

Community Care News

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

A newsletter about wellness and community care for the people of the South West



Welcome to the South West CCAC – Caring Together for our Communities

A message from Sandra Coleman, Executive Director

The South West Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) brings together all or portions of seven previous CCACs to serve nearly one million people in a region stretching from Tobermory in the north to Long Point in the south. Our job is to support people of all ages who are facing the challenges of age, illness, injury or disability. We are here to help you get home from hospital sooner, get the care you need in your community, stay in your own home as long as possible, and when it is no longer possible, provide you with the information you need to make other living arrangements. We can help you move through the health system more easily and comfortably, and put you in touch with the right services and supports at the right time.

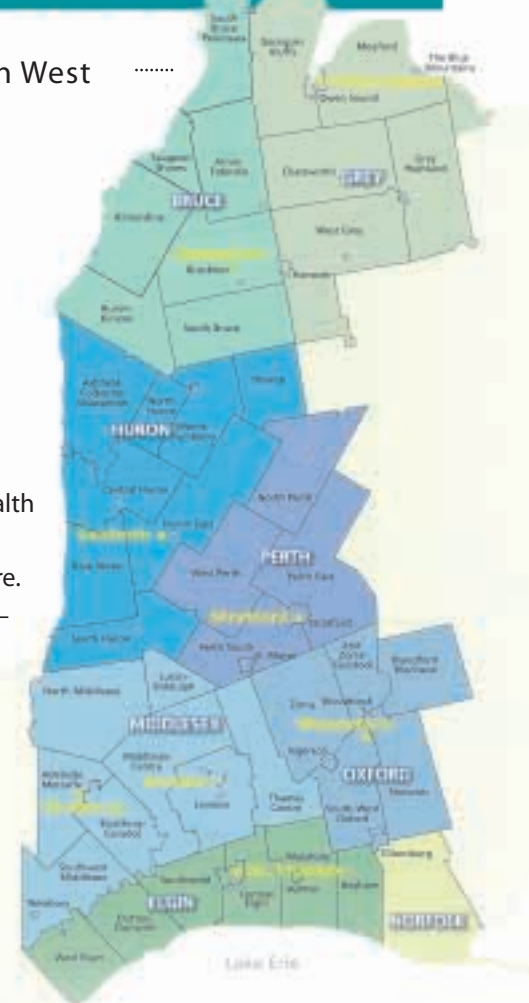
Our organization has a special approach to providing care – something we call Client-Driven Care. What does that mean?

You are an important member of your care team. Our Case Managers, nurses, personal support workers and other care providers will work in partnership with you to reach your health goals. We will respect your knowledge, wisdom and preferences, and help you make informed decisions about your care.

At the South West CCAC, our core strength is our people – skilled and compassionate health care professionals who are deeply committed to helping you. If you have questions or concerns, or your situation changes, be sure to contact your Case Manager immediately.

Watch for future issues of *Community Care News*, with useful information about the South West CCAC and how we can work with you and help you. Or, contact your local office (see page 2).

— *Best wishes, Sandra Coleman*



Safe at Home

Take common-sense steps to make your house as safe as possible

When Sandra Gardiner first goes into a client's house, she takes a close look at the area rugs, furniture and bathroom fixtures. No, she's not an interior decorator: she's a South West CCAC Case Manager, and she wants to make sure her clients are safe at home.

South West CCAC clients are often frail, have limited mobility, or live with physical, sensory or cognitive disabilities. Many live alone. It's important that their surroundings are designed with safety and security in mind. "The number one piece of advice I give my clients," says Gardiner, "is to use their mobility aids, such as walkers or canes. It's much better than taking a risk and hanging on to walls or furniture." She also notes that loose throw rugs, power cords, crowded furniture and clutter on the floor can create hazards.

Because stairs can be challenging, she suggests that clients consider moving their bedroom and laundry facilities to the main floor. That's a piece of advice one client, 85-year-old Viola, took to heart. Viola lives in the farmhouse where she was born, and until recently cared for her twin brother Earl. Earl recently moved to a long-term care home, but Viola is fiercely independent. "It's my home," she says.

"It's full of all kinds of memories."

Gardiner says it's important to respect the choices clients make and work in partnership with them. "People have a right to choose how they live," she says. "Many of them are determined to stay in their own homes. I just try to help them be as safe as possible."

"People have the right to choose how they live."

Gardiner suggests clients consider a few simple measures, including:

- Installing a raised toilet seat or "high-rise" toilet, grab bars around the toilet and in the tub, a hand-held shower, and a sturdy bath seat
- Purchasing a "reacher" – a long pole with a squeeze handle on one end and a claw hand on the other – to get things from high cupboards
- Wearing supportive shoes at all times in the house, to ensure stability and avoid slipping
- Installing an emergency response system to call for help
- Arranging a "buddy system" with a neighbour, or having a family member call at a regular time each day

Concerned about the safety of a family member who is living alone?

Here are some more things you can do:

- Ensure steps and hallways are well lit
- Arrange for walkways and outdoor steps to be cleared of snow and ice
- Put a fire extinguisher near the stove and a smoke alarm just outside the kitchen
- If your family member is cognitively impaired, consider removing the stove fuses so that he or she can only use the microwave
- Install a thermostatic shower control to prevent scalding, and non-slip bathroom flooring
- Install nightlights in the bedroom to illuminate the way to the bathroom
- Keep a list of emergency phone numbers by the telephone
- Contact the South West CCAC if you have questions or concerns

South West CCAC Case Manager Sandra Gardiner helped her client organize the living space of her farmhouse with safety and accessibility in mind.



Contents

WELCOME.....	1
Make your home safe.....	1
Special support for clients with cancer.....	2
Continuous care from hospital to home.....	2
Helping you organize end-of-life care at home.....	3
Have a say in the future of community care.....	3
One family's story.....	4
Information at your fingertips.....	4
Meet our Board.....	4

For further information about *all* South West CCAC support services, visit us online at www.sw.ccac-ont.ca or call your local office.

London
 519 473 2222
 1 800 811 5146

Owen Sound
 519 371 2112
 1 888 371 2112

Seaforth
 519 527 0000
 1 800 267 0535

Stratford
 519 273 2222
 1 800 269 3683

Strathroy
 519 245 3233
 1 800 265 6235

St. Thomas
 519 631 9907
 1 800 563 3098

Walkerton
 519 881 1181
 1 888 371 2112

Woodstock
 519 539 1284
 1 800 561 5490

Supporting the Cancer Journey

The South West CCAC is a place to turn for help when you need it most

Two years ago, Jeff Karp learned he had colon cancer and would have to undergo aggressive treatment. Peggy Gillespie, South West CCAC Oncology Care Co-ordinator in Elgin, recalls the day that Karp showed up at her office armed with piles of information about his disease and how to treat it. When it came to making decisions, Karp wanted to be involved. But he needed help in understanding the system.

“We explained how the London Regional Cancer Program (LRCP) works, what the referrals meant, what the oncologists do and what the radiologists do,” explains Gillespie. “This gave him an idea of how he could be part of the decision-making concerning his treatment.”

When it came time to organize support at home, Karp and his wife Terri met with their South West CCAC

Support Team. Since then, his home care has included regular visits from nurse Bette Kline of ParaMed Home Health Care, a South West CCAC service provider.

Home care can often be arranged to suit a client’s personal schedule. Karp, for instance, is an early bird so Klein usually arrives first thing in the morning. Says Karp’s South West CCAC Case Manager Anna Ackland, “We work with our clients to provide the services needed to help them get through their journey. And that’s that.”

If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with cancer, chances are you’re feeling frightened and overwhelmed. First of all, you’re coping with emotional questions: How do I tell my family? Will I be able to continue working? How will I get everything done? It’s likely you’re also asking: What are my treatment options? And, what services are available to me and my family?

The South West CCAC is here to lend a hand and help you find answers to your questions through our Supportive Care Program. It’s free of charge to Ontario residents with a valid health card and available at many sites across the region. (See list of sites and contact numbers).

The South West CCAC provides a variety of other oncology care services including personal care, nutritional counselling, social work, therapies and caregiver relief. One of our Case Managers will arrange these services for you or link you to other resources for navigating your cancer journey.

Jeff Karp and his wife, Terri, are surrounded by their South West CCAC Supportive Care Team (left to right): Case Manager Anna Ackland, ParaMed Home Health Care Nurse Bette Kline and Case Manager Peggy Gillespie (far right).



No Place Like Home

South West CCAC support helps you leave the hospital, confident that home is where you belong

“There’s no place like home,” declared Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*. Here at the South West CCAC, we agree. Even after being in hospital for chronic illness or surgery, we know that people generally fare better at home, surrounded by their own things and people who are near and dear to them.

Of course, when you’re leaving the hospital careful attention must be given to putting the right services in place for a successful convalescence. That’s the job of our Hospital Case Managers. Working in all hospitals throughout the South West area, they keep in touch with the doctors and nurses who have been caring for you. They’re then able to answer ques-

tions you and your family may have.

Discharge planning is all about ensuring continuity of care from hospital to home. In fact, if you’re admitted to the hospital, planning for your return home often starts right away. Says Karen Robinson, Discharge Planning Case Manager at Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital (TDMH), “I always work well ahead to make sure that individual services will be in place as soon as my client returns home.”

Taking advantage of the services offered is entirely up to the patient. “We are simply empowering clients to make care choices by offering to them a wide variety of community programs and services,” says Gwen Vanderheyden, South West CCAC Client Services Regional Manager for Hospitals.

Patient Betty Jackson is making care choices she feels suit her best. Helped by Robinson at TDMH, she has been in and out of hospital several times over the course of her cancer journey. Jackson has used South West CCAC-arranged home nursing and medical equipment but decided against having a Personal Support Worker. These decisions have been hers to make. “I have been encouraged to take my time and think about what I want to do,” she says. “But when I do want support, it’s at my fingertips.”

Studies show that careful discharge planning frees up hospital space earlier for acute care patients and results in fewer surgery cancellations due to bed shortages. In short, it means the right care can be delivered to the right patient in the right place. That’s a good thing.

“When I do want support, it’s at my fingertips.”



South West CCAC Hospital Discharge Case Managers Karen Robinson, left, and Vicky Coward, right, meet regularly with patients like Betty Jackson at Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital. The Case Managers work to ensure a smooth transition from hospital to home.

Here’s what our Hospital Discharge Case Managers can do for you:

- * Set up home nursing, personal support and other therapeutic services
- * Ensure that medications and/or equipment have been ordered
- * Link you with various community resources designed to support your needs

Support

Sharing the Final Days

Caring for a loved one at the end of life is not a decision to be taken lightly

Terri Johnston's father was terrified of hospitals. A man of 60, he hadn't spent a night in hospital since he had his tonsils out at age 6. When doctors told him he was dying of lung cancer and had weeks to live, Terri decided to look after him in her home. "My parents took good care of me when I was little," she says simply. "It was time for me to return the favour."

For three weeks, Terri and her husband cared for her father with the support of South West CCAC Case Manager Nancy Thornton and a group of dedicated care providers. It wasn't always easy but Terri says it was the right decision for them. "It was as good an experience as it could be under the circumstances, because everybody was so supportive. My dad passed the way he wanted to pass, and that's a gift that nobody can ever take away from me."

A recent poll showed that 90 per cent of Canadians would like to die at home, yet 75 per cent continue to die in hospital. That's changing. The Ontario government has invested additional funds in end-of-life care to ensure that families can choose the right option for them. The South West CCAC supports many families who make the same choice as Johnston. "When it works, it's a good feeling," says Thornton, "but it's not for everyone. It can be a very rough road."

When a family decides to care for a palliative patient at home, a referral is made to the South West CCAC. The first step is a visit from a Case Manager like Thornton – an opportunity to provide information and get a feeling for the family dynamics. The Case Manager arranges for nursing, personal support and medical equipment, puts the family in touch with other community support services, and then checks in regularly.

Some families supplement the assistance available through the South West CCAC with private-pay nursing and personal support. Volunteer hospice visitors can also be a welcome help, often staying with the patient while caregivers take a much-needed break. "A visit from a hospice volunteer can be a chance for the patient to talk about things in a different way than they can with their family," says Karen Lehnen, Program Coordinator of the VON's Palliative Care Volunteer Program in South Huron. "They can open up to a volunteer and explore issues in their lives in a safe, confidential way."

That kind of emotional and spiritual support can be just as important as symptom control and physical care, says Reverend Graham Bland, Professional Practice Leader for Spiritual

Care at London Health Sciences Centre. "We start with the assumption that most, if not all, people at the end of life raise spiritual questions," he says. "Any caregiver can respond to these

Paul Cavanagh, Director of the South West End-of-Life Care Network, says there are many questions to ask yourself before deciding to care for a loved one in the final days. "Find out

"My dad passed the way he wanted to pass and that's a gift that nobody can ever take away from me."

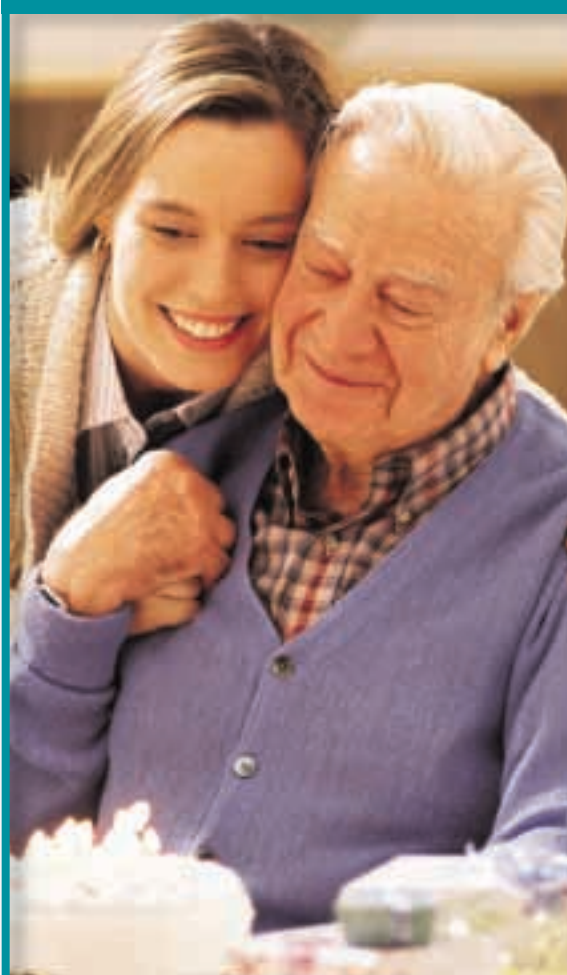
issues. It's a matter of celebrating your lives together, telling your stories, looking back on the things you have valued and found important, and sharing the places where you have consistently found strength and nourishment."

what resources are available in your community," he says, "and then consider what it will mean to you as a family. Help is available for families, but they still need to be ready to deal with a lot of care."

SOME ISSUES TO CONSIDER:

- Do you have a family doctor willing to care for a patient dying at home?
- Can the patient's symptoms be managed at home?
- Can you balance caregiving with your family and work responsibilities? Can you arrange to take a leave from work?
- Can you afford the financial costs of medical equipment and private nursing?
- Do you have space in your house for a hospital bed and other equipment?
- Can you handle the physical and emotional demands of care?
- Will the patient be comfortable with you providing care?
- Are there other family members and friends who can help?

For more information on end-of-life care and the services available in your community, contact the South West CCAC or visit thehealthline.ca and click on "End-of-Life Care Resources."



We're all in this together...

Help shape the future of home care

Recently, seven CCACs in this area merged to become the South West CCAC. We want to tell you about our new organization and find out how we can meet your needs through consistent, high-quality care. That's why we're hosting a series of meetings over the next few months with groups of people throughout the South West. We'll explain what we're doing and listen to your comments and suggestions.

Be sure to attend an interactive session near you.* It's your opportunity to help us develop a bold new vision for community care and an action plan to get there!

Together we're caring for our communities!

Community Engagement Schedule – Public Sessions

Date	Time	City	Location	Address
September 11, 2007	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Owen Sound	St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church	865 2nd Avenue W.
September 19, 2007	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Walkerton	Walkerton Agricultural Society	206 Durham Street W.
September 25, 2007	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Clinton	Betty Cardno Memorial Centre	317 Huron Road
October 3, 2007	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Woodstock	CAW Local 636 Hall	126 Beale Street
October 4, 2007	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	St. Thomas	St. Thomas-Elgin Memorial Centre	80 Wilson Avenue
October 16, 2007	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	London	Westmount Library	3200 Wonderland Road S.
October 23, 2007	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Stratford	Kiwanis Community Centre	111 Lakeside Drive
October 30, 2007	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Strathroy	Gemini Sportsplex	667 Adair Boulevard
November 1, 2007	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Port Rowan	Port Rowan Legion	12 Centre Street

* The presentation and a questionnaire will be posted on the www.thehealthline.ca website beginning in September for those unable to attend.

For more information contact:
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 South West CCAC
 Telephone: 519 641 5521
 Toll Free: 1 800 811 5146
 Fax: 519 472 1059
Susan.mclean@sw.ccac-ont.ca

South West
Community Care Access Centre



CCAC
 Centre d'accès aux soins communautaires
 du Sud-Ouest

www.sw.ccac-ont.ca



thehealthline.ca

Information highway to health

Wondering when the nearest walk-in clinic is open? How to find pre-natal classes? What adult day programs are in your area? Where to get your flu shot?

In the South West, the answers are all at your fingertips. thehealthline.ca is an easy-to-use web portal listing more than 2,000 health and social services. Simply visit the home page and follow the subject links, or use the search engine to go straight to the information you need.

Say, for example, you want to find general information about long-term care for your father, contact the South West CCAC about placement, and view a listing of homes in your area. It's all only a few clicks away! Or perhaps your daughter is looking for information about breastfeeding. Help with an addiction? Information on nutrition and weight control? It's all there along with health event listings, a job board, news items, and monthly e-bulletin. In fact, the site is so useful it gets more than one million visits each year. Maybe it's time for you to explore www.thehealthline.ca.

POINT OF VIEW

Through our programs, we help amazing people of all ages – and with all kinds of challenges. Meet six-year-old Gabby Nixon of Durham in Grey County. The South West CCAC has arranged support services for her since she came home from the hospital in London at six months old. Her mother, Susan, explains just what the South West CCAC means to their lives.

“Gabby was born with Spina Bifida and a rare syndrome called Arnold-Chiari. She is severely challenged and requires tubes to eat and breathe. She needs round the clock monitoring and care. We’ve been able to get much of this from the South West CCAC. Gabby has lots of appointments. Loading her equipment into the car takes about 20 minutes so it’s been a Godsend to have South West CCAC-arranged services in our home or at the school.”

“Now that Gabby is six, the highlight of her day is being with other children at school. Her nurse Jane Terwoord, who works for the South West CCAC service provider CarePartners, gets her ready every morning and looks after her throughout the day. Our South West CCAC Case Manager, Karen Nunn, has co-ordinated other services at school such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech language pathology. It’s a very busy day but Gabby is thriving!

“Caring for a high-needs child like Gabby on our own could easily have turned family life upside down. However, with help from the South West CCAC, we’ve been able to live quite normally. I have a part-time job. My husband Rob and I also have time to enjoy our three other children and their many activities. We feel very blessed.”



Gabby Nixon and her care team (left to right): Nurse Jane Terwoord of Care Partners; South West CCAC Case Manager Karen Nunn; and Gabby’s Mom Susan Nixon.

Besides pediatric support, many other South West CCAC programs are available to people of all ages. They include community geriatrics, convalescent care, end-of-life care, school health and respite/caregiver support.

- South West CCAC services include:
- Information and referral to community resources
 - System navigation
 - Case management services including individualized assessment and service planning for in-home services and supports
 - Community programs accessed through the South West CCAC

All A’ Board

Meet the men and women who govern our affairs

Members of our Board of Directors are all volunteers and hail from all corners of our region. They have a special interest in health care and all are leaders in their communities. The Board forms a strong public voice when it comes to discussing strategic policy and priorities for the South West CCAC.

Recently, the Board has been holding meetings at sites across the South West to get to know our region better. These men and women will also play a key role in our upcoming public sessions, leading discussions and fielding your questions about our plans for future care. Public sessions start in September (see page 3).

“I would like to invite our clients to get involved by attending any of the public meetings we are hosting across the South West CCAC region,” says Evelyn Harris-Williams, Board Chair. “It’s a wonderful chance for us to meet our clients and to involve them as stakeholders in their community care.”



South West CCAC Board Members

Front row (left to right): Dr. Deborah Fitzsimmons, Vice Chair; Sandra Coleman, Executive Director; Evelyn Harris-Williams, Chair and Bonnie Monteith; Back row (left to right): Jean Peacock; Ed De Decker; Richard Murray, Treasurer; Joy Warkentin; Glen Elliott; Don Keillor; Mary Lapaine, Secretary; Dr. Claude Lanfranconi and Cate Patchett, Corporate Liaison

South West CCAC Board Meetings

Date	City	Date	City
August 22, 2007	Walkerton	November 28, 2007	Woodstock
September 26, 2007	St. Thomas	December 19, 2007	London
October 24, 2007	Stratford		

If you wish to contact the Board please call Cate Patchett, Corporate Liaison, at 519 641 5482

If you or someone you know needs a helping hand, contact your local South West CCAC.

www.sw.ccac-ont.ca

Quality Care Innovation Integration Accountability System Navigation

South West CCAC
Community Care Access Centre
CASC Centre d'accès aux soins communautaires du Sud-Ouest

