

The *Birch Leaf News*

Summer 2021

Summer Fun at the Birches

Summer is a time for fun here at the Birches, and with the help of our 2 summer students, Tory and Abby, our recreation calendar has been chock full of summer activities like baking, BBQs, and music lessons!

We are also trying to spend lots of time outdoors, including enjoying our beautiful gardens which are boasting lots of vibrant colors thanks to the wonderful donation of flowers from Mannette's Nursery.

Some other summer highlights included our Strawberry Social which was a hit with local berries and lots of whipped cream, and our Canada Day celebration with trivia and staff singing our anthem.

We hope you're enjoying the summer as much as we are here at the Birches! And we also hope you will join us in saying a big thanks to Tory and Abby for joining us this summer, as they head back to school in the fall! Kudos to you both!



Spotlight on... Embracing Change

Did you know that in 2030, more than 1 in 4 Nova Scotians will be aged 65+?

As a charitable nursing home, at all levels — from our volunteer Board of Directors, to our leadership team, to our frontline staff and volunteers — we are driven to do all we can to help our local seniors live in a community of dignified, gracious living. We know that to accomplish this, changing the way we do things is going to become more and more essential to ensure we're able to help our growing number of local seniors live well as they age.

For some organizations, **change** is a challenging and scary word. But here at The Birches we want to embrace change as a great tool at our disposal! Although sometimes uncomfortable, change can create opportunity, growth, and positive impact. **We are surrounded by the positive results of change every day!**

Now you might be saying, "Sounds great in theory, but in real life the status quo seems easier!"

So I invite you to imagine for a minute if two pretty big changes, the introduction of the *telephone* AND *walkie talkies*, never happened! When these two things were invented (*both by Canadians, by the way*), each represented a big change in how people communicated. Many wondered, at the time, why we couldn't just continue doing things the way we did before.

Just imagine the amount of yelling we'd have to do around The Birches if people hadn't eventually embraced those changes! Or imagine how much more of a struggle the many months of the pandemic would have been if families weren't able to reach our residents by phone (and even more recent technologies, like tablets)! It's obvious that change CAN have positive impacts!

"But change still *feels* challenging, what should I do?"

- **Read and listen to information** about the change as it is shared to learn more!
- Pause and take time to **reflect on "why"** the change might be happening, and how it might have a positive impact on those we serve
- **Ask questions** at meetings, huddles, or in conversations with managers
- If you have a concern or feedback about a specific change, try to **suggest solutions/tweaks** to make the change work better!
- If staff are struggling with a change, they can also reach out to our *Employee and Family Assistance Program* for support at www.workhealthlife.com



Who's Who...?

Shirley Landry, Team Leader

Meet Shirley! Shirley comes to this leadership role at The Birches with a wealth of experience, including 20+ years of nursing experience in long term care, mental health, and management. Many of you will remember Shirley from her previous contributions to the Ocean View and Birches community!

In the Team Leader role, Shirley will support us in a number of important ways, including daily supervision of our LPN and CCA teams, supporting and leading them to ensure we are providing excellent resident care. She will be responsible for many of the human resources supports for this team, including performance feedback and reviews; and orientation of new team members.

Shirley will act as a resident and family advocate; and will implement best practice policies, procedures, education, and improvements to ensure we're offering quality care! As Team Leader, she will also provide leadership for infection prevention and control initiatives.



We are thrilled for Shirley to contribute her talents and training to this and other activities at The Birches. Her education includes programs in Management Development for Women and Health Services Management. She herself has also been a facilitator for a number of courses over the years, which will help her coach and educate our teams! We are thrilled to see all she will contribute to life at the Birches!

Doug Snow, Decision Support Leader

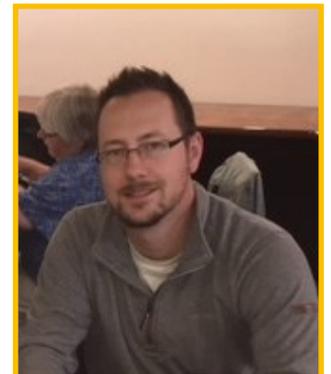
Providing support for Ocean View, The Birches, Port City, and central office, Doug has an impact on so many aspects of our work in his role as Decision Support Leader. One of the things he enjoys about his position is that he gets to work with every employee (and many stakeholders) of our organization.

"And luckily Ocean View and The Birches have some of the nicest people I have ever had the pleasure of working with!" he says.

Doug brings a wealth of experience to his role. His work involves many aspects of information technology — from servers, to emails, to our websites, to computers, to printers, to phones, to cyber security, to software, to nurse call systems, and beyond! He also helps us troubleshoot when we have issues and maintain the software systems that facilitate our work. Doug also helps us collect, store, and use information that we need to do our work! He loves playing a part in our large inter-disciplinary team as we tackle tough issues.

Above all, Doug tries his best to help us all feel comfortable with technology, while also feeling comfortable to ask him questions!

"People often say 'wow you make this look so easy'," Doug says, "Keep in mind I've been doing this for years, and practice this stuff every day. I don't know how to provide care for a resident or give a needle... you sure make THAT look easy!"



Spotlight on Quality & Risk - Protecting our Residents' Information

We are thrilled to share that a new member of our team will be taking on our "Privacy Officer" role — our new Senior Director, Engagement and Accountability, Erin Beaton, will be our Privacy Officer moving forward. With this change in mind, we thought it would be a great time to review some information about privacy and confidentiality!

Here is a helpful Glossary to help us all discuss this topic day-to-day!:

Confidentiality: preserving the privacy of the people you care for; this means all information related to clients will be kept in strict confidence for use only by the team of care providers (includes information gained verbally or from client records). **Confidentiality applies to data/information.**

Private: not available for public viewing or knowledge; privacy also refers to the right to have physical privacy (e.g. curtains closed, knocking before entering a bedroom). **Privacy applies to the person.**

Breach of confidentiality: sharing information verbally or in written form regarding a Resident with someone who is not on the care team, or who does not have a release of information consent.

PHIA: The Personal Health Information Act protects Residents' personal information. It governs how healthcare providers may collect, use, disclose, and maintain clients' health information. We strive to follow the need to know principle - "We collect, use and share the least amount of health information necessary to provide quality care".

"NEED
TO
KNOW"

Under this law, clients have the right to be told if their privacy has been breached if there is potential for harm or embarrassment to them; to see who has looked at their health record; and to be told who to complain to and how.

Spotlight on Quality & Risk - Protecting our Residents' Information *continued*

You might be wondering, how do we protect Private and Confidential information in our day-to-day work?:

- We should never leave client information or health care records open or unattended in public areas where others can have access to them (ex. spa rooms, common rooms). This includes MARs, TARs, flow sheets, log sheets, tracking sheets. Diet profiles should also be closed and removed from public areas when not in use.
- We should discuss client information ONLY in a place that is away from other clients and visitors. We should never discuss client information in a hallway, break room, or any other public place within or outside the facility.
- We should discuss client information only with appropriate staff who have a "need to know" the information.
- We should shred any item with a client's name or identifying medical information - never dispose of them in general trash bins or use for scrap paper!
- We should never use a personal device to photograph or record anyone while at work.

Do you still have **questions about Privacy & Confidentiality?**

You can refer to Corporate policy A1700 to learn more!

Or if you have a specific question,
you can reach out to **Erin at**

902-465-6020 ext. 2625 or **ebeaton@oceanv.ca!**



In this section of the Birch Leaf News, we share some words of appreciation that have been posted on our *Leaves of Respect* board:



"Some days are blessings and some days are rough hills, but working together makes it all worthwhile. Thanks a million!" - Rebecca M.

"Laura & Yoko, you both rock!"

"Thanks for a great summer to all the casuals that got us through the whirlwind of being part of a great team" - Rebecca M.

"Thank you all nursing staff for helping me learn! Special shout out to Sarah, Susan & Judy for orientating me!" - Richelle

What's Going On?

- The Department of Health and Wellness is re-offering the **Recognizing Prior Learning (RPL) Assistance** and **CCA Bursary Programs** this year. These two initiatives are intended to reduce the costs of becoming a CCA, and may be an exciting opportunity for members of our team and community! Spread the word!

Recognizing Prior Learning (RPL) Assistance Program

The RPL process has been an important source of new CCAs for Nova Scotia. Approximately 18% of all CCAs certified have been credentialed through this process.

Supports provided in this program include:

- Fees for the RPL process will be waived for Phase I (\$800) and/or reduced for Phase II (\$800) for up to 300 participants!
- Up to 10 new assessors will be available to deliver Phase I of the RPL program to increase the accessibility province-wide!

To qualify for the RPL Assistance Program, participants must:

- Be accepted as a participant in Phase I or Phase II of the RPL Program between April 1, 2021 and March 31, 2022;
- Provide a letter from a Nova Scotia continuing care employer (like the Birches!) indicating that the participant is currently employed there or has been offered employment there; and
- Sign a letter of intent to work as a CCA in the continuing care sector in Nova Scotia, upon certification, for a period of one year.

For questions about the program, please contact
Pam.Fowler@healthassociation.ns.ca.

CCA Bursary Program

Again this year, the CCA Bursary Program will continue to provide bursaries of up to \$4,000 for full-time students or \$2,000 for part-time students enrolled in approved education programs including those at NSCC, CBBC Career College, Eastern College, and Island Career Academy.

The purpose of the program is to increase enrollment in the program by removing financial barriers for students.

For a list of approved education programs, please contact the CCA Program
Pam.Shipley@healthassociation.ns.ca



What's Going On?

- We are pleased to share that **Yvonne McKinnon, RN, will join us in September as Site Manager / Director of Care.** Yvonne comes to us with a rich nursing background in acute care in leadership and staff nursing roles. Being a resident of the Eastern shore area she is very familiar with the local community. She has also worked at Twin Oaks and Eastern Shore Memorial. Her most recent role was that of Administrative Coordinator at the Dartmouth General Hospital. We are offering a warm welcome to Yvonne!

- We are recruiting! We know staffing shortages impact all of us here at The Birches. That is why we are working hard to recruit lots of roles! We are especially keen to hear from local CCAs and RNs — if **you** know any folks with these talents, please invite them to visit our website to learn more about what makes The Birches special! They can also learn about these specific roles and the creative benefits we might be able to offer new members of the team at: www.thebirchesns.ca/join-our-team

- During the Spring of 2021, residents and families were able to give some feedback on how the staff and administration are doing at the Birches! Overall, the survey results were very good! Top result areas included:
 - More than 80 % of families feel communication during the pandemic was above average.
 - More than 80 % of families feel the care that CCA, LPN and RNs provide for residents was excellent during the pandemic.
 - More than 90 % of families feel they were treated with respect by administration and that questions were answered quickly.
 - More than 80 % of families feel staff were easy to talk to during the pandemic.The survey results will be reviewed in detail in August by our Birches Quality team who look for potential quality improvement projects to implement based on the feedback!

- **October 9th is World Mental Health Day!** Did you know? The Canadian Mental Health Association is a fantastic resource for all Nova Scotians! CMHA offers lots of information, programs and resources at www.novascotia.cmha.ca/

- In October we celebrate **Continuing Care Month** in Nova Scotia, a time to celebrate all of the hard work of our amazing staff!

Kudos to you for all you do, each and every day, to help our residents live in a community of dignified, gracious living!

