



# Cultural diversity

A Handbook for Long Term Care Staff



*Bringing staff, residents and their families together as partners in care*



# Cultural diversity

## Addressing Diversity in the Long-Term Care Field

### **The gap between culture and care**

Recently there has been increased emphasis placed on bridging the gap between culture and care in the healthcare industry. It is, therefore, timely that we in the long-term care field examine the important diversity issues in our own workplaces and develop strategies to address them. This handbook will serve management and registered staff at Regional long-term care centres as a resource on how to promote culturally sensitive care.

Our residents need to know what programs and services are available to them and how they are accessed. It can be a challenge to communicate this information to our residents and their families, especially to those who are from diverse backgrounds with varying beliefs and abilities. On occasion, our approach will have to be innovative in order to be effective.

### **Responding to diversity**

As healthcare providers, we need to assimilate ethnic diversity into our centres' service delivery culture to prevent our residents from feeling socially isolated. Isolation can result in depression and lead to other health-related problems and complaints. This approach integrates well with our client-centred care philosophy and with the standards of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation.

For those of us responsible for the delivery of long-term care services, the immediate need is to recognize the importance of providing care in a manner that is culturally sensitive and demonstrates respect for the

residents' sense of personhood. Individuals have their own unique set of values which are shaped from their past informative life experiences such as where they were raised, religious beliefs, education, and socioeconomic status to name a few. This is what strongly influences the way one responds to health concerns, approaches to treatment and preferred communication channels. For example, in some cultures, it is customary for the male to speak on behalf of the female and to make the decisions.

As managers, we need to set a good example by adopting a culturally responsive approach to care. It is incumbent upon us to provide staff education on the diverse cultures represented in our centres and, where possible, deliver it in an interactive and fun way so it is remembered and used appropriately.

We need to recognize that staff will require continuous education and management support to better understand the importance of incorporating a flexible approach into their daily care routines.

Educational institutions such as Ryerson Polytechnic University offer courses on transcultural nursing. In addition, the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario offers workshops. It is recommended that we encourage and enable our staff to attend these educational courses.

Together, we can make a difference by celebrating and supporting the uniqueness and values of those we serve.



Wendy Beattie, Administrator  
Malton Village Long Term Care Centre

**Identified Issue:** Language barriers.

**Some residents have never learned English or have reverted back to their mother tongue.**

**Suggested Action Plan:**

Provide staff with a list of external multi-lingual services including the Cultural Interpreter Services of Peel and Language Line Services. The agreement and costs for specific services are available on the finance site on Pathways. If this is a required service it should be budgeted for annually by the manager.

Provide the identified residents and their families with additional time/education to explain our LTC services, answer questions and provide reassurance when needed, e.g. at time of admission or a health crisis.

Facilitate on-site language classes (basic) for those predominant to the centre or free up multi-lingual staff as needed to translate on an on-going basis.

Offer language classes to residents, family members and staff. They can network with local schools to identify and attract students who would like to practice their skills as "teachers" in the centre's "language program".

Consider the option of the Activation Department or Adult Day Program offering month-long courses in a different language. Staff and residents could receive a certificate for completing the course and celebrate the completion with an event. This approach would help break down the barriers created by language and culture and develop positive relationships between residents and staff.

When needed, provide staff with a phonetic dictionary, pictograms, translation cards and basic phrases in other languages such as are you hungry, do you have pain and others.

If the resident has a computer in his/her room, a special translation software could be downloaded to enhance the communication between the resident and caregiver.

Explore the feasibility of having more than one resident council/family council if there are a number of residents from different cultures and more issues to deal with, so that all residents are able to participate in the language of their choice. There is also the option of having different councils divided by home area or floor to allow for bonding and facilitation of responses to common issues.

**Identified Issue: Cultural differences****Suggested Action Plan:**

Attract and recruit qualified staff and volunteers of various backgrounds from the local community, so that the residents feel more connected to their own culture and feel right at home. Attracting professionals from other cultures is also an asset in the treatment of the elderly as trust could be an issue.

Ascertain on admission how residents and their families wish to receive communication. They need to be asked about their personal values, likes/dislikes and have this information documented for the multi-disciplinary team.

Consider creating a Cultural Advisory Committee consisting of residents, family members, and staff. The Committee's major goals are to help staff appreciate their cultural differences, while helping them discover how much they are alike and educate the residents about their caregivers' different cultures. These goals can be achieved by offering ethnic foods, wearing traditional clothing, and talking about rituals and customs that can assist with social interactions.

Display community events on a centre's bulletin board or sponsor events in the home that draw the public in. These events could include fundraising activities such as bake sales and bazaars.

Organize activities and entertainment to celebrate cultural events, i.e. Chinese New Year.

Ask agencies to donate culturally diverse artwork.

Bring the community into the centre by partnering with community agencies and intergenerational programs with the schools.

**Identified Issue: Current lack of educational resources to assist staff with learning about different cultural preferences. Traditional meetings might intimidate some residents and their families and discourage them from participating.****Suggested Action Plan:**

Maintain an on-site library containing resources to assist staff such as *Creating a Bridge Across Cultural Divides*, *An Ethno-cultural Guide for Frontline Staff* and the *Multi-faith Information Manual*.

Borrow books and videos from the diversity library located at Malton Village.

**Identified Issue:** Currently, our promotional materials such as brochures, tour kits, admission packages, and facility information (menus, activities) are produced only in English. This issue has been identified as a gap in service.

**Suggested Action Plan:** The long-term care centres need to be able to provide written, audio and visual materials in different languages. Documents such as Resident Bill of Rights, financial papers, and admission agreement should be translated accordingly.

Translation of materials will be addressed through the LTC divisional strategy that is currently being implemented. Communication Services will arrange for translation of information on request to reflect the cultural needs identified in each long-term care centre.

**Identified Issue:** Inadequate staff time to meet the needs of residents from different cultures may lead to frustration and complaints.

**To be successful in accommodating the individual care needs of residents, staff need to embrace the client-centred philosophy of care.**

**Suggested Action Plan:** Ensure good communication with staff on the importance of flexibility and sensitivity to meet individual care needs of residents.

A client-centred philosophy of care must be adopted and supported by upper management to enable staff to accomplish these goals. In addition, they must provide continuing education to staff on the Region of Peel Long Term Care philosophy.

Highlight and talk about the successes that staff can celebrate. One way to do this is to share success stories on Pathways, in Inside Peel or at divisional meetings. Celebrate in a style that suits your staff.

Share and look at lessons learned from unsatisfactory incidents and look for ways to avoid similar situations in the future and to find the best solutions. One way to do this might be through conducting a review in a quality circle that consists of the multi-disciplinary care team.

Review hiring practices and determine which values are desired when recruiting new staff.

Identify ways to attract volunteers who are sensitive to multi-cultural issues.



**Identified Issue:** Unclear understanding of long-term care terminology, programs and services.

**Suggested Action Plan:**

Encourage involvement of family and friends in a buddy system via family council/volunteers to promote sharing of information.

Allow residents and their families the opportunity for input and listen to their feedback. Residents have a strong need to feel safe and welcome in their new home and fully understand what to expect, so they can make informed decisions.

Management needs to have a high visibility in the centre. It should maintain an open door policy, post relevant contact information for family members, provide suggestion/comment boxes and encourage feedback, facilitate town hall meetings, advocate at council meetings, and provide support to family members.

**Identified Issue:** Many newcomers to Canada, whose loved ones live in our centres, must work long hours and may not be able to attend meetings during regular business hours.

**At certain times of the day or week, transportation may also be an issue for them.**

**Suggested Action Plan:**

Be flexible to accommodate the families' schedules by holding meetings in the evening or on a weekend when they can attend.

Consider using teleconferencing service, depending on the client.

**Identified Issue:** Residents may feel isolated when families are unable to visit regularly.

**Suggested Action Plan:**

Find a compatible volunteer or a suitable agency for support. Invite them to attend activities and spend time with residents.

Encourage intergenerational programming through visits from schools and participation in projects. For example, a secondary school could create a mural once a year to which the residents can relate.

Provide regular trips to learn more about surrounding community.

**Identified Issue:** Family members from some cultures may experience guilt in placing their loved ones in a long-term care centre.

**Suggested Action Plan:**

Additional support will be required from the LTC team, especially from the social worker to help the family cope with their guilt and understand their cultural expectations of caregiving.

Encourage the family to be actively involved in the provision of care for their loved one.

Open two-way communication is critical to addressing this concern. The LTC staff need to listen and learn from the family and collaborate with them in order to meet the needs of their loved ones. Families are an integral part of the care team.

***Identified Issue:*** Older people tend to be less tolerant of minorities, which can lead to discriminatory behaviour and preconceived notions among residents.

**This could create barriers and conflicts between the residents and staff.**

***Suggested Action Plan:***

Help residents value and respect diversity. When their behaviour is unacceptable, tell them.

We need to foster a culturally supportive environment for all – clients, families, staff, and volunteers.

Families tend to see the centre through the residents’ eyes, so the LTC staff should become involved in resolving conflicts and listening to complaints.

***Identified Issue:*** High staff turnover rate.

**Residents and families like having a consistent relationship with their caregivers. It is especially true in situations where through extra time and effort residents and staff have established a rapport and trusting relationship. Losing staff can be a detriment. It will take time and effort to establish new relationships.**

***Suggested Action Plan:***

Show staff that you value them and, in return, they will treat and value the residents as well. For example, provide a nice restful environment for breaks.

Allow staff time-off to celebrate their own special holidays.

Survey staff regularly to keep your hand on the pulse of staff morale and to manage the workforce effectively.

Have an open-door policy and be approachable.

Conduct exit interviews to determine trends and look for opportunities to improve.



**Identified Issue:** Some residents have no family ties. In this situation, a resident will feel isolated and will need additional support.

**Suggested Action Plan:** Seek additional support to care for residents who do not have family ties. This support can be provided by an ex-neighbour, friend, volunteer, agency, church group, others.

**Identified Issue:** Volunteer support.

**Suggested Action Plan:** Take the time to match an appropriate volunteer to a resident for one-on-one support and companionship.

Provide volunteers with a thorough orientation to meet the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care standards and to follow Region of Peel policies.

Ensure your volunteers are culturally sensitive and involve them in educational opportunities.

**Identified Issue:** Clergy.

**Suggested Action Plan:** Facilitate the spiritual care by establishing networks to provide appropriate support within the local community.

**Identified Issue:** Cultural diversity training.

**Suggested Action Plan:** Create a fun atmosphere that is conducive to adult learning. This can be easily accomplished by celebrating diversity through fun activities. For example, allow staff to "travel in their minds" by providing them with passports and sending them to different locations within the centre that represent various countries and to have their passport stamped. They can wear their cultural costumes, enjoy multicultural food, learn a few words in another language, and hear music from other cultures.

A more informal approach to training is to place travel posters up throughout a centre depicting the different travel destinations.

Artwork and artifacts from other areas can also be displayed around the centre.

Offer theme days to celebrate holidays such as Chinese New Year. By celebrating the various traditions, staff and residents will be able to understand and appreciate the positive contributions being made by different cultures.

Approach agencies to see what they can do for you. For example, you can invite them to do presentations to staff, provide entertainment for the residents, and bring ethnic meals. Create partnerships with them.

# Cultural diversity

## Bringing staff, residents and their families together as partners in care

We can continue developing and strengthening ways to address cultural diversity in our long-term care centres by:

1. Providing leadership in cultural diversity through
  - our strategic direction
  - hiring practices and policies that integrate diversity
  - volunteer recruitment practices
  - equal access to our services and programs
2. Involving all perspectives in the decision-making process
3. Providing responsive, accommodating actions to meet clients' unique needs
4. Ensuring a discrimination-free workplace
5. Promoting a positive environment for diversity
6. Communicating effectively using multiple methods to reach clients from all backgrounds
7. Educating and informing staff, families, and residents on diversity
8. Using the Cultural Interpretive Service in Peel or Language Line Services to enhance communication
9. Sharing best practices and maintaining accessible and current resources
10. Conducting research at regular intervals to remain current and knowledgeable, and
11. Developing partnerships with community agencies to decrease social isolation for residents.

## External Multi-Cultural Resource List

### — Ethno-Specific Agencies

#### For the Arab West/Asian population in Peel

**Afghan Women's Counselling and Integration Community Support Organization**

55 Dundas St., Ste. 205-206,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-279-3679

**Arab Palestine Association**

3195 Erindale Station Rd., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-270-3622

**Canadian Lebanese Cultural Club**

3345 Burdock Pl., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-896-8850

**Canada Palestine House**

c/o Palestine House  
3195 Erindale Station Rd., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-270-3622

**Palestine House Educational and Cultural Centre**

3195 Erindale Station Rd., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-270-3622

**Phoenician Club of Mississauga**

c/o Elias Bejjani  
505 Ginger Downs, Mississauga  
Phone: 905-272-9389

**United Holy Land Fund – c/o Palestine House Educational and Cultural Centre**

3195 Erindale Station Rd., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-270-3622

#### For the African Canadian population in Peel

**Abary Sports and Cultural Organization**

P.O. Box 125 Credit Woodlands,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-270-1930

**African Community Services of Peel**

3461 Dixie Rd., Ste. 504,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-206-9497

**Caribbean Association of Peel**

145 Traders Blvd., Ste. 15, Mississauga  
Phone: 905-890-2676

**Congress of Black Women of Canada**

**Brampton Chapter**

8 McFadden Dr., Brampton  
Phone: 905-840-3378

**Congress of Black Women of Canada**

**Mississauga Chapter**

P.O. Box 432, Stn. A, Mississauga  
Phone: 905-608-0126

**Malton Black Development Association**

7454 Airport Rd., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-677-6349

**Mississauga Caribbean Social Cultural Association**

3034 Palstan Rd., Ste. 103,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-848-6411

**Peel Sisters of Colour in Action**

10 George St. N., Brampton  
Phone: 905-453-7940

**Sisserou Cultural Club**

2051 Williams Pkwy E., Ste. 13,  
Brampton  
Phone: 905-450-7733

**United Achievers Community Services**

36 Queen St. E., Ste. 220, Brampton  
Phone: 905-455-6789

**United Caribbean Canadian Association**

848 Burnhamthorpe Rd. W.,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-896-3765

**Westend Sports and Cultural Club Inc.**

4680 Kinbermount Ave., Ste. 116,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-608-0075

**For the Chinese population in Peel**

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**Brampton Chinese Association**

499 Main St. S., Brampton  
Phone: 905-458-4159

**Chinese Association of Mississauga Golden Square Centre**

1177 Central Pkwy W., Unit 80,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-275-8558

**Chinese Golden Age Club of Mississauga**

4460 Tucana Cr., Ste. 1006,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-507-2280

**Chinese Opera Group**

c/o Mike Tang  
1285 Matheson Blvd. E., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-625-6288

**Mississauga Chinese Business Association**

**Dixie Park Centre**  
1550 South Gateway Rd., Ste. 300,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-625-6222

**Toronto Chinese Community Services Association**

3033 Palstan Rd., Unit 104 and 106,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-615-9500

**For the Filipino population in Peel**

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**Brampton Filipino Seniors Club**

c/o Ben Ustaris  
21 Aldebury Cres., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-792-7422

**Filipino Seniors of Mississauga**

c/o Paul Natividad  
12 Thorncliffe Park Dr., Ste. 1002,  
Toronto  
Phone: 905-275-1372

**Silver Lining Filipino Seniors of Mississauga**

c/o Carl Mahilum  
2475 Truscott Dr., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-405-0986

## **For the Latin-American population in Peel**

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### **Academia Association of Brampton**

99 Orenda Rd., Brampton  
Phone: 905-453-8606

### **Grupo Folchorico of Brampton**

6 Cambridge Cres., Brampton  
Phone: 905-451-7264

## **For the Polish population in Peel**

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### **John Paul II Polish Cultural Centre**

4300 Cawthra Rd., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-306-9900

### **Polish Immigrant and Community Services**

Sheridan Mall, 2525 Erin Mills Pkwy.,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-403-8860

## **For the Portuguese population in Peel**

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### **Academia Association of Brampton**

99 Orenda Rd., Brampton  
Phone: 905-453-8606

### **Grupo Folclorico of Brampton**

6 Cambridge Cres., Brampton  
Phone: 905-451-7264

### **Portuguese Club of Mississauga Inc.**

1310 Dundas St. E., Units 13 and 14,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-275-6844 or 905-275-1999

### **Portuguese Community Centre of Brampton**

Luis Pacheo, President  
25 Fisherman Dr., Brampton  
Phone: 905-840-6061 or 905-840-1229

## **For the South Asian population in Peel**

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### **Can-Sikh Cultural Centre**

52 Newport St., Brampton  
Phone: 905-454-8308

### **Canada Bengali Cultural School of Mississauga**

TL Kennedy Secondary School  
3100 Hurontario St., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-542-0054

### **Canadian Bengali School of Brampton**

46 Mikado Cres., Brampton  
Phone: 905-792-9217

### **Hindu Sabha Temple**

9225 Gore Rd., Brampton  
Phone: 905-794-3294

### **Hindu Seniors' Association**

c/o Vik Handa  
21 Knightsbridge Rd., Ste. 1903,  
Brampton  
Phone: 905-793-9940

### **India Rainbow Community Services of Peel**

3038 Hurontario St., Ste. 206,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-275-2369

### **Indo Canadian Seniors Group**

c/o Burnhamthorpe Community  
Centre  
1500 Gulleden Dr., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-625-1583

**Muslim Welfare Centre**  
2570 Haines Rd., Ste. 3, Mississauga  
Phone: 905-281-9730

**Ontario Khalsa Darbar Inc. (Sikh)**  
7080 Dixie Rd., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-670-3311

**Pakistani Support and Cultural Group of Mississauga Inc.**  
c/o Habib Khawja  
2582 Ambercroft Trail, Mississauga  
Phone: 905-569-9531

**Punjabi Community Health Centre**  
150 Central Park Dr., 3rd Fl.,  
Brampton  
Phone: 416-995-3920 or  
905-273-4884, Ext. 222 for written  
translations in Hindi and Punjabi

**Punjabi Seniors**  
c/o Gurdial Singh  
18 Knightsbridge Rd., Ste. 612,  
Brampton  
Phone: 905-458-7823

**Raghu Pati Bhawan Sabha**  
171 Advance Blvd., Unit 17,  
Brampton  
Phone: 905-793-4791

**Senior Asians Association  
Malton Community Centre**  
3540 Morning Star Dr., Malton  
Phone: 905-670-6031

**Senior Lions**  
c/o Gurman Singh Dhaliwal  
4607 Full Moon Circle, Mississauga  
Phone: 905-890-5399

**The Shri Lanka Club**  
c/o Shanta Mendis  
3105 Ballydown Cres., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-275-8326

**Sunshine Senior Citizens Association**  
c/o Gurbach Singh Sooch  
4 Kings Cross Rd., Ste. 412,  
Brampton  
Phone: 905-458-9721

**Tamil Eelam Society of Canada**  
1590 Dundas St., Ste. 201,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-272-8567

## **For the Southeast Asian population in Peel**

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**The Indonesian Association**  
c/o Susie Sugiharto  
4294 Fieldgate Dr., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-741-4700

**Vietnamese Community Centre**  
624 Lakeshore Rd. E., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-891-3825

## **Multi-ethnic agencies**

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**Catholic Cross Cultural Services of Peel (two locations listed)**  
389 Main St. N., Brampton  
Phone: 905-457-7740

90 Dundas St. W., Ste. 204, Mississauga  
Phone: 905-273-4140

**Elder Help – Peel**  
17 Dean St., Ste. 100, Brampton  
Phone: 905-457-6055



**Peel Multicultural Council**  
4680 Kimbermount Ave., Ste. 116,  
Mississauga  
Phone: 905-608-0075

*Multicultural Multilingual  
Memory Clinic at the Centre  
for Addiction and Mental  
Health (CAMH) accepts  
referrals of patients who speak  
English, French, Spanish,  
Italian, Portuguese, Greek,  
Hindi, Mandarin, and  
Cantonese.*

## **Neighbourhood Centres**

**Brampton Multicultural Centre**  
150 Central Park Dr., Ste. 107,  
Brampton  
Phone: 905-790-8482

**Brampton Neighbourhood  
Resource Centre**  
168 Kennedy Rd. S., Units 3 and 4,  
Brampton  
Phone: 905-452-1262  
**Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood**

**Resource Centre**  
3439 Fieldgate Dr., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-629-1873

**Inter-Cultural Neighbourhood  
Social Services**  
3050 Confederation Pkwy., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-273-4884

**Malton Neighbourhood Services**  
7200 Goreway Dr., Mississauga  
Phone: 905-677-6270

**Cultural Interpretation  
Services of Peel (CISP)**  
2430 Meadowpine Blvd., Ste. 106  
Mississauga, ON L5N 6S2  
Phone: 905-813-6038  
or 1-888-721-4444  
Fax: 905-542-1234  
E-mail: [cisp@idirect.ca](mailto:cisp@idirect.ca)

