



**STAFF REPORT
INFORMATION ONLY**

“Your Opinion Counts” - Advocacy

Date:	October 2, 2009
To:	Advisory Committee on Long-Term Care Homes and Services
From:	General Manager, Long-Term Care Homes and Services
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

At the May 22, 2009 meeting of the Advisory Committee on Long-Term Care Homes and Services, the Committee received and reviewed the findings on resident and family satisfaction contained within the report entitled “Your Opinion Counts Survey - January 1 to December 31, 2008”.

During this review and subsequent discussion, members suggested that specific to the Advocacy section within the survey, perhaps the division may want to re-consider the current questions within the set survey as a means of soliciting feedback and improving data collection. Given this review and discussion, members questioned whether the current questions were “user friendly” for the respondents completing the survey, and given the history on the completion rate on this section of the survey, if the current format within this section of the survey extrapolated the most useful data for the division.

As a result, there was a commitment expressed that the division would consider this input and respond back to the Advisory Committee at a later date. This report provides the Advisory members with an update on the activities undertaken within the division, and the plans that have been initiated in addressing the issues and concerns noted within the Advocacy section of the “Your Opinion Counts” satisfaction survey.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Resident-Client Advocate led the work to review and enhance the questions in “Your Opinion Counts” related to advocacy. In addition to research and interviews with key staff, the Resident-Client Advocate facilitated three (3) focus groups to solicit feedback

from residents, families and community advisers. A focus group was held with the Wesburn Manor Home Advisory Committee (August 25th); residents from Castleview Wychwood Towers participated in a focus group (September 4th); and interested family members from Seven Oaks participated in a focus group (September 16th). All participants readily volunteered to take part in the focus group exercise.

In total, thirty-five (35) people participated in consultation through the focus group process. All participants were well versed and enthusiastic supporters regarding the advocacy process, as well as the division's approach and commitment, philosophy and approach to create an environment where residents and family members could raise issues and concerns. This was most poignant in the consultation with the residents at Castleview Wychwood Towers. Having been informed of the purposes of the focus group and provided with a copy of the current "Your Opinion Counts" in advance of the meeting, several came to the meeting with side notes, questions and suggestions for change.

Following careful consideration and being sensitive to all of the feedback and advice received throughout the review process, revisions to the advocacy section of "Your Opinion Counts" are being made. The revisions fall within the following domains: formatting, definition and content changes in the questions.

COMMENTS

Currently, the advocacy section on the "Your Opinion Counts" survey spans two (2) pages. It was suggested that the survey be re-formatted so that the entire advocacy section is on one page. In this way, the reader will more easily see the section as a whole, increasing the likelihood that the section would be fully completed.

Given the fact that the term "advocacy" itself may not be widely known or understood, it was suggested that a simple definition be included as a cue and helpful reference for respondents. The following definition has been included in the revised "Your Opinion Counts": "to advocate means being able to raise an issue or concern for yourself, another person or a group of people, in order to make things better".

Participants in the consultation also offered thoughtful and insightful suggestions regarding the content of the actual questions that they felt might help in completion and in providing the division with more complete, useful data. It was suggested that the questions mirror the advocacy process as much as possible, without becoming unruly or overwhelming. Questions were re-focused for clarity as follows:

- I know who to go to if I need information or wish to have an issue addressed.
- It is important to be familiar with the "*Just for You...Advocacy*" brochure and the "*Advocacy ... Working Together*" poster.
- I am/would be comfortable in accessing the advocacy process in addressing a concern or issue that I might have.
- I am confident that I can use the advocacy process to help me if an issue or situation arises.

- I am familiar with the role and how to access the Resident-Client Advocate.

These questions are felt to be simple, user-friendly and more easily interpreted, thus increasing the likelihood of respondents being able to complete this section of the survey. In addition, the formation of the questions is framed over two (2) axis; (i) knowledge transfer and process; and (ii) perceptions, based on feelings and values, both of which may provide additional insight for future planning within the division.

The revisions to the advocacy section of “Your Opinion Counts” are anticipated to improve the response rate in this section of the survey, thus offering enhanced measurement and providing more focused data to guide advocacy processes and quality improvement.

An unresolved issue from the advice is the translation of “Your Opinion Counts” into multiple languages. Participants noted that without translated materials (in a language of choice, comfort and familiarity), a barrier to completion may continue to exist.

While the division is both aware and supportive of the benefits of translated documents, financial realities challenge this and require prioritization of documents to be fully translated. Specific to translation of the “Your Opinion Counts” (which is not linear in terms of simply disseminating specific information and knowledge), there is a reciprocal relationship, in that if the respondent should choose to respond back to the translated survey in their language of choice, the division would need to establish a process for translation, while ensuring the integrity and confidentiality of the survey process. As with other documents and publications that have been identified for potential translation, the division is committed to continue to pursue possible options and alternatives.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

- (1) Adapted “Your Opinion Counts”