

Seniors Speak

Issue 8



Toronto
Community
Housing

Changes to leadership in the Seniors Housing Unit

The General Manager (Interim) of the Seniors Housing Unit is now Grant Coffey, who joined TCHC in March 2020. Jill Bada, the former Interim General Manager, returned permanently to the City of Toronto as of September 29. We thank Jill for her many contributions to the company and its tenants, and congratulate both Jill and Grant on their new roles.

Contest winners

Congratulations to our two winners for the newsletter ideas contest in the previous issue of Seniors Speak. Our winners are **Raissa** and **Nicholas**, who each received a \$25 Shoppers Drug Mart gift card.

We have already incorporated some of your feedback in this issue, including adding a human interest story that also has information about resources available in buildings. We will continue to include your ideas whenever possible. Thank you to everyone for your contributions!

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Integrated Service Model update

The Seniors Housing Unit is divided into four regions – the North West, South West, North East and South East.

Phase 1 of the Integrated Service Model (ISM) launched in 18 buildings in December 2020. Implementation of Phase 2 of the ISM launched on September 23 in 26 buildings in the North West region, as well as in eight additional buildings in the South East region.

The implementation of Seniors Health and Wellness Hubs is currently paused while further consultations on the model take place to make sure it meets the needs of senior tenants. Information on how to participate in the consultation process will be communicated in the coming months.



Integrated
Service Model

Upcoming ISM tenant virtual information sessions will be held on:

- **Tuesday, November 16, 6 to 8 p.m.:** Update on Phase 1
- **Wednesday, December 8, 6 to 8 p.m.:** Phase 3 implementation

More information on the ISM, including tenant information sessions, a list of buildings by region and ISM implementation phase, as well as updates on the wellness hubs and consultation process, can be found at torontohousing.ca/ISM. Event information will also be posted on building notice boards.

The City's Seniors Services & Long-Term Care Division (SSLTC) has a Council-directed mandate to oversee and evaluate the ISM. As part of this process, a progress report on Phase 1 will be released in early 2022. Tenant information sessions about this report will be held by SSLTC. Keep your eye out for posters or visit toronto.ca/seniors for more information in the coming months.

Senior tenant receives staff support

The Seniors Services Coordinator (SSC) is a new role created as part of the Integrated Service Model. The following tenant experience highlights how the role of the Seniors Services Coordinator can support tenants.

A SSC received concerns from a tenant about a neighbour in the building that they felt was “not being cared for.” There were questions around the neighbour’s ability to perform daily tasks without safety risks as they had a vision impairment.

The SSC attended the unit to introduce themselves and assess the tenant’s needs. When they entered the unit, the SSC noted a lot of clutter, as well as an empty fridge. While the tenant did have nonperishable food items that they could cook, they let the SSC know they weren’t able to identify what the food items were.

The SSC expressed their concern about the safety and wellbeing of the tenant and got their consent to contact supportive services. As a result, the following was coordinated:

- The tenant was taken to an eye clinic to assess their vision.
- PSW supports increased from twice weekly to twice daily for personal care, daily needs and food prep.
- Home visits by community supports.
- A case manager worked with Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee to redirect funds to a community agency to allow access to funds for fresh and available food.

The tenant is very happy and appreciative of the support they have received. If you need support or access to services and are not sure where to start, speak with your SSC or your Community Services Coordinator (CSC - Access and Support), if your building is not yet part of the ISM.

The SSC role has been implemented in all South East and North West buildings. Their contact information is posted on notice boards in the buildings.

Senior Tenants Advisory Committee update



Members of the Senior Tenants Advisory Committee (STAC) provided input from tenants on several procedures and communications, specifically those related to arrears and eviction prevention, RGI rent reviews, and turning 65. Tenants felt the forms were threatening and too wordy, so staff are looking at how to revise the forms.



Members also met to discuss how common space is being used and prioritized and how Use of Space procedures can make sure that the tenant needs and wants are the priority.



Members will meet in mid-November to discuss unit inspections and maintenance procedures.



Interested STAC members met with the Tenant Engagement System team to provide feedback on how the Engagement System could be more senior-friendly.



STAC members met with TCHC President and CEO Jag Sharma and Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation (TSHC) Interim Transitional Lead and Chief Corporate Officer Michael Sherar to share and discuss transition plans for TSHC to take on the responsibility for Seniors Housing in mid-2022.

We are looking for new STAC members!

To apply, visit torontohousing.ca/STAC. If you need support with accessing or completing the application, contact your Seniors Services Coordinator or Community Services Coordinator.

If you have any questions or comments about STAC or the Integrated Service Model, you can email STAC@torontohousing.ca or call **416-981-6601**.

R-PATH asks: Do you want to make a difference?

Are you passionate about accessibility for people with physical disabilities?
Are you committed to working as a team?

The R-PATH Committee wants to add a member from the Seniors Housing Unit. R-PATH stands for Responsible Personal Accessibility in Toronto Housing.

We are a tenant-led committee that works with Toronto Community Housing (TCHC) management and staff to create communities that have usable spaces for tenants and staff with physical disabilities.



R-PATH was founded in 2013. In the last eight years, the TCHC accessibility program has grown leaps and bounds and R-PATH has been an important partner in the success. This includes:

- A step-by-step increase in the annual accessibility budget from \$1.5 million in 2013 to \$20.1 million in 2021.
- Helping up to 100 tenants a year live better and safer in their home through unit accessibility modifications.
- Creating the Accessibility Build Standards that go above and beyond any other design standards to make homes and communities truly usable by tenants with disabilities now and in the future.
- Advocating with the City of Toronto to improve accessibility in public spaces and City housing.

We are about the fix, not the problem. Our goal is to create effective solutions that remove accessibility barriers on all levels.

Are you interested in joining us? Email Cathy Birch at cbirch619@msn.com to receive the application package. Learn more about the R-PATH Committee at torontohousing.ca/r-path.

Decorate with care this holiday season

With beautiful and diverse festivities of many cultures upon us, it is important to decorate safely. The Ontario Fire Code sets clear rules for decorating during the holiday season.

- Holiday decorations that can burn like wreaths, trees, garlands, doormats or holiday lights **are not to be put up in common areas in your building. This includes your hallway or on your front door.** These items are a fire hazard and can cause smoke and fire to spread quickly throughout the building. As a result, tenants may not be able to escape safely from their unit and/or building.
- Only metal or non-combustible trees can be placed in common areas. They should be near sprinklers and cannot have decorations on them.
- Non-combustible trees or other non-combustible decorations must not block the path for evacuating an area in an emergency.
- As an option, holiday trees can be placed outside the building where it is safe to do so.



These rules exist to keep you and other tenants safe. Please decorate with care so that everyone can celebrate the holiday season safely. Visit torontohousing.ca/firesafety for more fire safety information.

OCHE update

The Office of the Commissioner of Housing Equity (OCHE) helps tenants who are facing eviction for rental arrears from Toronto Community Housing. Tenants within the Seniors Housing Unit are still able to receive the same level of support from OCHE as they have in the past. The new Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation (TSHC) will continue offering OCHE services to all of their tenants for a minimum of two years from when the operations are fully changed over to the new corporation (expected to be in June 2022). TSHC will be looking at ways to continue meeting the needs of tenants who are at risk of losing RGI eligibility or eviction due to arrears.

Seniors supports and services

Here are some quick links for supports and services that are available for seniors:

- For confidential health advice or information from a registered nurse, call Telehealth Ontario at **1-866-797-0000** or visit [ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca).
- For grocery and household item delivery to seniors living in low-income housing, call the Friendly Neighbourhood Hotline at **1-855-581-9580**.
- Sign up for the Rogers Connected for Success Internet Plan that's right for you. Visit connectedforsuccess.ca or call **1-866-689-0758** for more information.
- Flu vaccines will be given by appointment only at each of the City's five mass immunization clinics. You can book your flu vaccine appointment at **416-338-7600** or tphbookings.ca. You may also receive your vaccine at your local participating pharmacy or through your family doctor.



Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation update

The Interim Transitional Lead and Chief Corporate Officer for the Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation (TSHC), Michael Sherar, started his new role in July and has built a small Transition Team. The team, collaborating with TCHC and the City of Toronto, will plan a smooth transition for TSHC to become landlord for the 83 buildings within the Seniors Housing Unit by June 2022. They will engage tenants in various ways during the process.

The Corporation's Board of Directors is holding monthly meetings and has opened the meetings up and welcomes deputations from tenants and other stakeholders. For more information about the Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation Board of Directors, including event calendars, meeting agendas and recordings, visit torontoseniorshousing.ca.

How to get in touch with TCHC

You can call these numbers 24 hours a day, seven days a week, or reach us at help@torontohousing.ca:

- Client Care Centre **416-981-5500**
- Community Safety Unit **416-921-2323**
- Crime Stoppers **416-222-8477**

Disclaimer: Information in this newsletter is considered true and correct at date of publication, but changes could affect its accuracy. You can find the most up-to-date information by:

- Contacting the Client Care Centre at **416-981-5500** or help@torontohousing.ca
- Visiting torontoseniorshousing.ca
- Visiting torontohousing.ca
- Visiting toronto.ca

Seniors Speak Newsletter



Call 416-981-5500 to request this newsletter in an alternate format or another language.