

Seniors Speak

Seniors Housing Unit newsletter



Issue 6

Summer 2021

Integrated Service Model updates

The Integrated Service Model is being implemented in three phases across the Seniors Housing Unit, with completion expected by end of 2022.

The model includes two new staff positions, now in place in the 18 phase one buildings in the South East Region.

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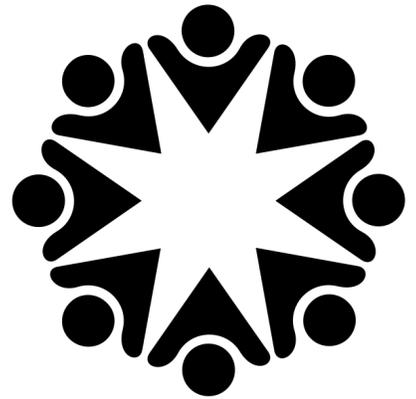
Seniors Services Coordinator (SSC): This staff member is the main point of contact for all tenant-facing concerns in the building, including access and support, engagement and tenancy management. The Seniors Services Coordinator will foster strong relationships with senior tenants, and facilitate referrals to health and community agencies as required.

Tenant Services Administrator (TSA): This is an administrative position that performs administrative tenancy management functions, including preparing correspondence with tenants, completing rent assessments, collecting arrears, analyzing data, and preparing reports.

Visit torontohousing.ca/ISM for more information on the Integrated Service Model.

Senior Tenants Advisory Committee update

The Senior Tenants Advisory Committee (STAC) are a group of senior tenants who live in Seniors Housing Unit buildings across Toronto. Our role is to provide feedback and advice on the design and delivery of the Integrated Service Model, scheduled to be implemented in every seniors building by 2022.



We have been busy. Here's what we have been up to:

- Reviewed the needs assessment tool implemented as part of the Integrated Service Model. This tool will make sure seniors are receiving the proper supports to successfully age in place.
- Provided feedback on Seniors Health and Wellness Hubs that will be located in each region.
- Worked with Seniors Housing Unit staff to develop real life scenarios used to train Seniors Services Coordinators on supports for tenants.

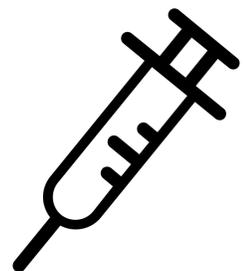
If you have questions or comments about the STAC or the Integrated Service Model, you can email **STAC@torontohousing.ca** or call **416-981-6601**.

COVID-19 reminders

With rising COVID-19 cases across the city, here are some reminders for how to stay safe:

- **Stay two metres (six feet) apart** from one another to maintain physical distancing.
- **Wear a face mask or face covering** in your building's lobby, common areas, elevator, stairwell, and laundry room.
- **Wash your hands regularly** with soap and water for 20 seconds. You can use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- **Follow the City of Toronto social gathering limits** when planning and attending indoor and outdoor public events.
- **Get the vaccine** in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Visit toronto.ca/covid19 or call **1-888-999-6488** to book an appointment.

COVID-19 vaccines are being offered in all Seniors Housing Unit buildings, with first doses almost complete. Health partners will schedule second doses of the vaccine approximately four months after you receive the first dose. Once health partners schedule dates for your second dose, staff will inform you directly.



For information on COVID-19 support or resources, visit torontohousing.ca/covid-19 or call the Client Care Centre at **416-981-5500** or the City of Toronto at **211**.

R-PATH reports: Five ways a unit modification can help you stay in your home

By the Responsible Personal Accessibility in Toronto Housing Committee

We all want to stay independent. The Accessibility Program can help you live easier in your home for longer.

Accessibility upgrades (called unit modifications) are free to you. Here are a few ways they can help:

- A raised toilet makes it easier to use the washroom.
- Climbing into a bathtub is risky. A roll-in shower stall keeps you safe.
- Having trouble reaching into cupboards for dishes and pantry items? An insert into your cupboard brings them to you.
- Is it difficult to turn doorknobs or taps? Lever handles give you independence.
- Doors are difficult to open if you use a mobility aid (cane, walker, or scooter). An automatic door opener makes it easy.



Here's how to apply for a unit modification:

- Get the Medical Questionnaire from the Client Care Centre or online at torontohousing.ca/accessibility-program under Forms. Ask your medical professional to complete the form.
- Give the form to staff in your building or put it in the office drop-box. Remember to get a copy of the completed form with a date stamp when you hand it in.

Helpful hints to combat fraud

Based on a recommendation by the Senior Tenants Advisory Committee to provide helpful advice from tenants to tenants in Seniors Speak, here is an article submitted by Anita D. Thank you, Anita!

Be wary of unsolicited calls, emails or texts.

- When you receive an unsolicited phone call and the person wants your personal information, ask questions. If the caller can't answer your questions, hang up.
- Many scammers will call, text or email pretending to be from a bank or the Canada Revenue Agency. Do not give out personal information until you can verify the call is a real one, not a scam.
- Never give your name, address, birthdate, banking or credit card information, or Social Insurance Number to anyone you do not know and trust.



If it doesn't sound right, it's not.

- A common scam is a message from a friend or family member asking for money or gift cards because they are in trouble. Call the person and ask if they need help.
- Do not click on links or attachments you do not know. This fake email may contain a virus and take over your computer.

The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC) has helpful information to avoid fraud and scams. Visit antifraudcentre.ca or call **1-888-495-8501** to learn more. You can report a fraud or scam to CAFC, but if you think you have been a victim of fraud, always call the police.

Resources and supports

Dental coverage for low-income seniors

The Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program offers free, routine dental services for low-income seniors.



You can apply for the program if you:

- are 65 years of age or older
- are a resident of Ontario
- meet the income requirements

Income requirements:

- annual net income of \$19,300 or less for a single senior
- combined annual net income of \$32,300 or less for a couple
- have no other form of dental benefits

Program coverage includes:

- check-ups, including scaling, fluoride and polishing
- repairing broken teeth and cavities
- x-rays
- removing teeth or abnormal tissue
- anesthesia

For more information, visit ontario.ca/seniorsdental, or call **416-916-0204** or call **311**.

Income tax clinics

Although tax time has passed, some people may not have had the opportunity to file yet. Here are some free resources you can use to help you file your taxes as soon as possible.

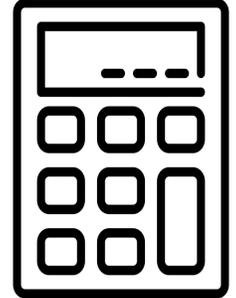
Canada Revenue Agency even offers a program where community organizations host free tax clinics, with volunteers that file tax returns for eligible people. These clinics are COVID-safe and held virtually. Free clinics are hosted by:

- Canada Revenue Agency | **1-800-959-8281** | cra.gc.ca
- Chartered Professional Accountants of Ontario | **1-800-387-0735**

Rent calculations

The Province of Ontario has recently changed the requirements of the *Housing Services Act, 2011*.

These changes come into effect on July 1, 2021, and may simplify how your rent is calculated. If your household pays Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI), your rent will now be calculated based on your most recent Notice of Assessment. This is the document that the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) sends you when you file a tax return.



All eligible members of your household need to file 2020 income taxes and provide the 2020 Notice of Assessment at the time of your next annual rent review. By filing a tax return every year, you may be eligible for various tax credits and benefits. These credits can reduce the amount of taxes that you owe and are also available even if you don't owe any tax.

If you have questions about these changes, talk to the Client Care Centre at **416-981-5500**. If you need help filing your taxes, go to canada.ca/taxes to see a list of free virtual tax clinics.

Want to be on our email list?

If you wish to receive communications from the Seniors Housing Unit, including an email version of this newsletter, send an email with your name to seniorsspeak@torontohousing.ca. You can also go to torontohousing.ca/seniorsspeak to see all issues online.

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 **torontohousing.ca**
- Visiting **toronto.ca**

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