



ISSUE 1

YOUR DIGITAL VOICE

If your Long-Term Care Home (LTCH) would like to promote a project, initiative, or resident story via this newsletter to highlight digital health accomplishments, share knowledge, and collaborate across LTCSS in our region, please reach out to Marie-Lyne.

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DIGITAL HEALTH IN LONG-TERM CARE AND SENIORS SERVICES

Welcome to the first edition of our Regional Pulse Newsletter on digital health, published by the County of Simcoe!

The goal of this newsletter is to share and provide updates on digital health within our regional long-term care (LTC) community. Please feel free to share this newsletter within your facility.

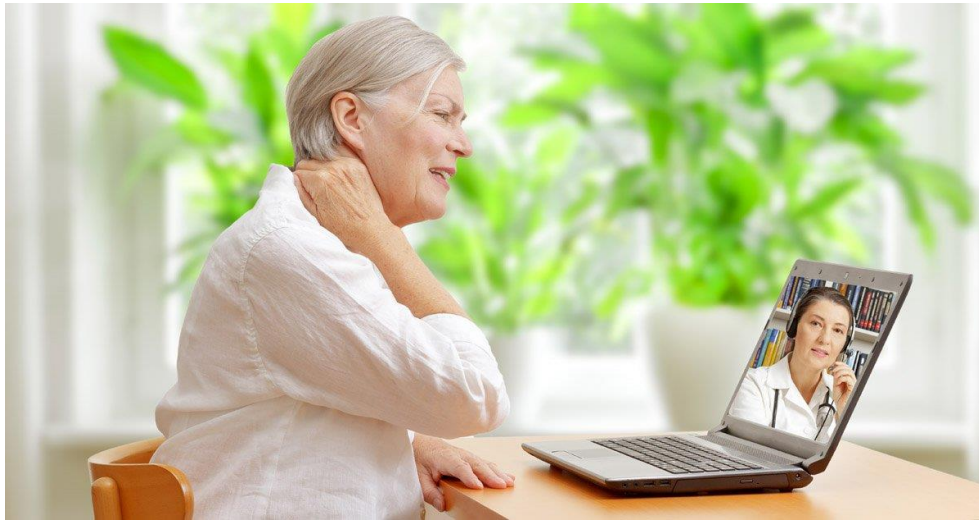
WHAT IS DIGITAL HEALTH?

Digital Health is the use of information technology and/or electronic communication tools, services and processes to deliver health care to facilitate better health outcomes and enhance health care delivery through:

- Increasing patients' access to care and improving system navigation
- Improving the provider experience
- Bringing care closer to home
- Supporting frontline staff
- Improving the patient experience

"The County is pleased to introduce and help coordinate this new resource and information tool. The Long-Term Care and Seniors Services sector continues to evolve and change in complexity, and we look forward to collaborating with homes across the region to share our wealth of available knowledge, programs and insights to improve the quality of care we can deliver in Simcoe County."

Jane Sinclair
General Manager, Health and Emergency Services, County of Simcoe



ACCESS TIMELY, EQUITABLE AND TRANSFORMATIVE CARE SERVICES FOR LTC RESIDENTS THROUGH TELEMEDICINE

WHAT IS VIRTUAL CARE?

Virtual care is a health care delivery model, occurring remotely, that enables patients to get equitable access to care sooner and more seamlessly using any form of communication or information technology. This includes all the ways a health care provider can interact with patients, for example annual wellness exams, remote care monitoring, follow-ups after surgery, consultations with specialists, etc.

WHAT IS TELEMEDICINE / VIRTUAL VISIT?

As part of virtual care delivery model, telemedicine, also referred to as a virtual visit, is the treatment of a medical condition without seeing a patient in person. Digital technologies such as eVisit/videoconferencing, phone calls and secure messaging allows patients to connect with health practitioners when in-person visits are not necessary.

The benefits for LTC residents include improved access to specialized care, reduced health inequities and maintaining the patient at the center of care.

WHO CAN ACCESS TELEMEDICINE?

Telemedicine services are available to everyone and covered by OHIP.

WHAT SERVICES CAN BE ACCESSED USING TELEMEDICINE IN LTC?

Services available in LTC include eConsults, Teledermatology, GeriMedRisk, and medical appointments with health professionals across Ontario, such as:

- heart function clinic
- geriatric assessments
- psychiatry
- pain management
- neurology
- dermatology

For more information: [Virtual Care Supports for Long Term Care Homes during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

The Ontario eConsult Program is a telemedicine service accessed via OTNHub that supports physicians and nurse

practitioners in gaining timely access to specialist advice, often eliminating a need for a patient referral, providing high-quality care within the long-term care setting.

For examples of the types of cases that can be referred to eConsult, check out this document.

- [eConsult Use Case Examples](#)

For more specific information on services available through telemedicine, please reach out to Marie-Lyne.

HOW CAN I ACCESS TELEMEDICINE SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS?

In LTC, residents, caregivers and health care professionals have access to telemedicine via

the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN), which is part of Ontario Health, as well as any additional telemedicine technologies adopted by individual organizations.

To gain access to OTN, an OTNhub account is required. OTNhub.ca establishes an online community that allows individual providers working in healthcare organizations to connect and collaborate with their patients and peers from anywhere in Ontario.

If you need more information on OTNHub or support with account setup, please contact Marie-Lyne at marie-lyne.duggan@simcoe.ca or 705-790-3489.

ABOUT YOUR DIGITAL HEALTH COORDINATOR

The County of Simcoe is excited to introduce our Digital Health Coordinator, previously known as the Telemedicine Coordinator, who will be supporting digital health at a clinical level across LTCHs in the region.

Marie-Lyne Duggan, a registered nurse, will continue to support Ontario Telemedicine Network platform as well as work to further advance digital health in LTCSS within the region.

She will work at a local level, to support Ontario's Digital First for Health strategy; at a clinical level to implement the initiative, provide education and mentorship; as well as establish relationships with local OHTs and Ontario Health Central's Digital Health Team.

Feel free to reach out to Marie-Lyne with any questions or if you're looking to discuss and/or partner on digital health projects.



RESOURCES FOR LONG-TERM CARE HOMES

- [Resources to Support Virtual Care in Long Term Care Homes](#)
- [Using Video Visits in LTC/Retirement Homes During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Ontario Health's Verified Virtual Visit Solutions – Vendor List](#)

RESOURCES FOR STAFF

- OTN Resources, Education and Support, please reach out to Marie-Lyne
- OTN Technical Support Team 1-855-654-0888

RESOURCE FOR RESIDENTS

- [OTN Brochure \(French\)](#)
- [Guide to Virtual Creative Engagement for Older Adults](#)

COMING UP IN THE NEXT EDITION:

Top 6 Considerations for Virtual Visits in LTC

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

We are interested in co-creating this newsletter, so please provide any feedback and suggestions for future improvements.

SUBSCRIBE:

If you are interested in receiving this monthly newsletter or opting out, please email: marie-lyne.duggan@simcoe.ca