90% reported that the Hub program:

- ✓ Helps them feel safe and respected
- ✓ Provides a team to support their needs
- ✓ Makes it easy for them to socialize with friends in the building where they live
- ✓ More than half of survey respondents reported that the Hub program reduced the need for them to go the hospital for acute care. That's good for the residents and our healthcare system!
- ✓ Makes it easy to access assistance when needed

What's Next for the Hub?

With the success of the program at Wellington Terrace, the Community Wellness Hub expanded to the John R. Rhodes Residence in Oakville in 2023 and on January 31, 2024, the program officially launched at 5250 Pinedale Avenue Senior's Residence in Burlington. Expansion will soon include designated apartment buildings near Wellington Terrace so residents can access services there. Plans are also underway for two additional Hub locations in Halton pending funding and staffing capacity.



Jennifer Johnstone

CWH Community Connector

"The Hub is a great program," says Johnstone. "It supports members to age in place, having access to services they require to keep them safe and living well. Here they can maintain their physical and mental health and enjoy living independently in their homes for as long as they can. It makes me proud and gives me great satisfaction to help members achieve their goals."

Meet Jennifer – A Hub Community Connector

Thrive Group is pleased to be part of the **Community Wellness Hub** as the lead organization facilitating the day-to-day operations and hosting the Community Connector at Wellington Terrace in Burlington.

As the Community Connector, **Jennifer Johnstone** coordinates the health and social care programs provided through the Hub for the senior residents.

As new tenants move into the building, Jennifer schedules a time to meet, sharing the benefits and opportunities of becoming a Hub member. If interested, she'll work with them to become a member, setting wellness-related goals and a care plan, connecting the new member to Hub services provided in the building or community: a family doctor, paramedicine services, social supports, pharmacy, etc.

Another of the many benefits of the Hub program is easy access to recreational, exercise, educational, and social programs scheduled in the building every week. Jennifer hosts **Coffee and Conversation get-togethers** where residents provide their ideas for activities and events.

From a Resident Perspective



Donna Meloney

Community Wellness
Hub Member

"The Hub program is a great benefit to me," says Donna. "It's helped improve my physical and mental health. I laugh again. I want to support other people to be happy here, too. I hope that can be my contribution."

Donna Meloney moved to Wellington Terrace five years ago and is an active member of the Community Wellness Hub. She previously lived on the top floor of a walk-up, geared-to-income apartment – a challenge for a woman in her 70s. The building was not just for seniors and had no dedicated parking. For Donna, living there was difficult and isolating.

After visiting Wellington Terrace, she knew there were many reasons to move there: **better accessibility**, she felt **safe**, she has **secure parking**, a **café** for some of her meals, and she appreciates the **freedom of choices** she now has as an enthusiastic Hub member – attending **social events**, **chair aerobics**, and looking after her **physical and mental health**, especially after the challenges of the pandemic. She also enjoys being in a building with other seniors and is happy to have made many **new friends**.

One of the greatest benefits for Donna as a Hub member has been access to physiotherapy services on site. After injuring her knee, she was able to see a **physiotherapist in the building** to provide treatment and assign exercises that Donna could do at home. In addition to her recovery from a previous hip surgery, the Hub services are supporting Donna to regain her **strength and mobility**.

A few of the many Hub programs and activities include:

- exercise classes
- a walking club, and
- fun special events



What Hub Residents and Providers have to say

Having the Wellness Hub in our building is one of the best things that could of happened for us. Having someone you can talk to about anything that is bothering you is God sent. The care and time taken to help you figure out a course that is best for you, setting activities and programs for the tenants allow us to interact and socialize.

Community Wellness Hub Member

I like the fact that this is offered in the building that I live in. I don't have to go far to attend programs and workshops. Staff hand out monthly calendars and give reminders of upcoming programs and encourage me to attend. I enjoy the weekly exercises and educational workshops provided. Recently I borrowed a tablet and was able to browse the internet and familiarize myself with how it works.

Community Wellness Hub Member



It's huge to see staff love their role. It's not common, so just seeing our Wellness Coordinator and Community Connectors go into their day every day and love what they're doing is really huge for us as an organization.

Community Wellness Hub Leader

Highlights of a VIP Tour



L-R: MPP Effie Triantafilopoulos; Karin Swift, Connected Care Halton OHT; MPP Natalie Pierre; Joe Valvasori, Halton Region; Tamara Warwick, Halton Region; Jennifer Johnstone, Thrive Group; Judy, Hub Member; Andrea Evershed, Thrive Group; Kathy Peters, Burlington OHT; Robin Martin, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health



In November 2023, the Community Wellness Hub partners were pleased to host Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health, Robin Martin; MPP Effie Triantafilopoulos; and MPP Natalie Pierre with Hub members to tour the [Wellington Terrace Hub](#) location and see first-hand how the program benefits members.

They were impressed to see how the Hub supports seniors for less than \$3.00 per day.

With sustained funding, just think of how many more seniors in Halton could benefit from the [Community Wellness Hub](#)!