

FOCUS

FALL/WINTER 2020



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Message From CEO

We started 2020 with a great deal of hope and excitement for the new decade. We have been focused on implementing our new strategic plan and 2020 was set to be a big year for Belmont House. Well, it has been a big year.

Since March, like everyone else in the world, our Belmont family has been challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic. Just like you, we have experienced significant challenge in the way we live our daily lives and the many restrictions we face.

Belmont rises to conquer many challenges

At Belmont House, the way we work has also required many difficult restrictions and changes, but they paid off. At the time of publishing this newsletter, not one Resident or Tenant has contracted COVID-19.

I am so proud of all our staff who are going above and beyond to make sure Residents and Tenants receive the best care possible including keeping up with their exercise, outdoor time, and enjoying recreation activities and family time. Their commitment and love for Residents and Tenants has been inspiring and I consider myself truly blessed to lead such an extraordinary team.

We have also been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support and encouragement from our Belmont family. To everyone who has dropped off masks, or made generous financial gifts to the Belmont House Foundation and our special staff gratuity fund, from the bottom of my heart, I thank you. Your support means the world to us and is helping us keep everyone who lives here healthy and happy.

Maria Elias



Our staff are tested for COVID-19 every two weeks. Registered Practical Nurses Taj Kassam and Brittney Hadada are part of our team who kindly (and gently) test all staff. We are committed to doing everything we can to keep our community safe!

New Board Chair committed to growth and innovation

In a far-from-“normal” Annual General Meeting held by conference call, Elaine Roberts took up the mantle of Chair of the Belmont House Board of Directors with excitement and vision.

Since joining the Board of Directors in 2017, Elaine has learned about the care of seniors and navigating the challenges of providing excellent quality care for a population that is so often overlooked. Inspired by our home-like atmosphere and excellent reputation, Elaine continues to proudly to serve the Belmont community, now accepting a leadership role.

A highly ethical retired finance professional, Elaine is passionate about assuring that Belmont continues to be strongly governed and innovating to meet emerging healthcare needs. She is looking forward to being a part of leading Belmont House into the future and implementing the strategic plan, which was released in 2019.

“Our ambitious strategic plan gives us an opportunity to be creative and forward thinking,” says Elaine. “Unfortunately, the global pandemic is part of our new normal, but we cannot let it



Elaine Roberts is excited to take the role of Chair of Belmont House’s Board of Directors, and will lead us in strategically reshaping and expanding our care model.

stop the ongoing work we must do for all Belmont Residents and Tenants. We have a real opportunity to reshape and expand our care model.”

Maintaining family connections in a difficult time

“Being able to see Mum, talk with her and assure her as best we can throughout these uncertain times really means the world to us,” says family member Peter Campbell. “It is important to still feel close, even in times I can’t give her a hug.”

The past few months have been difficult for the entire Belmont family. We miss having our home filled with family members and friends enjoying

“These trying times have been a learning experience for all of us,” says Peter Campbell, safely speaking to his mother Resident Mrs. Violet Campbell through a family interaction screen. “Belmont House staff have been doing a remarkable job keeping our family close.”



Belmont community is in good spirits



"I painted this piece that I call "Corona" from an outlook of hope," says Tenant Ellen Edmonds. "The colours represent faith, hope and love." During the past few months, Ellen has spent lots of time painting. "It is so relaxing and gives me an opportunity to get my feelings out."



Thank you to grade 3, 7 & 8 students at Jesse Ketchum Public School who created beautiful art for our staff, Residents and Tenants! Accompanied by Paige Fernandes, Planning and Community Engagement Coordinator, Tenant Mrs. Barbara McMurrich says, "We all need to take care of each other right now. I love the art that was made for me!"



The sunshine in the Belmont House gardens is truly divine! Resident Ms. Madeline Samuel and Kim Barton, Recreation Coordinator, enjoy some time outside, soaking up the sunshine together.

time together in the gardens, having fun at our special events and sharing meals together. Family members are an essential part of life at Belmont House.

Enabling safe visits keeps families connected

Peter recalls, "When we were told in March that we were no longer able to visit our loved ones inside the home, I was worried about how long it would be until I could see my mum. Thankfully, the recreation staff began facilitating alternative visits right away."

Our exemplary recreation staff began scheduling video calls and window visits the day after we had to stop visitors from coming inside. Once

warmer weather arrived, distanced outdoor visits allowed families to spend quality time in the gardens. We have also invested in family interaction screens and microphones that encourage closeness in a safe way.

"The window visits and distanced outdoor visits had their own challenges as my mother has difficulty with her hearing," says Peter. "The new plexiglass barrier has solved a lot of these challenges. We are able to be close and the microphone makes it easy to hear each other. Of course, I long to hold my mum's hand and spend more time together, but I am so thankful for all the Belmont House staff who have been scheduling and coordinating all of our visits, while continuing to give such great care to my mum."

Man on a mission to help Belmont House Residents

While in isolation, our Residents and Tenants have been able to continue to enjoy ample time outdoors and exercising. Thanks to Belmont's extensive and safe outdoor grounds, Tenant Chris Wansbrough continued to enjoy our gardens, taking long walks in the Stillman Garden courtyard. While on one of this walks, he had an idea.

"My daughter told me about a WW2 veteran in the UK who was walking around his garden to raise funds for the frontline healthcare workers across the country fighting COVID-19," says Chris. "We thought that it would be fun if I could do something similar. We came up with the idea that I would challenge myself to walk 100 kilometres and raise \$25,000 for Belmont House."

Chris thought this challenge would be a great opportunity to raise funds for new therapeutic mattresses. They are much needed for Residents — often people in palliative care — who must spend significant time in bed. Their lack of mobility inhibits their circulation, which can lead to uncomfortable pressure ulcers that are at high risk for infection. Therapeutic mattresses automatically and gently adjust under Residents to provide continual support that reduces pressure on their body and increases their comfort.

"We are all so lucky to be living in such a wonderful, safe, and beautiful home," says Chris.



Mr. Chris Wansbrough walked 100 kilometres in 21 days and raised \$54,000 to buy special therapeutic mattresses to help frail Belmont House Residents who must spend most of their days in bed.

"I consider myself especially lucky to live here in my retirement apartment because every day I get to see my wife who lives in Long Term Care at Belmont, and the exceptional care she receives. The opportunity to raise funds for these beneficial mattresses was an exciting challenge," Chris recalls.

In just 21 days, Chris walked 100 kilometres around the Stillman Garden and more than doubled his goal, raising an incredible \$54,000 for Belmont House!

Our sincerest gratitude goes to everyone who gave so generously and sent words of encouragement and cheer, and particularly to the Wansbrough family who so proudly engaged their friends and colleagues in giving. Well done, everyone!



Sewing masks to keep everyone safe

Our community rallied around Belmont House from day one of the pandemic. Many thanks to everyone who sewed face masks to help keep us safe including Belmont House Housekeeper, Philomena Pimentel who spent hours lovingly sewing masks. Thank you Philomena, Trudy Huaining, Nichole Hadada, Grace Church on the Hill and everyone else who so generously made and donated face masks.

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A newsletter for
donors and friends
of Belmont House

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