



# 100

## A CENTURY OF CARE

VHA'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY  
COMMEMORATIVE YEARBOOK

**100**  
1925 • 2025

**VHA** Home  
HealthCare  
Creating More Independence for Over 100 Years





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Creating More Independence for Over 100 Years



# Welcome

## TO VHA HOME HEALTHCARE'S CENTENARY YEARBOOK

For 100 years, VHA has been at the heart of our communities—offering care, compassion, and unwavering support to individuals of all ages and backgrounds.

From our beginnings in 1925 with just 14 homemakers supporting new mothers to a team of over 3,000 today, our journey has been shaped by visionary leaders, dedicated staff, and compassionate caregivers—each leaving an indelible mark on the people we serve.

I am honoured to be VHA's CEO as we celebrate this significant milestone. I pay tribute to all of VHA's remarkable leaders who have propelled the organization forward throughout our 100-year history. First among them was VHA's founder, Barbara Blackstock Cody. Her vision of supporting people to live independently at home with dignity and compassion fostered our commitment to the highest quality care delivered with a caring human touch. VHA's incredible team of personal support workers formed our early roots, embodying that essential personal connection and showcasing their critical role in keeping people healthy and safe at home as long as possible.

Today, VHA's team is incredibly diverse, comprised of skilled nurses, rehab providers, personal and home support workers, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, behavioural support workers and other professional groups – all of whom are home care specialists, and have contributed to this moment in which home care is recognized as critical to a well-functioning healthcare system.



Dr. Kathryn Nichol,  
VHA's President and CEO

In the pages that follow we share stories from dedicated team members, committed caregivers and special clients and families, and highlights of VHA's many achievements and advancements over the years. We feel this is a fitting way to celebrate and honour the incredible legacy of all who have made VHA the strong and vibrant organization that it is today.

We are proud to celebrate 100 years of care at home, delivered with heart and are more committed than ever to delivering high quality, person-centred care, forging collaborative partnerships, advancing research and innovation and informing health system advancement.

Thank you for your support and partnership along this journey. I can't wait to see what VHA will do next!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn Nichol".

Dr. Kathryn Nichol  
President and CEO  
VHA Home HealthCare







# VHA LEADERSHIP OVER THE YEARS

VHA Home HealthCare (VHA) would like to highlight our past presidents, CEOs, executive directors, honorary presidents, and board chairs. Each individual listed below has played a key part in developing VHA's history and establishing our organization as a leading homecare agency since 1925.

## PAST PRESIDENTS, CEOS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS AND HONOURARY PRESIDENTS

Carol Annett  
President & CEO of VHA, 2004–2021

David Wright  
President & CEO of VHA, 1988–2004

Merrill C. Stafford  
Honourary President of VHA, 1986–1998

David Evershed  
Executive Director of VHA, 1986–1988

Pat Thomas  
Executive Director of VHA, 1976–1986

Robert S. Dunlop  
Honourary President of VHA, 1980–1982

Kathryn E. Taggart  
Executive Director of VHA, 1961–1976

Barbara Blackstock-Cody  
Honourary President of VHA, 1960–1980

Elizabeth DeWitt  
Executive Director of VHA, 1945–1959

Marjorie Bell  
Executive Director of VHA, 1935–1945

Lexa Denne  
First Director of VHA, 1924–1930

## PAST AND PRESENT BOARD CHAIRS

Ian Brunskill, 2022–Present  
Karen Singh, 2018–2022  
Adwoa K. Buahene, 2014–2018  
John MacFarlane, 2011–2014  
Jeffery Litwin, 2008–2011  
Vikas Sharma, 2005–2008  
Alan Ely, 2001–2005  
Ian McHaffie, 1998–2001  
Austin Hamilton, 1995–1998  
Marcia Galligan, 1993–1995  
Paul Sinclair, 1991–1993  
Barbara Stymiest, 1988–1991  
Donald Robinson, 1987–1988  
Lorraine Fortune, 1986–1987  
Marilyn Tory, 1983–1986  
Nigel Gunn, 1981–1983  
Dorothy Martin, 1976–1979  
Catharine Fallis, 1973–1976  
Katharine "Kay" Masters, 1969–1973  
Frances Somerville, 1966–1969  
Catherine Percival, 1964–1966  
Margaret Hoare, 1961–1964  
Elizabeth Carrick, 1958–1961  
Barbara Blackstock-Cody, 1925–1960

*VHA does not have the years of the following previous board chairs, but we acknowledge their time on our Board of Directors and thank them for their dedication to our organization: Ms. J.B. Allen and Ms. Ruth Carruthers.*

# Celebrating a Century of Care



The Visiting Housekeepers Centre is founded by **Miss Barbara Blackstock** to provide homemaking services to families where the mother is ill. By the end of its first year, 14 housekeepers are trained and in service. The Canadian Red Cross, Toronto Branch, provides a building and temporary financial support for the service.

**1925**



**1935**

The Visiting Homemakers Association (VHA) incorporates.

**1937**

VHA administers a fund to provide parental relief for polio victims.

**1951**



Homemaking services extended to care for sick children of working mothers of single-parent families.



**1981-85**

VHA begins providing personal support services. Increasing demand for homemakers and growing provincial government awareness means by 1985, 355,000 hours of personal service are provided.



**1969**

VHA moves to 170 Merton Street — a building donated by the W. Garfield Weston Foundation in memory of Mrs. Garfield Weston, a VHA client.







VHA enhances integrated care partnerships with UHN, launches VHA Virtual Care, and collaborates with Michael Garron Hospital to develop the Kew Beach Unit, a transitional care unit to support Alternative Level of Care patients.

**2020**



**2014**

VHA introduces a Client and Family Voice program and creates a Client and Carer Advisory Council to ensure our programs and services effectively meet the needs of our clients and families.



**2011** VHA moves its head office to 30 Soudan Avenue.



**2025**

VHA celebrates its 100 year anniversary. VHA now has close to 3,000 team members focused on delivering high quality person-centred care, collaborative partnerships, research, digital innovation and quality excellence.

**2009**

VHA acquires COTA Health's Rehabilitation Services to provide physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech language pathology, dietetics and social work services to clients and expands services to London and Ottawa. VHA also inaugurates its Research program.



**1998** VHA provides nursing services for the first time.

**2000**

VHA partners with United Way to provide programs and services to help create the opportunities people need to improve their lives and build a better future.

**2001**

Our name officially changes from Visiting Homemakers Association to **VHA Home HealthCare**, reflecting our growing continuum of health and home support services.



# VHA's Centenary Year:

## By the Numbers

At the start of 2025, VHA's 100<sup>th</sup> year in operation

3,054



**team members** contributing to creating more independence across the communities we serve.



66

**volunteer** team members, providing support through 5 volunteer-led programs.



26

**VHA Client Partners**, and many more client and family voices, shared their lived experiences and perspectives, innovative ideas, and invaluable guidance — fueling progress, sparking innovation, and making a real impact at VHA.

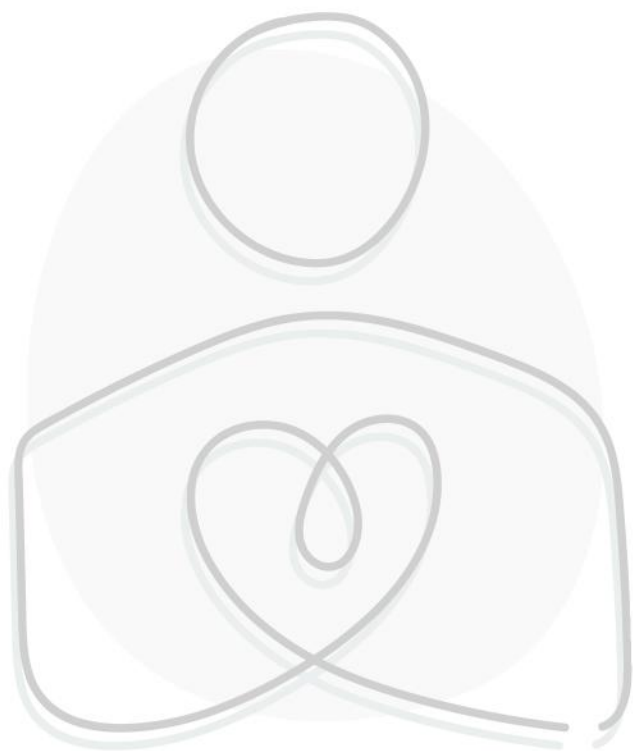
20,696

**visits** to **1,676** Responsive Community Care clients\*

67,239

**hours** of Responsive Community Care services to clients in need \*

\*Data as per 2024 calendar year



# 382

**hours of client  
engagement\***

# 3,916,764

**episodes of care to 111,000  
clients** admitted where and  
when they needed it\*

\* Data as per 2024 calendar year

# 13+

health disciplines  
provided by our  
team of home care  
specialists, including  
specialties like  
paediatric and  
palliative care

# 25

The number of  
years VHA has  
been recognized  
as an accredited  
organization by  
Accreditation  
Canada.





PRIME MINISTER • PREMIER MINISTRE

I would like to convey my warmest greetings to everyone celebrating the 100th anniversary of VHA Home HealthCare.

Since it was established in 1925, VHA Home HealthCare has offered a wide variety of programs and services aimed at supporting the health and well-being of individuals and families across Ontario. This milestone offers a wonderful opportunity to reflect upon the history of your organization, to celebrate its many accomplishments and to set goals for the future.



I would like to thank everyone associated with VHA Home HealthCare over the past 100 years for their hard work and commitment to making a difference. You can take pride in knowing that your efforts are appreciated and are helping to build a stronger, healthier community.

I wish you an enjoyable anniversary celebration and continued success.

The Right Honourable Mark Carney, P.C., O.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada

Ottawa  
2025





*I am pleased to congratulate the management and staff of*

## **VHA HOME HEALTHCARE**

*on the occasion of its*

### **100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

*Over the years, the commitment of the members  
of VHA has helped to make your community  
and our province a better place.*

*Congratulations again, and I wish you  
many more years of success.*

Legislative Building, Toronto  
July 9, 2025



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Ford".

**Doug Ford**  
Premier



CITY OF  
TORONTO

*Mayor Olivia Chow  
and Members of Toronto City Council  
extend congratulations to*

## ***VHA Home HealthCare***

*on the occasion of its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.*

*It is a pleasure to recognize your organization's  
vital work of providing compassionate and individualized care  
to vulnerable populations so they can maintain their independence  
and live safely at home.*

*Best wishes for a memorable milestone anniversary.*

Mayor Olivia Chow

Deputy Mayor Mike Colle

City of Toronto  
2025









# HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Key Milestones Over the Years

Within the pages of our ***History in the Making: Key Milestones Over the Years*** section, you will find a unique transportation in time to moments in VHA's history.

Learn about how our past has carried us to where we are today through the various photos, articles and newspaper clippings in this section. The content featured here showcases a century of care, with key milestone dates going back to our very early beginnings in the 1920's and all the way to modern times in the 2020's.

# 1920s

In the **1920s**, VHA began as a Red Cross-supported pilot, with homemakers earning \$16 a week.

By **1927**, growing demand led to more staff, steady funding, and the foundation of a trusted home care service.

## THE TWENTIES

In 1925, A Visiting Housekeeper received a salary of \$16.00 per week, of which \$6.00 had to be returned for room and board at the centre. Five housekeepers were in the field August 1, 1925 and 14 by Summer of 1926. During that time 143 families were attended. The daily cost was \$3.79 per household, which

included her training, supervision, administration and office space. Fees collected in 1925 were \$552.55, 1926, \$2,722.05 and in 1927, \$4,094.70. Service preference was given to families of ex-servicemen and payment was made from the Soldier's Family Relief Fund. In 1926, the VHA Budget was \$20,000 and, after hard negotiation, was reduced to \$15,500. However

In January 1926, a Director of the Red Cross wrote "this committee considers the work of the Visiting Housekeepers centre to be still an experiment which must be conducted throughout the year 1926 at least, before its value can be demonstrated". VHA proved itself and by the Spring of 1927, 24 Homemakers were on staff.

In 1929, during the great depression, a new separate organization called Visiting Housekeepers Association was formed and the services of VHA were promoted through the Federation for Community Services Bulletin in a display window at Yonge and Albert Street.

(continued on page 3)

An article published in our 1995 newsletter highlighted some of VHA's history.

# 1930s

An article published in the *Toronto Daily Star* highlights VHA's involvement with the Red Cross and the Food Service program at the time.

## GOOD WORK IS DONE BY DOMESTIC COURSE

Housekeepers' Department of  
Red Cross Seeks Larger  
Enrolment

FAMILIES ARE HELPED

Now that the Visiting Housekeepers' Department of the Red Cross is a going concern and destined to fill an important niche in the life of the city, its promoters are anxious to enlist the interest of more young women who, having a good education, some knowledge of food values, and a kindly interest in the human family, will cover the course prescribed and enter the housekeeping ranks.

The first class, with an enrolment of eight, started work last June, and completed a course of instruction in six weeks. The second class commenced training in October, the term being extended to seven weeks, and by December there were ten graduates from the two classes happily employed among the homes of the city. Since the first of August, 1925, 68 families have had a Visiting Housekeeper for various periods of time ranging from one-half day to six weeks, among those assisted



An article published in our 1995 newsletter highlighted some of VHA's history.

*(Continued from page 1)*

On April 5, 1935, the Provincial Government finally approved the letters patent, officially incorporating **The Visiting Homemakers Association**.

By 1956, VHA was serving 890 families and was receiving full page coverage in the *Globe and Mail* and write ups in leading magazines such as *Chatelaine*. VHA had moved into more new activity areas including special classes through the YWCA for overweight girls and through 23 community centres assisted in prenatal education programs for

1641 mothers and 343 fathers.

The 1980's sparked another financial crisis. Visiting Homemakers came out fighting with a news release entitled **5000 Human Beings in Crisis** and informed the community about their work with a newsletter introducing a new look and logo, communicating its services in a variety of languages. In 1987, the City of York, North York, Scarborough and East York declared **October 18-24 as Homemaker/Home Support Week**. In 1988, VHA was faced with a

financial crisis and despite serving 1600 households, VHA ran a deficit and was threatened with closure. Again, Homemakers mobilized, fought to survive and the government responded.

Which brings us to today. 1995. VHA unveiled its new look in the Fall of 1995 including a new logo, new brochures, and also, effective January 1, 1996, VHA homemakers will be wearing their new uniforms. It has been an exciting journey since 1921. Over 70 years of change, growth, challenges, caring and trust!

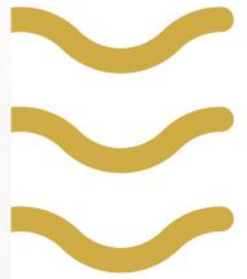
**By 1935, our program was officially recognized by the provincial government and our organization was incorporated as The Visiting Homemakers Association.**

With strong training and a growing team, VHA received recognition in newspapers and magazines. Throughout the years, VHA's care providers continued to support clients and their families — even through financial hardship.



# 1935







## 890 FAMILIES GET AID OF HOMEMAKERS ASSCN.

Reports submitted at the annual meeting of the Visiting Homemakers' association indicated that the greatest operational problem was reaching people in the outlying districts of Toronto.

Speaking to members of the board, Elizabeth DeWitt, director, remarked that due to shortage in staff, 554 families who applied for the service were turned down in the past year.

She said that among the problems was a lack of transportation to the suburbs, particularly to North York and Weston, which for the first time had the services of the homemakers in 1956.

During that time, 890 families received service in Toronto and district, making a total of 16,352 working days. This was an increase of 1,522 days over the previous year.

Of the 3,200 calls received, said Miss DeWitt, 1,209 were ineligible for service, for a variety of reasons such as irregular shift work.

### Ask Budget Advice

Among the services the association offers is nutrition counselling. Members in the past year began collecting data on New Canadians to enable a program of food education to get under way.

People also came to the ser-

vice for advice on problems such as the preparation of food budgets, pricing of special diets and other important homemaking plans.

The agency, which is part of the Community chest scheme, helped at special classes at the YWCA which offered instruction to over-weight girls. A survey was also made to discover the food habits of Toronto school children, under the Toronto nutrition committee.

### Assists in Program

Across the city in 23 centres, the Homemakers' association is currently assisting in a pre-natal education program for parents-to-be. In 1956, 1,641 expectant mothers enrolled, with 343 fathers also attending.

Elected to office on the board of directors, were: Mrs. H. J. Cody, president; Mrs. W. J. Houston, 1st vice-president and chairman; Mrs. Donald S. Carrick, 2nd vice-president; L. A. Henderson, honorary treasurer; Mrs. H. G. Stark, honorary recording secretary; and Mrs. Neil Macdonald, honorary corresponding secretary.

Executive members are: Mrs. Frank Wood, Mrs. Gordon W. Hewitt, Mrs. George W. Stratton, Mrs. W. L. Somerville, Mrs. G. Douglas Jeffs and Mrs. R. Campbell McNeil.

# 1950s

A news article from the 1950s titled "890 Families Get Aid of Homemakers Association" breaks down our service numbers at the time. The article shares some insight about VHA's programs during that time.



Home Made Story 1958?

# New Bill Provides Home Nursing Care

Canadian Press

TORONTO—Children in Ontario need no longer be put in care of the Children's Aid Society in emergencies simply because the family does not have money to obtain a homemaker or home nursing care.

It is hoped this will be one result of the provincial Homemakers and Nurses Service Act, which Welfare Minister Louis P. Cecile has announced will become operative within a month.

The legislation empowers the provincial government to pay half the costs—the municipality paying the other half—of providing homemakers and nursing care in the home for persons who cannot pay for these services themselves.

W. A. Goff, executive secretary of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, said "every Children's Aid Society in the province welcomes this, because at least two or three cases every year are reported from every locality, of children being taken in care merely because the mother is ill."

"We expect that providing a homemaking service will keep families together, which will save money and be better for children and parents."

Another aspect of the new plan is foreseen by Miss Eliza

beth De Wijn, director of the Visiting Homemakers Association. She reports her organization employs about 80 homemakers, serving 800 families last year, but was forced to refuse about 500 urgent cases through lack of staff.

"We hope that the legislation will enable municipalities not now giving us money to donate to our funds so that we can employ more staff," she said.

The Victorian Order of Nurses, which is expected to provide the home nursing service, also welcomes the measure. Miss H. K. Mackay, chairman of the nursing advisory committee of the VON in Ontario, says her organization at present provides a free service for patients who cannot pay, but welcomes the promise of a set fee.

"The new act will not make any difference to patients we serve, but we hope it will mean more money to enable us to expand and improve our service," she said.

Local welfare departments will be required to provide the homemakers, who will look after home and children if a mother goes to hospital, or will prepare meals and generally are incarcerated. The home nursing service will provide care through visits to homes.

## 1958

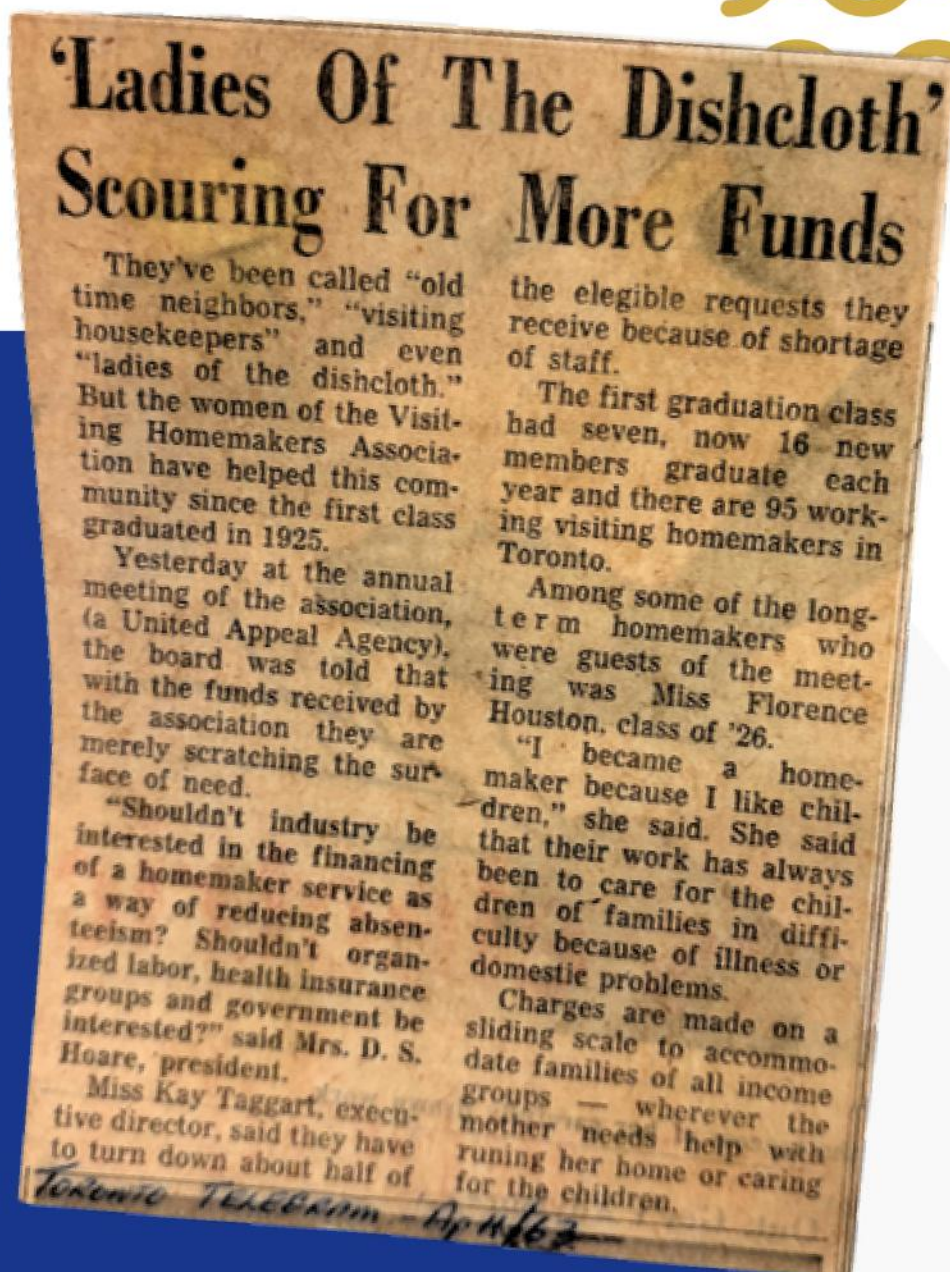
Another news article from the 1950s which mentions VHA's goal of being able to deliver nursing care in the future



# 1963

This news article, "Ladies of the Dishcloth Scouring For More Funds" from the newspaper

*Toronto Telegram* from April 1963 discussed the challenges with meeting the growing need for homemaking support at the time, citing efforts to make care more accessible using a sliding scale.



Today, VHA is a **registered non-profit charitable organization** with funded support for children and families. Very different from the 1950s!



# President's Job Busy One

As a Madame President, Margaret Hoare has discovered her own alchemy to keep women's organizations bubbling happily—and productively.

It's a relatively simple formula: Keep a freezer full of casseroles. Keep your mind and your time organized. Keep detached from personalities. Judge a woman by her usefulness rather than her heavy hand with the eyeshadow.

After about 15 years of working with women's groups from Red Cross war work to the civilian war of a Toronto Symphony Orchestra rummage sale, Mrs. D. S. Hoare has come by her recipe through trial and inevitable error.

Mother of three grown children, grandmother of four, wife of a Toronto pediatrician and overseer (with only occasional help) of a big rambling home in Don Mills, she adds a flourish: Keep relaxed—at least, keep your butterflies to yourself.

Exercise is part of Mrs. Hoare's way of coping with the nervous butterflies that afflict Madame Presidents. She walks her dog, curls in winter, golfs and swims in summer.

And as Madame President, she plans. "An officer must plan ahead," Mrs. Hoare said.

Son has to, so that she knows exactly what she is doing or has to do. If I'm organized in my mind, I can do anything."

This is what she is doing now.

- Margaret Hoare is president of the board of directors for Visiting Homemakers Association, a welfare agency which primarily serves families where the mother is unable to fill the role of homemaker herself. The agency has a staff of 21 and is assisted by 21 volunteers.

- For three years, Mrs. Hoare has served on the budget review board of the United Appeal, attending three daylong meetings a year,



Mrs. D. S. Hoare

two lengthy afternoon meetings and several subcommittee meetings in the summer to review camps.

- Annually Mrs. Hoare works on United Appeal campaigns and has served from canvasser to area chairman.

- Last fall she agreed to serve with a newly organized project, Catholic Rehabilitation Service which operates a hostel for men.

- A former convener, Mrs. Hoare, serves on the TSO rummage sale committee, canvasses for the symphony sustaining fund and attends TSO concerts and musicales.

- She is a member of the Women's Auxiliary of Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children. She has served on the executive and still does volun-

tary work in the hospital. She helps her husband, chief pediatrician at St. Michael's Hospital, with functions connected with his alumni association.

- She supports the Art Gallery of Toronto by keeping up her membership. She is a faithful ticket buyer from the National Ballet Guild of Canada and the Canadian Opera Company.

- She is an associate member of the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir. She was an active member of the Catholic Women's League when her husband practiced in a mining area in Quebec. She has kept up membership with the Mining Women's Association to keep in touch with friends of that period. Recently she had to turn down the vice-presidency of the association.

- She is a member of the Ladies Golf Club but strictly for enjoyment. She recently refused an office on the executive of the Toronto Cricket, Skating and Curling Club.

## 1963



Article in *The Globe & Mail* featuring **Margaret Hoare**, VHA Board Chair from 1961-1964. The piece highlights what a typical day looked like for Margaret during her tenure with VHA.



*Lawn Crier - Oct 16, 1964.*

## VISITING HOMEMAKERS ASSOCIATION.



In these four pictures a temporary mother takes over efficiently.



Our tour included a call at the Visiting Homemakers Association located at 400 Mount Pleasant Road where we had a most interesting and informative session with Miss Kathryn Taggart, Director of the Association. A number of questions from our group were answered by Miss Taggart after she had described the functions of the Association.

The Agency employs about eighty full time Homemakers and usually about thirty on a part time basis. The function of the Visiting Homemaker is to provide the service of a trained and supervised substitute mother on a temporary basis in the homes where a mother, because of illness, death, or other cause, is unable to carry on her regular homemaking, and where there are no relatives or friends who are able to take over during the emergency.

Homemakers service is open to all races and creeds. Service is provided to the municipalities of Toronto, North York, East York, Leaside, Weston, Swansea and Forest Hill. Visiting Homemakers service is not given to Scarborough, Etobicoke or Lakeshore municipalities as they are serviced by Red Cross Homemakers.

Eligibility for service to families is determined by the Agency depending on the nature and extent of illness. Exceptions are where mothers are the sole support of their children and are unable to look after their families due to illness. Service is also given to single adults and the aged, but this is at present restricted to East York.

The Visiting Homemakers service is not able to provide long term or permanent help to families. The



anticipated length of service is eight weeks or less.

A fee is charged based on the size of the family and total income. The fee is established by the agency after consulting with the family and treated confidentially.

Visiting Homemakers wear an identifying uniform and generally work by the day five days a week. Any special situations requiring longer hours have to be arranged with the agency as exceptions.

The extension of service to senior citizens is a new service whereby a Homemaker goes into the home of an older person who may need some assistance. This service is usually part time and is designed to assist aged or partially incapacitated persons to carry on daily routines in their own home. Once again a fee is determined according to the person's ability to pay.

A further service is the Home Care Program which enables persons who are ill, to return to their homes earlier from the hospitals than if this care could not be provided. Usually requests for this service is through the family physician.

The Visiting Homemakers Association began its service program in 1925 and is one of the oldest corporations of this kind in Canada.

The agency's source of income, other than the fees which those being served can afford to pay, comes from the United Community Fund.

This very essential service is but one of many supported in large part through the United Community Fund.

JOAN HOOVER,  
Home Office Service Department.

# UNITED APPEAL

for Metropolitan Toronto

# 1964

An article in the October 16, 1964 issue of *Crown Crier*. The piece highlights a session with **Kathryn Taggart**, VHA Executive Director from 1961-1976, to answer questions about our organization.

# 1975

Brochure of services offered by the Visiting Homemakers Association from May 1975.

It is such an interesting piece of history to see how the specialties of our team have evolved from 1975 to today!

## VISITING HOMEMAKERS ASSOCIATION

170 MERTON STREET  
TEL. 487-1565

### VISITING HOMEMAKER SERVICE TO THE ELDERLY AND HANDICAPPED ADULTS

One way of helping elderly and handicapped adults to remain at home as long as possible is by sending a Visiting Homemaker into the home for 2 to 5 half days a week to do those things that the elderly or handicapped person cannot do or finds too burdensome.

The Homemaker service is part time only, so it is important for the elderly or handicapped adult to be able to manage by himself between the Homemaker's visits; or there must be a responsible family member in the household to do what is necessary when the Homemaker is not there.

### APPLICATIONS

Applications may be made to the Visiting Homemakers Association, 170 Merton Street, Tel. 487-1565, Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

- 2 -

### HOW DOES THE SERVICE WORK?

How a Homemaker helps in any home depends on the special needs in that home. The Homemaker's duties include shopping, laundry, light cleaning, preparation of meals (including special diets), simple personal care. The Homemaker also provides companionship and support to her clients. She is alert to the many ways in which she can make life more comfortable and pleasurable for them.

Careful planning helps to make the best use of the Homemaker's time, and her tasks are adjusted to meet individual requirements as much as possible. She may go into a home for as little as 2 half days a week or up to 5 half days.

When changes are needed in the Homemaker's usual routines or hours of service, these changes will be arranged through the supervising social worker from the Visiting Homemakers Association.

- 3 -

### FOR HOW LONG WILL SERVICE BE PROVIDED?

Homemaker service for the elderly and handicapped adult may be continued as long as necessary, if it is giving the kind of help that is needed. This may be for a few weeks or many months. It is provided on a planned basis to meet continuing needs. It is not intended as an emergency service. Frequently there is a waiting period of several weeks before a Homemaker can be assigned.

### WHO IS A VISITING HOMEMAKER?

The Visiting Homemaker is a reliable experienced woman with a genuine interest in others. She receives training and supervision from professional staff and is trained to respect the confidential nature of her work.

She receives a regular salary from the Association regardless of what the client is able to pay.

### HOW IS THE SERVICE FINANCED?

Those who are able to do so are asked to pay a fee. The amount paid is adjusted to meet individual circumstances.

Homemaker service is made possible in part through funds from the United Appeal of Metropolitan Toronto and in part through interested community groups. In Metropolitan Toronto, Municipal and Provincial Funds have been made available to help provide this service.









# Community Focus

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF VHA'S CLIENTS AND HOMEMAKERS

By Patricia Triantafyllou, Editor

Recently, I was given the opportunity to visit some of our clients during their homemaker visits. I had the chance to see our homemakers in action and to see what a difference they make in people's lives.

My first stop was Lynda Hatful and her homemaker Gwendolyn Henry. Lynda has been receiving VHA's assistance for the past 20 years after being diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. Lynda's homemaker assists her with duties such as cooking, light housekeeping and assisting with her bath. After a bad fall many years ago, which resulted in a broken pelvis, Lynda was placed in hospital and was not able to be discharged without having assistance at home. After a lengthy stay in the hospital, service was set up for Lynda and she was able to go home. Lynda states "I was told at 4:00 in the afternoon that Visiting Homemakers Association would be at my home for assistance - five minutes later, I was out of the hospital and on my way home! VHA was able to set up immediate service so that I could leave the hospital and get back into the comfort of my own home. It gave me back my freedom - a hospital is no place for a person with a disability".

The next stop was Elizabeth Gunn and her homemaker Ouidalyn Crossman. Elizabeth has been receiving VHA's services since 1995. Her homemaker assists her with light housekeeping, meal preparation, and laundry. Mrs. Gunn states, "With such bad arthritis, I can't do many things for myself and I was so independent before. My Homemaker is a gem. She is so cheerful, she brightens my day".



My last stop was Ernestine Smith and her Homemaker Vivian Green. Due to a chronic circulatory problem, Ernestine receives VHA's services 3 days a week for 2 hours each day. Ernestine, whose children range in age from 17 to 3, receives assistance with shopping, laundry, advanced meal preparation, light cleaning, and parental relief. During my visit with Ernestine, I was able to see how well the children bonded with Vivian and how comfortable they were in her care. Ernestine states, "when Vivian's here, she relieves my stress and gives many words of comfort. A great deal of burden is lifted and I feel spiritually and emotionally uplifted. The VHA homemakers are always such a good match. They have taught me organizing and cleaning skills. Most importantly, it relieves the older children from too many chores."



Although I have been working in the office at Visiting Homemakers Association for the past seven years, this was the first opportunity I had to visit our clients during their homemaker's visit and actually see what a difference VHA makes in so many peoples' lives. On the day of my visit, it was a cold and icy day. I had the good fortune of driving to these clients' homes, many of whom lived a good distance from the closest bus stop. This made me stop to realize what sort of distance some homemakers travel to reach their clients' home. I can only imagine what it must be like during a snowstorm in mid-February. Sitting back and observing at these clients' homes, I realized what a good job VHA's Client Service Coordinators do to provide a good match between client and homemaker. In each case, I sensed a very comfortable, trusting, and relaxed feeling between the clients and their Homemakers - especially in the case of the children and their homemaker Vivian. From the information I gathered throughout the day, I came to only one conclusion. In each case, Visiting Homemakers Association is able to provide independence, peace of mind, and freedom, but most importantly, these clients are able to live in the comfort of their own home. Personally, I can't think of any other place I'd rather be!



\* All names used with permission of clients.

# 1990s

A day in the life of VHA's client and care providers from a 1995 newsletter.

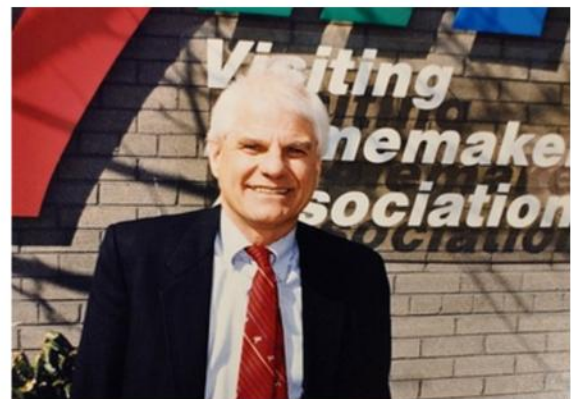
It shares the story of a homemaker visiting three of their clients throughout the day.

In **1998**, VHA would provide nursing services for the first time.





David Wright, President and CEO from 1988-2004, stands in front of VHA's new logo at our 170 Merton Street location. In the note below, David reflects on VHA's growth and direction, and what this meant to him.



## THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Here's me, standing in front of 170 Merton Street looking a little tired and a lot older asking myself, "Has it really been a year and a half since we introduced the new logo as a proud symbol of our new plan to re-position VHA as a multi-service provider?"



You can see from the list of services below, that the scope of our services has expanded considerably from that fateful day late in 1995. True, these are still small programs relative to the mammoth size of our work in Homemaking – but we have made an important start. We have had a particularly hard time with the start-up of our Rehabilitation Services because of significant changes made last year to Provincial Legislation which caused that market to suddenly become depressed. On the plus side, our Home Cleaning division (while not growing nearly as fast as we had hoped) now provides 35,000 of hours of service to over 700 clients.

This year, we have set aggressive new targets for the sale of our core service, Homemaking, to private pay clients and – the big news this month – VHA has decided to move into the sale of Nursing as a new core service aimed at private pay clients. In addition to the marketing of a diversified VHA, there is tremendous effort being expended on other fronts. First, we have reorganized our Client Service operations, the details of which are outlined in the Client Service update on page two. Secondly, we have been meeting with a number of Ontario Community Support Colleague organizations, in Metro and across Ontario to discuss possible partnerships that would help us deal with the acute need to reduce our service costs.

If the major preoccupation last year was with getting a new marketing initiative started at VHA, this year's major focus has to be on cost reduction. We are forced to take these steps in preparation for the open market tendering process to which we will soon be subjected when the new Community Care Access Centres become active. There is considerable concern among our not for profit colleagues that we could not sustain a protracted price war with the multi-national corporations who will be aggressively competing in the new order. Hopefully, through work both within and among each OCSA organization, we can meet the challenge in time.

All of this has demanded tremendous flexibility from everybody in the organization – and I mean everybody! One thing about homemaking, wherever you work in the service, there's never a dull moment!

Clipping from VHA's fall 1997 newsletter



# 2001-2002

Our name officially changed from Visiting Homemakers Association to **VHA Home HealthCare**, reflecting our growing continuum of health and home support services.



# 2004

VHA's nursing program grew by over 100,000 service units after we won breakthrough Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) nursing contracts with Durham Access to Care, North York, Chatham-Kent and Sarnia Lambton CCAC.



# 2005

To commemorate our 80th anniversary, VHA launched the Heroes in the Home Award as a way to recognize and honour unpaid caregivers in the health care industry - family members and friends who provide extraordinary home care to their loved ones.



# 2009

COTA Health's Rehabilitation Services – which includes physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, social work services and diet and nutritional services – joins the VHA family to become VHA Rehab Solutions.





# 2009

## VHA inaugurates its Research program

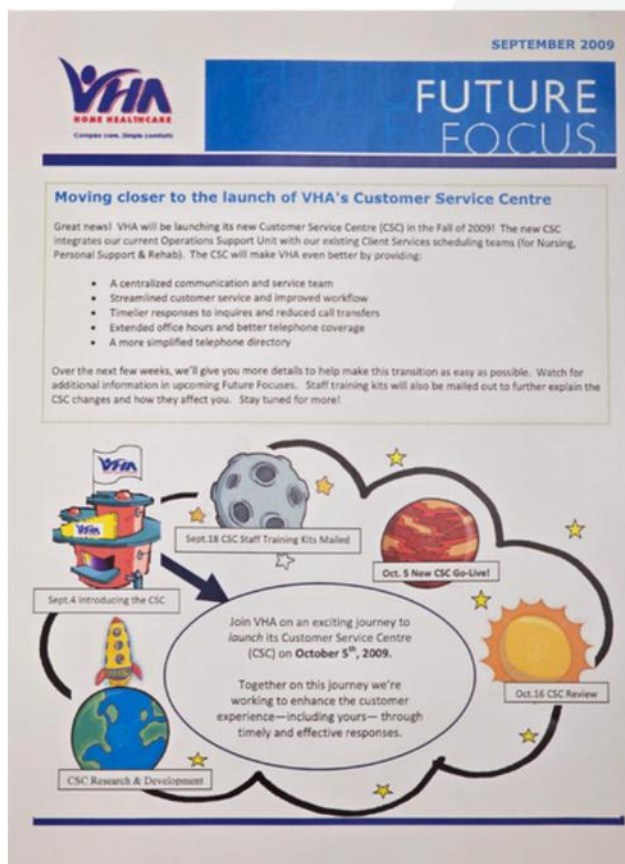
VHA begins its commitment to investing in research to generate evidence to advance home care and the broader health system.



# 2009



In 2009, VHA launched its Customer Service Centre to boost efficiency and improve client care. This milestone streamlined communication and marked a big step forward in delivering faster, more connected support. This team now supports the coordination of nearly 4 million episodes of care across VHA every year.





# 2011

VHA's Heroes in the Home Award was renamed to the Heart of Home Care Awards. Seeking nominations from across the province, each winner and nominee was invited to attend a special day in Toronto which included a luncheon and an invitation to our public Heart of Home Care Awards ceremony event on National Caregiver Day in April. At the event, the winners would share their heartfelt stories through videos created in collaboration with VHA and they would be presented with their award. The awards took place annually from 2005–2021.



## Breaking News and Updates

### VHA gives young scholars a Head Start

This September, VHA awarded its first Head Start Scholarships to 21 inspiring students pursuing their higher education goals. The Head Start Scholarship program was launched to support sons and daughters of VHA staff and service providers who are continuing their full-time or part-time post-secondary studies at an accredited college, university or trade school.

Through the new program, we allocated \$1,500 scholarships to recipients selected on the basis of their academic achievement, community involvement/volunteer activities and financial need. We received 45 applications from students in total. These outlined a range of impressive accomplishments and interests, while also demonstrating a universal commitment to values that strengthen our communities.

The applicants wrote passionately about their volunteer involvement in schools, churches, their community and even overseas to address such issues as mental illness, hunger, children's education, at-risk youth and environmental challenges. One recipient's comment, "I learned that there is power in one person and that I can make a difference," exemplified the value that these students attached to giving back to the community.

The selection committee faced some difficult decisions with the impressive group of candidates before them and we are pleased to congratulate our inaugural Head Start Scholars.

Ariana Abdul  
Adejumoke Adeshina  
Aisha Afrah  
Stacey Bien-Aime  
Jeahlisa Bridgeman  
Long Cheng  
Tasha Davidson

Jocelyne Lamarche  
Monique Mitchell  
Jes Muli  
Ruth Nara  
Lisa Ogbomo  
Sylvia Pinsonneault  
Jocelyn Reaume

Sahar Salimi-Mosavi  
Margaret Shanks  
Morgan Suggitt  
Manuel Villatoro  
Terah Wong  
Sarah Yu  
Mary Zhang

# 2012



In 2012, VHA launched VHA's Head Start Scholarship program.

In September 2012, we awarded our first Head Start Scholarships to 21 students making a difference in their communities.

Each recipient received \$1,500 toward post-secondary studies. Their passion, resilience, and dedication reflect the very best of VHA Home HealthCare.



# Client Voice

## 2014



In 2014, VHA launched its Client and Family Advisory Council to formalize our partnership with clients and families and our commitment to keep clients at the centre of all we do. Client voice is such a foundational piece of our work at VHA.



**PARTICIPATING IN THE  
CO-DESIGN PROCESS IS  
PERSONALLY IMPORTANT TO ME.  
TO THINK THAT MY PERSONAL  
EXPERIENCE MAY POSITIVELY  
AFFECT OTHERS' IS VERY  
REWARDING AND MEANINGFUL.**



**- PAUL MORSE**

*Client Partner*





VHA staff pose at our BPSO Champions workshop on August 14.

over the next three years VHA teams will implement selected RNAO best practice guidelines and then evaluate them on improving client care and patient outcomes.

To date, we have two pilots underway in Durham and Sarnia. Our Durham West and Sarnia teams have each selected two aspects of the RNAO's Assessment and Management of Stage I to IV Pressure Ulcers Best Practice Guideline and best care for their clients.

### VHA Spotlights Best Practices

VHA's journey to become a Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) has begun! We officially launched our candidacy for BPSO recognition by the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) during the week of August 15 -22 with workshops, guest speakers and presentations in our Toronto, Sarnia, Chatham, London, Ottawa and Durham locations.

The BPSO process seeks to make a positive impact on patient care through evidence-based practice. As a BPSO candidate,



## BPSO LAUNCH

VHA began its Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) journey in 2012 to improve care through evidence based best practices, strengthen outcomes for clients. The goal of Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO)'s BPSO is

to create evidence-based practice cultures through systematic implementation and evaluation of multiple RNAO clinical Best Practice Guidelines.

# 2015

VHA celebrates our first designation as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization from the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario.



VHA leaders pose at VHA's inaugural designation as a BPSO from the RNAO.



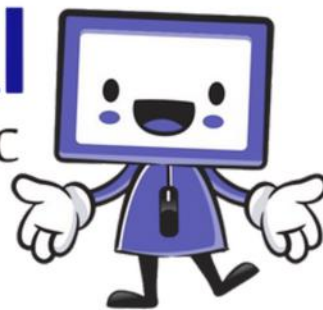
# 2016



VHA rolled out our Electronic Medical Records Initiative (EMRI) province-wide, beginning with adult nursing program service providers.

## EMRI

ELECTRONIC  
MEDICAL  
RECORDS  
INITIATIVE



# 2019



## Ontario Health

VHA played a key role in five of the first Ontario Health Teams that were announced in November 2019.







Carol Annett (left) and VHA's Vice President of Client Services Barbara Cawley (second from the right) meet with Christine Elliot, Ontario's Minister of Health (centre) and other Leaders of the East Toronto Health Partners at WoodGreen Community Services to discuss how integrated health care can improve the patient experience by focusing on patients and specific local needs.

about the possibility of being a partner in one or more of the first OHTs to help create a better health system in local communities we are an integral part of. Regardless of whether we are tapped on the shoulder to move forward in this first round of applications, there is good will and great enthusiasm at the tables we are at to forge ahead regardless and keep working together to improve the care experience for all involved—clients and clinicians alike. This work requires heavy lifting, a comfort with ambiguity, a willingness to let go of the past and a heavy dose of trust. As one of our partners put it so well—OHTs will move forward ultimately at the speed of trust amongst partners!

**“[OHTs] will allow patients, clients and families to more easily access and navigate the system and be better supported through transitions from one provider to another, to have better access to health care records, and to be active partners in care decisions.”**

Eventually the plan is to have OHTs in all communities across the province. I have been asked whether I am concerned that VHA is not playing a significant role in all the OHT submissions where we currently provide service. My response has been and remains VHA may well not look like it is today in the years to come, but our creative, skilled and passionate team with their deep knowledge and expertise in home and community care is certainly needed. For now, our focus is on ensuring our

voices, along with those of our clients and families, are heard as a new future is being reimagined! A transition as significant as this will take time, so I encourage everyone to speak up, fasten your seat belts and get ready for an exciting ride.

The first OHTs are expected to be announced this Fall and we will keep you updated as this progresses. If you would like to read more about the OHTs, the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care have provided detailed information about this process on their website at <http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/connectedcare/oht>, and one of the Self-Assessments VHA is involved in is posted on our website at <https://www.vha.ca/vha-home-healthcare-self-assessment-submission-for-ontario-health-team>

We hope you find the pages that follow interesting and engaging. If you have comments about *Excelsior*, or would prefer to receive this news electronically, I encourage you to contact our Senior Communications & PR Manager Tracey Turriff at [tturriff@vha.ca](mailto:tturriff@vha.ca) or 416-280-8426. Please also feel free to contact me with any comments directly at [cannett@vha.ca](mailto:cannett@vha.ca) or 416-482-4609.

Thank you for your interest and enjoy the summer!

*Carol Annett*  
President and CEO  
VHA Home HealthCare

EXCELSIOR® SUMMER 2019

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## A LETTER FROM VHA'S PRESIDENT & CEO: ONTARIO'S EVOLVING HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

**“The most significant new element in our landscape has been the announcement of a new vision for health care by the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care in Ontario.”**

# 2019

In 2019, Carol Annett, VHA's CEO from 2004–2021, highlighted a shift toward a more connected and integrated health system in Ontario.

This province-wide transformation set the stage for many of VHA's strong partnerships in communities today.

Dear friends, Welcome to the Summer 2019 issue of *Excelsior*, VHA Home HealthCare's newsletter sharing updates on the latest developments from within our walls and across the communities we serve.

The most significant new element in our landscape has been the announcement of a new vision for health care by the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care in Ontario. The government is aiming to create a health care system that includes more integrated care, improved patient and service provider experience, an end to hallway medicine in hospitals and improved access to digital tools and virtual care. No one can disagree with these laudable intentions – it's what we all want – the challenge will be in making it happen. A key element of their

strategy involves setting up Ontario Health Teams (OHTs), which the government has defined as groups of providers and organizations that are clinically and fiscally accountable for delivering a full and coordinated continuum of care to a defined geographic population. To put that another way, OHTs will be teams of local health

and community care providers working collaboratively to provide integrated care within their communities. These coordinated provider groups will allow patients, clients and families to more easily access and navigate the system and be better supported through transitions from one provider to another, to have better access to health care records, and to be active partners in care decisions. VHA has worked in close collaboration with a large number of trusted partners for some time and has seen the benefits of integrated interprofessional care and the positive outcomes when clients and their families are truly in the driver's seat ensuring we pay attention to what matters most to them. VHA is well-positioned for this transition and we are optimistic about the improvements this will bring across the continuum of care.

The government is taking a staged approach to these changes. Currently the Ministries are reviewing Self-Assessments completed by organizations who have chosen to work together. They are only expected to approve a small number of OHTs to move forward to the full application at this stage, and we anticipate that decision in the near future. VHA is participating in a number of submissions across the province and we are excited

1

EXCELSIOR® SUMMER 2019

# 2019

In 2019, VHA partnered with CANES to open its first adult nursing clinic in Mississauga. This milestone expanded care in the Central West region, offering vital support to acute and wound care patients.

## VHA partners with CANES to open a new Integrated Care Clinic in Mississauga



Members of the Malton Integrated Care Clinic.

VHA regularly works with partner organizations to improve the delivery of health care to our clients.

A recent example of the power of partnerships is our collaboration with CANES Community Care to open an integrated care clinic in the Central West LHIN. The Malton Integrated Care Clinic opened on December 18 and represents VHA's first nursing presence in the area of any magnitude.

CANES Community Care is a non-profit organization that does a lot of personal support work in the Etobicoke area and other communities within the Central West LHIN.

In its announcement of the new clinic, the Central West LHIN said it will operate according to the LHIN's "clinic first" approach to nursing services. Specifically, every patient is assumed to be a clinic patient, and will attend an Integrated Care Clinic to receive their nursing services. The clinic will serve mostly acute care patients, as well as those who require wound care and IV support.

"When CANES offered the building, the equipment and transportation for clients who need it, we saw a wonderful opportunity to provide the nursing and rehab services," said Vicki MacCallum, VHA's Interim Regional Manager for Central West and Mississauga Halton. Vicki is coordinating VHA's involvement in the clinic with the help of Nursing Supervisor Richard Rementilla. "This is a natural fit since CANES' values are so aligned with our own."

Several new staff have been hired for the clinic, which is open 7 days a week, 8 am – 8 pm.

"VHA provides a limited amount of child and family nursing services in the area, but this is the first adult nursing support VHA will be providing in Central West," said Vicki. "The goal of this clinic is to better support people in the community and we're very excited to be part of it."

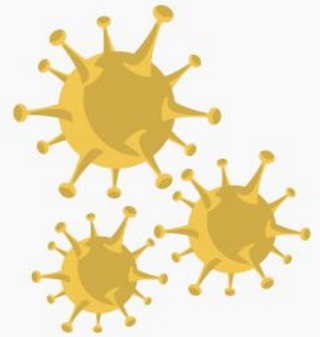
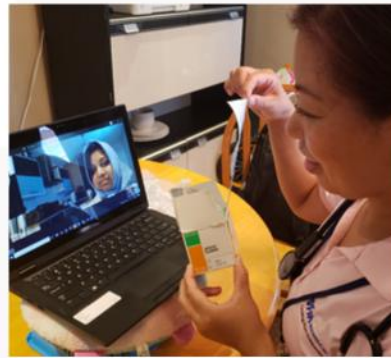




# 2020

## COVID-19 hit the world as a global pandemic.

VHA launched VHA Virtual Care in response to the urgent need to provide care whenever possible, without being face-to-face, during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Virtual Care allowed VHA to enhance both client care and client safety, and address health care staffing issues, during the pandemic.



### KNOW THE STEPS: COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS SCREENING

Whenever possible, please do your screening over the phone. It is also fine to screen during the visit. Best practice is to ask the two questions from a distance of 2 metres.

**STEP 1** Ask client: "Do you have a new or worsening cough, shortness of breath or fever?"

**IF YES:** Wash your hands. Put on surgical mask, gloves, eye protection and gown.

**STEP 2** Ask client: "Have you or someone you have been in close contact with travelled to China in the last 14 days?"

- IF YES:**
- 1) Switch your surgical mask to N95 respirator
  - 2) Put new surgical mask on client
  - 3) Call Supervisor immediately and continue to provide care
  - 4) Tell your client to get medical attention

**TO KEEP EVERYONE SAFE**

One of the first iterations of VHA's COVID-19 screener tool.

Throughout the pandemic, this tool would be modified to adjust to keep our staff, service provider and clients safe amongst new emerging information about the COVID-19 disease.



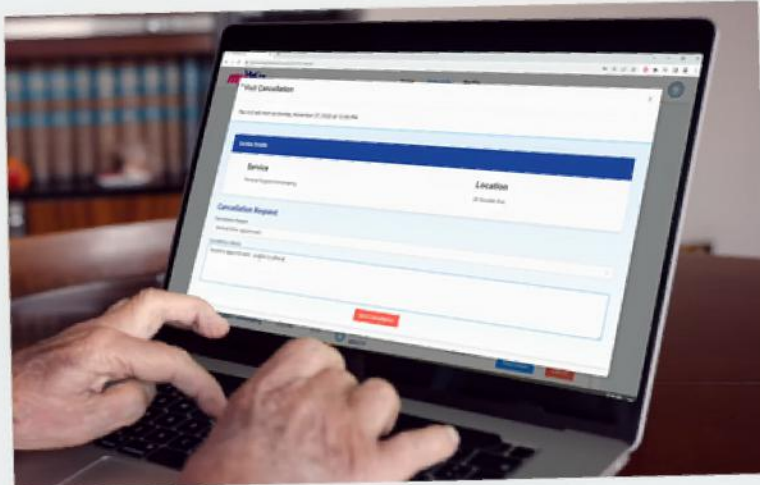
## 2021

In response to the changing needs of Ontario's healthcare system and the urgency of the provincial vaccine rollout in the wake of a COVID-19 third wave, VHA created THRU, which stands for Tactical HealthCare Response Unit.



## 2022

VHA launched our *myVHA* Client Portal to give our clients greater control over how and when they receive care and to enhance our ability to communicate effectively with our clients and their families.





# 2023

In 2023, VHA welcomed a team of In-House Pharmacists. This team filled first-of-their-kind roles as full-time experts to help our frontline teams and clients ensure safe medication management.

Also in 2023, VHA expanded our integrated care programs, helping more clients to recover and receive care at home with the launch of two hospital-to-home programs with North York General Hospital and Michael Garron Hospital.



# 2024

In 2024, VHA became home to the Ontario Health atHome North Clinic, marking the first time VHA is actively providing care at our head office location.

Also in 2024, VHA is selected as one of the service provider organizations to test new ways or providing more connected care to clients and families after our involvement with many collaborative hospital-partnered or hospital-to-home programs.





PARTY  
time!



Mardi  
Lynas





# Office Life





# CARE AT HOME. DELIVERED WITH HEART. LED BY SCIENCE

Stories and Celebrations of VHA's Purpose



Within the pages of our ***Care at Home. Delivered with Heart. Led by Science: Stories and Celebrations of VHA's Purpose*** section, you will find stories of great heart in healthcare.

These stories are not just anecdotes; they are the very essence of what has always made VHA unique. They remind us that at its core, healthcare is about people — both those who provide it and those who receive it. These narratives bridge the gap between science and heart, creating a tapestry of compassion, courage, and connection that uplifts us all.

# Three Good Reasons For Saying Thank-You

By PHYLLIS GRIFFITHS  
Telegram Staff Reporter

**M**R. PETER SANTANATO has three good reasons for saying in plain if not fluent English: "Thank all who do this for me."

The reasons are Michele, Maria and Michael — three little Ms born to her and her factory worker husband May 30 when only a single birth was expected.

The thanks go to the Visiting Homemakers and the United Appeal contributors who support them.

## OTHER TOTS

The Italian couple, both 28 and already with sons, aged 5 and 4, couldn't afford help — but couldn't get along without it.

Visiting Homemaker

Edna Habermehl was the answer.

She took over the Morrison ave. home for 10 weeks until Mrs. Santanato had regained her strength and then gave a tapered service of three days a week for a fortnight.

Now the mother can carry on alone—but when Miss Habermehl drops in for a friendly visit she helps with the bathing or diaper-changing.

Speaking of diapers: the Homemakers arranged for a diaper service during those early weeks that at peak was providing seven dozen a day.

Now the triplets are down to three dozen a day and Mrs. Santanato washes them herself.

"The fine lady was like a mother," Mrs. Santanato said. "She showed me all things. Never I could manage without, never, never."

## UA AGENCY

The Visiting Homemakers, one of 83 organizations benefiting from the current United Appeal campaign, last year served 1,500 families involving 6,000 children. It has 95 Homemakers.

Fees are on a sliding scale, according to ability to pay.

Some people, like the Santanatos, can give only thanks—from their hearts.



VISITING HOMEMAKER Edna Habermehl, dropping in for a friendly visit, fits Mrs. Peter Santanato bathing her triplets and lends a hand with dressing Maria. Santanato holds Marco (left) and Michele.

1962



This news article, "Three Good Reasons For Saying Thank-You" from the newspaper *Toronto Telegram* from October 1962 featured a VHA homemaker providing care to a mother and her triplets at home.



# I HAVE CARE

Angelo had been a caregiver for years, but each day with Mrs. Thompson, an elderly woman with dementia, felt like a new chapter of understanding. Mrs. Thompson often struggled to remember where she was or who she was talking to, but Angelo never wavered in his patience. Every morning, Angelo would gently greet her with a smile, reminding her that it was a new day, and that they would face it together.

On this particular morning, Mrs. Thompson seemed a little more confused than usual. She sat quietly at the kitchen table, her hands trembling slightly as she tried to remember how to use the spoon. Angelo approached her, his voice soft and soothing, asking if she needed help. Mrs. Thompson looked up, her eyes filled with a mixture of frustration and sadness. "I can't remember how to do it," she whispered, her voice breaking.

Angelo sat beside her, his heart aching with empathy.

"It's okay, Mrs. Thompson," he said, gently guiding her hand to the spoon. "We'll take it slow. I'm right here with you." He didn't rush her.

Instead, he stayed in the moment, offering reassurance with each movement. He knew that the smallest gesture of care could make a difference in Mrs. Thompson's day.

*...it was about showing them they were seen, heard, and deeply valued.*

As the morning passed, Angelo helped Mrs. Thompson with more tasks, always maintaining a calm presence, his voice a constant source of comfort.

Mrs. Thompson's face softened as the day went on, a slight smile appearing as they sat together for a cup of tea. "Thank you," Mrs. Thompson said quietly, her voice full of gratitude. Angelo's heart swelled with warmth—he knew that in that moment, he wasn't just providing physical care; he was offering his presence, his love, and his unwavering support.

In those small, tender moments, Angelo realized that caregiving wasn't just about the little tasks — it was about showing people they were seen, heard, and deeply valued. And for him, that was the most meaningful care of all.

**- ANGELO JAVIER**

*Personal Support Worker*

# Homemaker

NEWSLETTER

VISITING HOMEMAKERS ASSOCIATION

170 MERTON STREET • TORONTO, M5S 1A1



WINTER 1976

EDITOR: MRS. R. D. HILL



"The Board of Directors of the Visiting Homemakers Association is pleased to announce the appointment of Mrs. P. A. Thomas as Executive Director."

Since this formal announcement, Mrs. Thomas has been "getting to know us" - the programs and the staff who are taking those programs into the community. This familiarization process has been extended to include other "helping" agencies and various government agencies with whom we work. At the same time, Mrs. Thomas has assumed the directing duties which are a part of the

day-to-day response of our agency to our community's needs. We are grateful for her enthusiasm and energy as well as for her warmth and inquiring mind.

Mrs. Thomas brings to the Visiting Homemakers Association her considerable experience in the provision and direction of social services in London, England. For three years she was the Director of the Family Welfare Association in that city. This voluntary agency, founded in 1869, provides a high standard of professional and voluntary services. Specializing in the preservation of casework and psychotherapy methods, it concentrates on individual or family group needs. The Family Welfare Association complements the local government Social Services, which are responsible for most of the social service work in the community. This combination of governmental and voluntary agency within which Mrs. Thomas has worked has many similarities to the relationship of the V.H.A. and governmental services in Toronto.

Mrs. Thomas is concerned that the V.H.A. will continue to offer the community realistic, workable and carefully conceived services within the capabilities of our human and financial resources, and also to respond to changing community needs. We welcome Mrs. Thomas as our new Director and know that the goals and programs of the V.H.A. will be developed and directed with competence and understanding.

Dorothy Martin  
President, V.H.A.

Mrs. P. A. Thomas was born in Winnipeg and had her early education

# 1976

In VHA's *Homemaker* newsletter, in winter 1976, there was a client compliment from a Mr. G.L. Thadani. The compliment shares that VHA's "wonderful, lovable and kind services [have] been the most important thing in our life...". A great example of VHA's care at home, delivered with heart, from the 1970s.

From a client.....

(Excerpt)...we wish to say at this stage that the experience and the great opportunity we had in being able to make use of your wonderful, lovable and kind services has been the most important thing in our life, for, just when we thought we were going to face difficulties in looking after our new baby girl, Homemaker came to our rescue. God bless you all.

Our special thanks to Mrs. King and Mrs. Auerbach.....

Yours truly,  
Mr. G. L. Thadani

36 The Sunday Sun September 18, 1988

## 'Homemakers' lend a hand

You don't get to skip or play baseball when you only have one leg, says nine-year-old Sarah Whiting.

**ANNE DAWSON**



With the United Way

"That's what I hate the most," the green-eyed, freckle-faced little girl said after thinking about it for a few seconds. "But I don't mind it - not that much."

It was the surgery to remove half of her right lung that hurt the most, she said. It hurt even more than the operation to remove her right leg.

Just five weeks before Sarah's fifth birthday, her mom Karen Whiting, 36, said she complained of leg aches.

"I thought she was having growing pains," said Karen, a dietician's aid.

That day, Jan. 13, 1984, a pediatrician at the Hospital For Sick Children diagnosed the lump as a rare case of osteogenic sarcoma bone cancer. It's the same ailment that attacked Terry Fox and Steve Fonyo.

Thirteen days later, Sarah's leg was removed from the waist down. She was fitted for an artificial leg the next week.

But that was just the beginning. "It's a trying experience when you have two other children," said her father Lindsay, 36, of his sons, Andrew, 5, and Aaron, 16.

Karen said she just couldn't cope. "I was back and forth between hospital and home most of the time."

Finally, Lindsay, who works for a courier firm, said it got to the point where they felt they just couldn't ask their friends for one more babysitting favor.

That's when the Visiting Homemakers Association, a United Way agency,

stepped in. It provides hundreds of homemakers to families and handicapped adults who need help.

"United Way allowed us to become a normal family," said Lindsay. "By bringing in a homemaker, I could go to work without having to worry about where my kids were going to stay or who was going to feed them."

Sonia, the homemaker, helped the Whiting family for two years, giving them time to take care of Sarah.

She underwent chemotherapy for the next nine months during which she lost all of her curly waist-length hair and an extraordinary amount of weight.

In October 1984 the treatment for her leg cancer finally ended but five more tumors on her lungs were found. She endured another round of chemotherapy, this time for 2½ years.

In March, Sarah had her most recent bout of surgery when her doctor found another tumor on her lung. Half of it was removed.

But a week ago today, you would have never guessed the hardships this little girl has endured. She raised \$211 by walking and riding in a wheelchair 8 km (5 miles) in the United Way's walkathon.

And a few weeks before that, she attempted waterskiing. She horseback rides every Saturday and she's also a Girl Guide.

# 1988

An article, *Homemakers Lend a Hand*, from *The Sunday Sun* on September 18, 1988 shares how the a provider from the Visiting Homemakers Association made a difference in a 9 year old's life.



## Honouring a Hero VHA Heroes in the Home Award



(L to R) VHA PSW Halina Martyniuk, Helen Martens, Albert Martens

Every year, VHA Home HealthCare's **Heroes in the Home Award** recognizes the extraordinary efforts of a friend or family member who has gone above and beyond the call of duty to provide a loved one who is disabled, elderly or chronically ill with the support needed to live at home. While Albert Martens — a retired quality control inspector for General Motors in Oshawa — may not be able to leap over tall buildings, his unwavering devotion to caring for wife, Helen, is nothing short of heroic.

Married for over 51 years, Helen and Albert met at a Polish hall dance though, ironically, neither is from Poland: Albert is originally from Germany and Helen, from the former nation of Czechoslovakia. Even though both were seeing other people at the time, a spark ignited that night and Helen agreed to go on a date with Albert the next day. The love-struck couple quickly realized this was the person they had

married and had one daughter.

Though Helen suffered from Muscular Dystrophy — a genetic disease which causes the progressive weakness and deterioration of movement-controlling skeletal muscles — it was still in its early stages at the time of their marriage. A few years later, in 1961, however, she was also diagnosed with kidney failure and needed two surgeries. Fortunately, the surgeries were very successful and Albert commends the doctors for "saving her life."

While over time, Helen's Muscular Dystrophy began to take its toll, Albert didn't give the extra support Helen needed a second thought, noting, "I have to take care of my girl." In fact, taking care of others is not new to Albert who says he's looked after numerous ailing relatives in the past including his father-in-law. "And he never really liked me," notes Albert dryly. Though bedridden and weak, the truth of the comment

From transferring Helen from her bed to a wheelchair, to bathing, to household duties, Albert had done it all until a hernia operation over seven years ago forced him to seek extra help from a VHA Personal Support Worker (PSW) and frequent visits from a VHA Nurse, both of whom are funded by Central East's Community Care Access Centre.

"I was just impressed," notes VHA PSW Halina Martyniuk, who nominated Albert for the Heroes in the Home Award and is typically at the Martens' home six days a week. Impressed, she adds, by his ability to persevere through life's ups and downs, his devotion to his wife's care and the obvious love he has for



Central East manager, Sue Beattie, presents Albert with the Heroes Award

Helen. A love that he openly displays for all to see: a love poem and plaque commemorating the couple's 50th wedding anniversary is proudly displayed on their wall.

Clearly both Albert and Helen are heroes in their own right: Helen for keeping her spirits up even as her physical health and strength declines and Albert for never wavering in his commitment to caring for his wife no

Our third annual **Heroes in the Home Award** recognized the extraordinary efforts of a friend of family member who has gone above and beyond the call of duty to provide a loved one who is disabled, elderly or chronically ill with the support needed to live at home.

While Albert Martens — a retired quality control inspector for General Motors in Oshawa — may not be able to leap over tall buildings, his unwavering devotion to caring for wife, Helen, is nothing short of heroic.

2008



## Reflecting on my experiences on my 10th year as PSW

As VHA celebrates 100 years of creating more independence, I am incredibly proud to mark my own 10th year of service as a Personal Support Worker with this exceptional organization. My journey has been nothing short of wonderful, unique and deeply fulfilling. The experiences I've had, the lives I've touched, and the bonds I've formed over the years truly make my time at VHA so special.

What stands out most about my experience is the genuine, one-on-one connection I've been able to foster with each client. In the homecare setting, every client is an individual with their own story, needs and preferences. Being invited into their homes is a privilege that goes beyond providing physical care — it's about understanding their lives, listening to their concerns, and ensuring their wellbeing, both physically and emotionally. I've learned so much from each of them, and in turn, have had the opportunity to make their lives better, even in small ways.

One of my most memorable moments was with a client who had lost the ability to move freely. Over time, I worked alongside them, helping them regain confidence and independence, celebrating every small achievement. The moment I saw the smile on their face when they took their first few steps again was priceless. It's these kinds of personal victories, like when clients regain their strength, confidence, and sense of self, that make my role as PSW so rewarding.



VHA has been a key part of what makes my experience so meaningful. The organization's commitment to person-centered care and providing constant support and training has empowered me to grow both as a professional and as a person. VHA's dedication to excellence has given me the tools I need to truly make a difference, and the ongoing encouragement from my colleagues and supervisors has allowed me to continue evolving in my role.

But perhaps what makes my experience truly unique is the sense of fulfillment and purpose that comes from knowing I'm making a difference in people's lives every single day. It's the small moments of connection — the smile of gratitude from a client, the relief in a family member's voice, the comfort of knowing I helped someone maintain their dignity and independence — that make me feel most proud.

Celebrating my 10 years of service during VHA's 100th anniversary is a milestone I cherish deeply. I feel incredibly fortunate to be a part of an organization that not only empowers its PSWs to grow but also has such a profound, positive impact on the lives of clients and families alike. My time at VHA has shaped me into the caregiver I am today, and I look forward to continuing to contribute to its legacy, knowing that the work I do truly matters.

### - VAN BATION

*Personal Support Worker*



## VHA Playdate: A Rare Chance for Kids with Medical Complexities to Socialize and for Their Parents to Take a Break

VHA Playdate is a unique pilot that ran this fall to give kids with complex medical needs a rare chance to hang out and play together, and their parents — who have few chances for respite as caregivers — a much needed weekend break. The brainchild of VHA Home HealthCare, the VHA Playdate program took place at Scarborough Village Public School and emerged out of a focus group of family caregivers who said there weren't many programs around where their kids could safely play.

"Many of these kids go to school during the week thanks to onsite medical support. But opportunities for play outside of the classroom are few and need lots of co-ordination," says Caroline Hunter, Regional Manager at VHA Home HealthCare and current chair of VHA's Client and Carer Advisory Council.

VHA Playdate doesn't just give kids a chance for fun, it allows their parents some precious free time. "It is always hard for me to leave my daughter behind and do things with my other two children, but this is amazing," said one of the moms whose daughter participated. "The socializing is good for her. It is all so well-planned and organized."

Another mom really appreciated the warm and open atmosphere of the program. "On the weekends my kids like to get out. At Playdate we feel comfortable because it is professional and safe. They are familiar and accepting and they fit in. You aren't worried about people's reactions — you can relax and feel comfortable."

"It's really an incredible experience to watch," says Alexandra Dunlop, Occupational Therapist and VHA Playdate program lead. "The activities, from music to arts and crafts to sports in the gym, create an atmosphere that is nothing short of magical." Parents are able to comfortably leave their children for three and a half hours as each child is paired with his or her own Personal Support Worker and is also supported by an onsite Registered Nurse to address any immediate medical issues.

VHA Playdate was funded by a VHA Ideas to Action/Innovation grant but is looking to secure long-term funding through community or government grants. In the meantime, VHA has launched a funding page to try to deliver another session in the early spring. For more details, and to check out the CTV news story on the program, visit [www.vha.ca/playdate](http://www.vha.ca/playdate).

This article, from a winter 2016/2017 issue of VHA's Voice newsletter, highlights an important initiative VHA ran for children with medical complexities and their families called **VHA Playdate**, described as **"nothing short of magical."**

# 2016





# RESEARCH & INNOVATION

VHA is dedicated to supporting research and innovation that advances human welfare, creates new knowledge, develops our understanding and informs best practices in home and community care since the beginning of our research program in 2009. Our research focuses on key areas that create possibilities for more independence, support clients to live at home, promote safe and rewarding working conditions for home care providers, and build toward fully integrated care across sectors. We strive to break new ground in research and development of integrated solutions that reflect the voices of our clients, caregivers and providers.

## 2018 CELEBRATING RESEARCH AT VHA'S CURIOSITY CARNIVAL



Collage submitted by Sonia Nizzer, Senior Research Associate—Mental Health Research Lead, Research & Innovation



# 2024

## Celebrating 5 Years of Champions of Change Fellows



Collage submitted by Emma Perera,  
Research Assistant, Research & Innovation

**CARE AT HOME.  
DELIVERED WITH HEART.  
LED BY SCIENCE.**

## Struggle to Strength: London's Restored Home and Safer Spaces Journey

When I first started as a hoarding coach in January 2020, I could never have predicted the whirlwind that would follow. The pandemic hit hard, and like many others, I lost my job. I lost family members, and I felt like the world was on pause, and I wasn't sure where I'd fit in. But the path was never meant to be static.

When I returned to the organization, the landscape had shifted, and I was entrusted with a new role as a supervisor. I came back to an uncertain world, but also to a new opportunity. At first, the team was small—just one employee on the "Extreme Clean" team—but we started with purpose, one step at a time.

Over time, the team grew. I watched as we moved from one part-time employee to an amazing and gracious team of 2 full-time and 3 part-time employees. Each person brought something special to the table, and together, we began to make a lasting impact. But it wasn't without challenges. The most intense moment came mid-2024, when we faced a significant funding deficit. We were at a crossroads, unsure if we could continue our work. But what followed was a reminder of the strength of the community we served.



Agencies local partners and our city rallied around us. It wasn't just a rescue—it was a testament to how essential we had become. The support was overwhelming, and it became crystal clear just how deeply our work resonated with those who were vulnerable, especially those at extreme risk of eviction. It reminded me of why we do this. It's not just about cleaning spaces; it's about restoring homes, supporting lives, creating safer spaces and standing as a lifeline for vulnerable individuals.

As we head into 2025, I feel more certain than ever that our mission is critical. We're not just a team; VHA Restored Home and Safer Spaces is a cornerstone of our community's safety net. And we're all so proud to work for this amazing organization. It's a place where we don't just show up for work—we show up for the people who need us most, and we'll continue to do so with unwavering dedication. We are small but mighty and I do believe we capture the Spirit of VHA in our work and everyday lives.

**- MELISSA DAVIS**

*Supervisor, Responsive Community Care*



# CLIENT'S PRAYER

*Submitted by Linda Dunlop, Personal Support Worker, for a poetry contest in May 2016*

I may be old and forgetful and gray,  
But I still have preferences.  
Please hear what I say.

I may be a child with a developmental delay,  
But I am still a kid who wants  
To laugh and play.

I may be bipolar. My moods tend to sway.  
But a kind word or two  
Brings light to my day.

You give me care in the usual way.  
You wash and dress me, then go away.  
You talk...or not. You do what you may,  
But sometimes it's nice if you go out of your way.

"Care" is not just an action or a word to say.  
"Care" is also an emotion for you to display.  
I need your care almost everyday.  
Please care for me and about me.

This is what I pray.



# PS COACHES

## *Keeping the Connection*



Submitted by Kimberly McFadden, PSW Care Team Coach



## MY HEART REMAINS WITH VHA

Twenty-seven years ago, my youngest daughter Elisa was diagnosed with Sanfilippo syndrome—a rare, regressive and terminal illness. Without any available treatment or cure, children with Sanfilippo lose the ability to walk, talk and eat on their own.

As Elisa's needs increased, we were introduced to VHA. In the beginning, personal support workers came for just an hour or two after school. Those few hours gave me the peace of mind to be present with my other two children—to help with their homework, take them to activities or simply prepare dinner together—knowing Elisa was safe and cared for. Over time, that support grew to include nursing care, but it was always VHA. The providers who came into our home became like family. Their support was a lifeline and it meant the world to us.

In 2013, I was also honoured to be nominated to VHA's first Client and Carer Advisory Council. I served on hiring committees and supported new initiatives, wanting to give back in any way I could. When you admire and respect an organization as much as I do VHA, it's easy to offer your time.

Elisa was a source of strength and inspiration to everyone who met her. After her diagnosis in 1999, my husband and I founded the Sanfilippo Children's Research Foundation to bring hope to other families like ours. Since then, we've raised over \$8 million to fund gene therapy trials in the U.S. and to support labs in Montreal and Toronto, including one named after Elisa. We've always run the foundation as volunteers from our basement and none of it would have been possible without the support we received from VHA.

Elisa lived a full life and beat many odds, passing away at the age of 22. I'll never forget how many care providers came to her funeral. It was a beautiful reminder of how deeply they cared, not just for Elisa, but for our whole family. Even after Elisa passed away, I remained involved with the Council for many years. Though my life and responsibilities have shifted—with five grandchildren, the loss of my father-in-law and caring for three aging parents in their 90s—my heart remains with VHA. We were on a long journey and VHA walked with us every step of the way. Thank you, VHA, for everything you've done for our family.

### - ELISABETH LINTON

*Mother, Caregiver and Client and Carer  
Advisory Council Member*

*Linton's family pose together.  
From left to right Randall,  
Elisa, Jessica, Elisabeth  
and Connor Linton*





# team picnics



2019 Scarborough Palliative Team Picnic



2019 Scarborough Palliative Team Picnic



PSW Appreciation Day



PSW Appreciation Day



PSW Appreciation Day

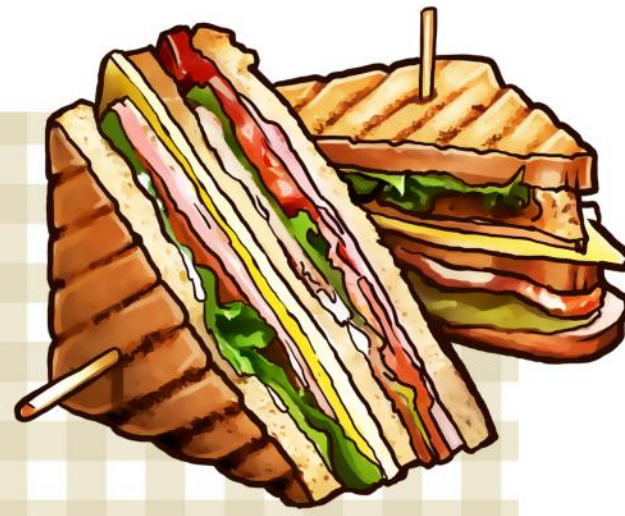
2019 Scarborough Palliative Team Picnic







2020 Durham Drive By Lunch



Our team having a meeting at High Park as a way to connect with fellow PSWs and enjoy the outdoors

The above photo was submitted by  
Cynthia Matundan, PSW Care Team Coach



PSW Appreciation Day



Pizza in the Park for PSW Appreciation Day!



## At VHA, you don't have to choose between who you are and getting the care you need

**I am a world majority, Jurassic Dyke / Rainbow senior who is differently-abled and I have been an advocate for 2SLGBTQIA+ elders — also called Rainbow Seniors — for five decades. Unfortunately, my first experiences with home care weren't positive. I've never hidden who I am, and because of that, I've faced significant hostility and discrimination during care interactions. Too often, people are forced to choose between being their full selves or feeling safe while receiving care. That's why my work with VHA has meant so much.**

I first partnered with VHA in 2015 while working as a volunteer trainer at The 519 — a City of Toronto agency, registered charity and 2SLGBTQIA+ community centre. VHA invited me to share my story through their mandatory inclusion training for staff and service providers. This kind of training doesn't just benefit Rainbow Seniors, it strengthens care for everyone. PSWs are the backbone of the healthcare system in Ontario. Their support can make a big difference, especially for aging or ill members of our many 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

Over time, I got more involved with VHA — as a Client Partner, member of both the 2SLGBTQIA+ Committee and Client and Carer Advisory Council and through the strategic planning process to help keep inclusion front and centre.

VHA's support has also extended further into the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. At Pride Toronto, and other events I organize for Rainbow Seniors, the organization continues to provide PSWs to help folks with mobility or health issues fully participate. Inclusivity and accessibility are at the heart of these events and VHA helps make that possible.



*leZlie lee kam, advocate for 2SLGBTQIA+ elders*

The training model VHA uses also inspired change for the City of Toronto's ten long term care homes. When I helped create a 2SLGBTQIA+ training toolkit for the city's long-term care staff, I used VHA as a best-practice example to push for mandatory training. We know that the people who need it most won't show up voluntarily. I wrote a motion, it was presented to the Executive Council and read by the Mayor and eventually it was approved by the full city council. While attending an international Pride conference, I was told how rare this kind of training is in healthcare around the world. VHA's leadership is unique and outstanding.

At VHA, you don't have to choose between who you are and getting the care you need. They don't just talk the talk—they walk the walk. Even though I've had to step back from training recently due to health challenges, I'm so grateful that VHA continues their commitment to improving and saving the lives of 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

**- leZlie lee kam**

*Caregiver and Client and Carer Advisory Council Member*









**VHA NURSES CARE  
FOR CLIENTS AT  
EVERY AGE AND  
STAGE OF LIFE,  
MANAGING THEIR  
COMPLEX MEDICAL  
NEEDS SO CLIENTS  
CAN STAY SAFE AND  
WELL AT HOME.**

## **Sisters in Nursing!**



Collage submitted by Grelyn  
Taganas, Registered Practical Nurse





# Mother Craft Training



## Child and Family Workers Mother Craft Training Certificate Ceremony

Submitted by, Asimah Husain, Supervisor  
United Way Programs, RCC

This training is one example of VHA's commitment to ongoing learning and development.

# THRU Team



## THRU information booth at the Scarborough OHT Healthcare Provider Fall Health Fair, October 2022

Submitted by Richard Tang, Supervisor, THRU

THRU, VHA's Tactical Healthcare Response Unit, is an interprofessional team of specialists who can urgently respond to community healthcare needs.



# LEAVING A LEGACY

Our VHA Community



Within the pages of our ***Leaving A Legacy: Our VHA Community*** section, you will find stories that highlight the impact our teams have left both on themselves and our clients and families throughout the years.

A legacy is the ripple effect of your presence in the world. Every single day at VHA, the connections our teams build with the clients and families we serve, and each other, are making a lasting impact. It may be in a smile that brightened someone's day, a word of encouragement that altered someone's path, or a transformational moment that changed the entire course. Each action contributes to the mosaic of influence in the present, and future.

# The Visiting Homemakers Association and Miss Smith in 1958

My family relied on VHA for help a number of times in the mid-to-late 1950's. Your company was known as the Visiting Homemakers Association then.

I wanted to send you a picture of a wonderful VHA homemaker, Miss Smith, but could not find it. As children, we would hope that it would be Miss Smith who came. You can see how happy we were to have our picture taken with her. We were quite upset when it couldn't be found - including my older brother, Robert, who has just turned 75.

My parents (Eugene and Leona Burns - now deceased) were very grateful to Miss Smith and VHA.

Miss Smith came later in 1958, and I believe in 1959 as well. Marilee feels she has a vague memory of being rocked by her and shares our warm feelings. Miss Smith represented the best of VHA and how incredibly important was the compassionate care provided to families and especially the children. The range of services VHA provides has evolved over time. But I know from working with you, that VHA remains deeply rooted in the values that brought us someone as caring and memorable as Miss Smith.

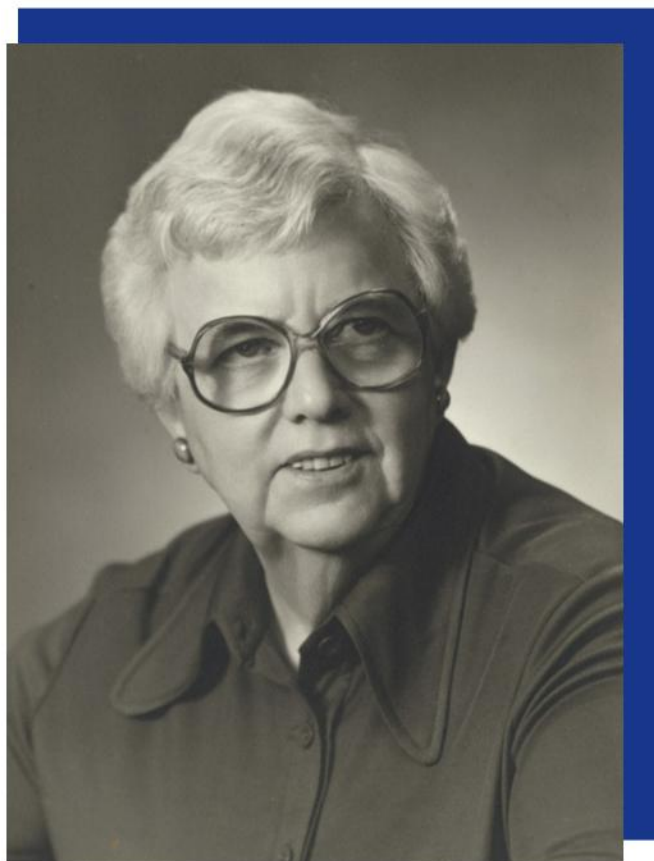
Best, *Rita Reynolds*



In the photo, from the right are Rita, Robert, Greg (now deceased) and the baby sitting on Miss Smith's lap is Marilee.

Message shared by Rita Reynolds in 2024





## 1961-1976

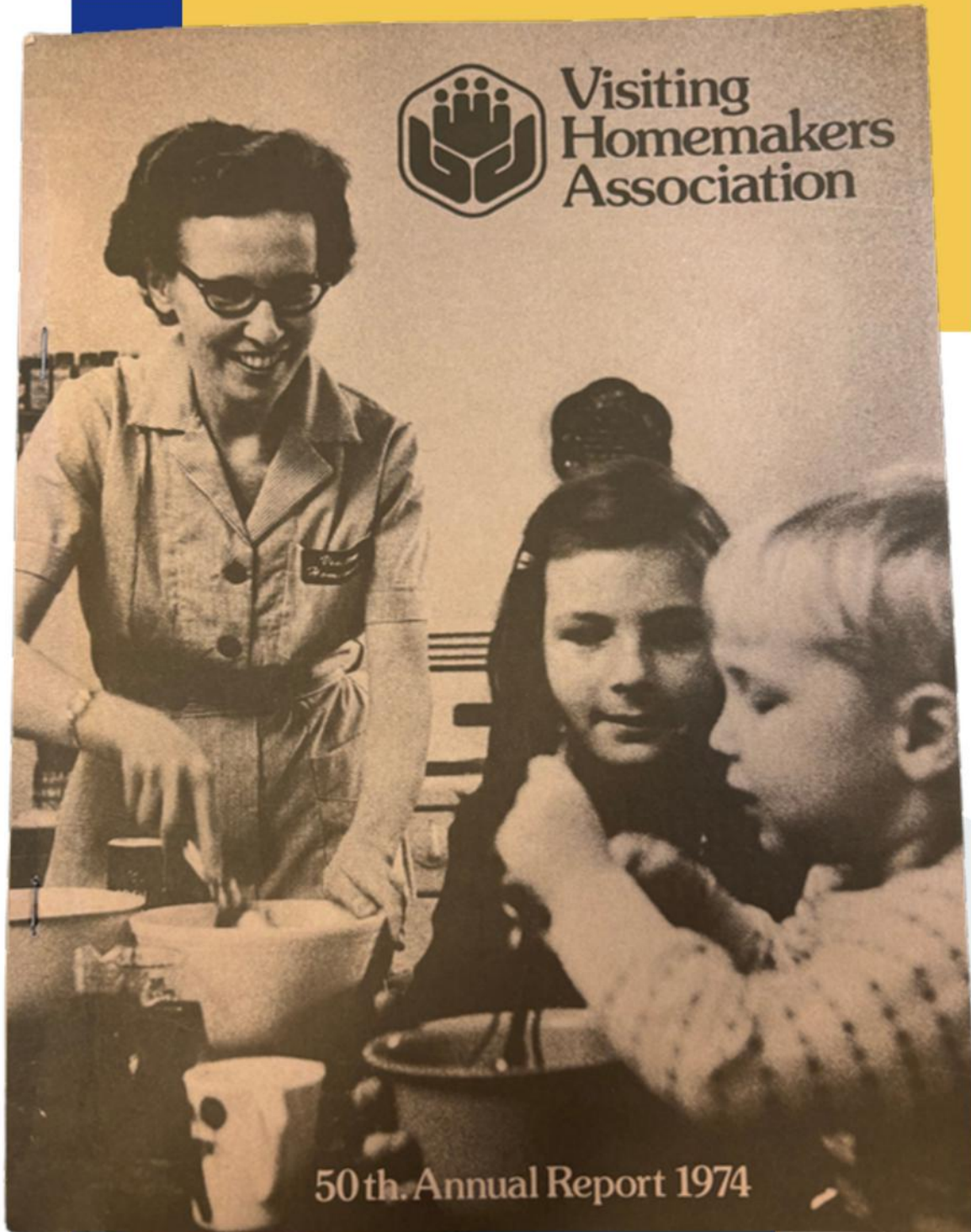
### *Taggart Years*

Kathryn E. Taggart was the Executive Director of VHA from 1961-1976.

The newsletter excerpt below written to commemorate her retirement in **1976** celebrates the “Taggart Years”, a period of exciting growth and development at the organization.

#### JUNE 1976 NEWSLETTER

**“Her remarkable combination of administrative ability and personal qualities of warmth, humanity and forthright common sense made her a leader who inspired loyalty and enthusiasm.”**



1974



Cover of our 50th Annual Report — halfway through VHA's first century of care. What a great piece of history!



In **September 1980**, an In Memoriam section in our newsletter highlighted the passing of VHA's founder Mrs. Barbara Blackstock-Cody.



Visiting  
Homemakers  
Association

## NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 1980

### UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN

We've said it before and say it again: We need to give all support possible to United Way this year. Not only our clients but others using other services will be affected if the Campaign results are as poor as they were last year. The sorts of people this agency relies on United Way funding for are like these (but many more).....

A young couple were referred when the wife was hit by a car and had both legs fractured. Unable to give adequate care to 4 children aged 6, 3, and 1-year-old twins, a homemaker was placed with the family for 6 weeks.

An income of \$240.00 a week might have made this family eligible for government funding but they also had \$5,000.00 in savings which automatically precluded that. United Way shared some of the costs.

\* \* \*

A 23 year old single mother referred suffering from post-partum depression following the birth of her son. Her only relative is her mother who has a long history of mental illness, not able for

This aged woman has savings which makes her ineligible for funding. Without United Way she would have had to be in a home.

A couple aged 91 and 89 want to stay together. The wife's sister in another city is a helpful neighbour, a pacemaker and is very confused and finds the pacemaker service has been for 3 years.

They are ineligible for funding because of savings. United Way has shared the costs.



### IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. Barbara Cody, our Honorary President and widow of the Reverend Canon Henry Cody, died in Toronto on September 2, 1980. Long remembered for her interest and activity in V.H.A. over very many years, and with gratitude for the tremendous help she gave, we extend our sympathy to all members of her family. They have asked for donations for V.H.A. instead of flowers in her memory. The Barbara Blackstock Cody Training Fund here will be a permanent memorial of her lively contribution to the homemaker services in Toronto.





## CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF SPECTACULAR CARE WITH PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKER ROSE SULLIVAN



### 38 YEARS OF SERVICE

After finishing the PSW program at George Brown College, Rose Sullivan vividly remembers the day she began her career at VHA Home HealthCare—February 23, 1987. On that Monday morning, she walked into the home of an overwhelmed mother to care for her five-year-old child and five-month-old infant triplets.

With one baby cradled on her shoulder, another nestled in her lap and the third gently rocking in a baby chair with her foot, Rose faced the challenge with calm determination. Growing up as one of 12 children, nurturing has always come naturally to Rose.

Now, nearly four decades later, she reflects on her long career. “I’ve stayed with VHA all of these years for a lot of reasons, but it really comes down to my passion for helping others,” she explains.

### DELIVERED WITH HEART

For Rose, working in home care is deeply personal. Unlike in a hospital or long-term care facility, she appreciates the opportunity to connect with clients in their own homes, where they feel most comfortable. “It’s not always easy,” she admits, referring to the challenges of driving between clients’ homes, managing timed visits and navigating difficult requests from family members.



*Rose Sullivan. Personal Support Worker*

But many of my clients are isolated or have limited social connections and just talking with them can really lift their spirits,” she says.

Rose believes that so much of this work is really about the little things. “When I walk into a client’s home, I leave it better than when I arrived. They are smiling, their bed is made, they’ve had a cup of tea and they feel clean and fresh. The impact is instant, it’s right in front of you, and that’s so rewarding.”



## EMBRACING CHANGE AND GROWTH

Throughout her 38 years with VHA, Rose has seen many changes. “When I started in the ‘80s, everything was done on paper. We had to sign in and out of client visits and mail our timesheets into the head office,” she recalls.

“When we first got Blackberry smartphones, I thought I would lose my mind. I wasn’t a computer person, but now it’s second nature, and it’s been amazing to see how technology has improved accountability and the quality of care.”

Rose also remembers her early uniform—a light blue dress that, while professional, less practical than the current uniform of a VHA polo and pants. “I don’t know where that dress ended up,” she laughs. “Maybe at Goodwill?”

Rose truly believes her work has helped her grow, not just as a PSW, but as a person. “VHA has always encouraged training and education and that’s been so valuable,” she says. “The skills I’ve gained—from leadership to providing care—have not only helped me in my work but also in caring for my friends and family. It improves your self-worth when you know you’re educated, trained and capable.”

## A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

Rose’s experience, clinical skills, patience, kindness and positive attitude are deeply appreciated by her entire team. Her supervisor, Ahamad Mohammed describes her as a “true gem”.

“Rose consistently sets an example for others through her strong work ethic and willingness to support complex clients without hesitation,” Ahamad says. “Her decades of experience

shine through in her clinical skills and clients and families regularly share how much they appreciate and value her care,” Ahamad says.

“Rose embodies the spirit of VHA,” he adds. “She always goes above and beyond to ensure her clients receive the best possible care.”

## LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

As Rose nears the end of her career, she remains full of energy and excitement.

“This work keeps me going,” she says. “I don’t think I’ll ever really stop. I’ll look for volunteer opportunities when I retire so I can keep making a difference.”

As we celebrate a century of care at VHA, we are proud to honour Rose and countless others who have dedicated their careers to making a difference. Their passion, resilience and commitment are the foundation on which VHA was built—and we know they will continue to inspire us for the next 100 years.

### Rose was a VHA Client Choice winner in 2015



Rose Sullivan, Personal Support Worker nominated by Carolyn Strangrat & Diogo C. Lobo

“Rose seems to go above and beyond her job. She does many things for my father and the one thing she does is always try to engage him in conversation and she makes him laugh and sings to him,” says

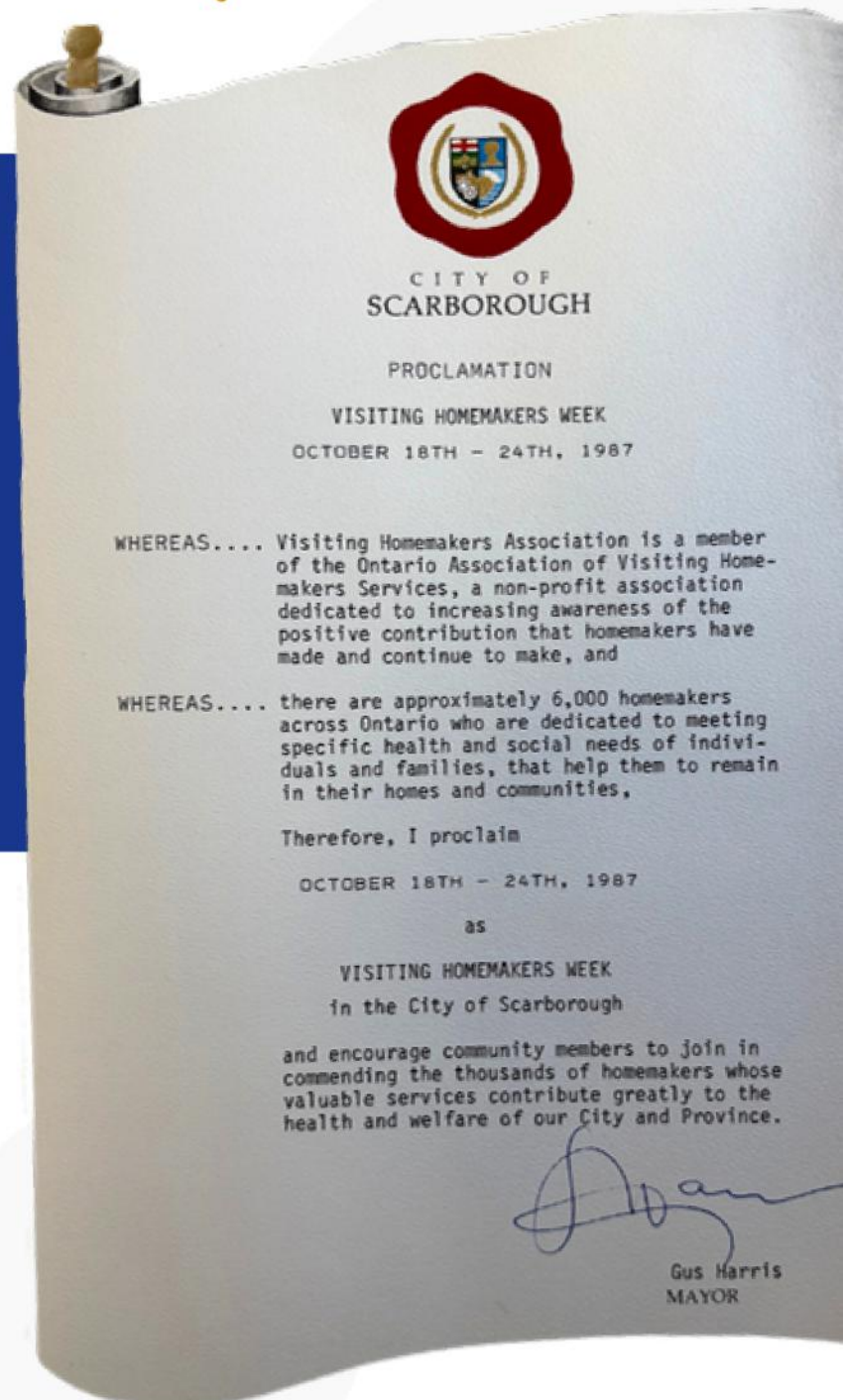
Carolyn. Diogo notes; “She has attention to detail and does the job completely not halfway and puts you at ease...that’s what I like about her.”

# OFFICIAL CITY *Proclamation*

In **October 1987**,  
the City of  
Scarborough,  
Ontario proclaimed  
October 18–24<sup>th</sup> to  
officially be Visiting  
Homemakers Week.



Visiting Homemakers  
Week would help to  
raise awareness of the  
positive contribution  
that homemakers  
make in the 1980s for  
the home healthcare  
community.



CITY OF  
SCARBOROUGH

PROCLAMATION

VISITING HOMEMAKERS WEEK

OCTOBER 18TH – 24TH, 1987

WHEREAS.... Visiting Homemakers Association is a member of the Ontario Association of Visiting Homemakers Services, a non-profit association dedicated to increasing awareness of the positive contribution that homemakers have made and continue to make, and

WHEREAS.... there are approximately 6,000 homemakers across Ontario who are dedicated to meeting specific health and social needs of individuals and families, that help them to remain in their homes and communities,

Therefore, I proclaim

OCTOBER 18TH – 24TH, 1987

as

VISITING HOMEMAKERS WEEK  
in the City of Scarborough

and encourage community members to join in commending the thousands of homemakers whose valuable services contribute greatly to the health and welfare of our City and Province.

Gus Harris  
MAYOR



# MY *sincere* GRATITUDE

On December 13th, 2005, I joined the VHA family and cannot believe it is almost 20 years. I started as an Operations Support Coordinator, doing intake and call center and in 2007, I joined the Toronto Central coordination team.

I have gone through a lot of changes at VHA, and each one of them brings different outcomes and they have shaped my career. My role as a coordinator has taught me a lot about having empathy, listening to clients and staff concerns and going extra miles to make our clients and their families happy. My role has changed me as a person.

All the training, parties and other events organized by management cannot go unnoticed. Our annual gatherings are the best of all (that is meeting staff face to face). Furthermore, all my colleagues from my first day at VHA to today are all wonderful people to work with.

**I picture the future of VHA to be awesome due to the hardworking people of this great organization.**

**My sincere gratitude goes to the founders who started the Visiting Homemakers Association 100 years ago and brought hope to the most vulnerable people in our society, and created jobs for thousands of people, and to my supervisors, managers, management, field staff and each one of us for still holding the torch passed by our founders.**

**A very happy centenary anniversary to us all.**

**- JANET OWUSU**

*VHA Personal Support Coordinator*





# BLAST! FROM THE PAST

Photos capturing our 85th Anniversary Party in 2010. Check out how we celebrated VHA's birthday over fifteen years ago! Can you spot anyone you know?







Groovefest! Staff and Service Provider Recognition Party from 2014!



Kelley Myers and Elizabeth Gordon at the 2014 Staff and Service Provider Recognition Party

Polaroids submitted by Kelley Myers, VP of HR and Organizational Development and Chief HR Officer





# AND THEN

*There was one*

Once upon a time when VHA was a small Home Care Agency with approximately 60 office staff - including the CEO - there was a small group of Registered Nurses called Field Supervisors.

During that era the home care funder, CCAC, was transforming the home care system and the scope of practice for Unregulated Care Providers and Health Care Aids (HCA). Their scope was broadened, and HCAs became PSWs - Personal Support Workers. PSWs were authorized to complete some nursing tasks after training and approval from a Regulated Health Professional, like a nurse for example, if those tasks were considered Routine Acts of Daily Living (RADL) for clients.



Field Supervisors were the ones to develop the policies and procedures as well as the instruction sheets for all the RADLs, while following guidelines from the CCAC contracts and the College of Nurses of Ontario's mandate for working with Unregulated Care Providers.

Home visits were made by this group of nurses to set up care plans with clients and their families, complete home safety checks, complete complex investigations and follow up on client complaints. Marketing was also a key accountability for the role. At the time, promotion of VHA's services was done through networking, representing VHA at trade shows and job fairs and promoting the private services department.

As the years flew by, the role changed significantly and only one member of that original team is left standing 17 years later- Denise Lywood.

With the rapid growth of VHA over the past 25 years, the Field Supervisor role and responsibilities are now covered by a combination of the Care Team Clinical Leads, Care Team Supervisors, Best Practice & Education (BPE) team and the Communications team.

## - DENISE LYWOOD

*Care Team Clinical Lead Durham Region*



**ON OUR 100TH BIRTHDAY,  
LET'S COMMEND THAT  
GROUP OF NURSES WHO  
PAVED THE WAY FOR SO  
MANY SERVICE  
PROVIDERS WHO HAVE  
COME AFTER THEM.**



# THREE CORE CONCEPTS AS A HEALTHCARE WORKER: *Skills, Knowledge, Attitude*

**"It's difficult to imagine a more amazing workplace than VHA Home HealthCare, especially as it celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary."**

I'm proud to share my three core concepts as a healthcare worker – SKA: Skills, Knowledge, and Attitude.

Firstly, continuous learning, collaboration, and problem-solving are essential. Teamwork, skills development, and refreshing courses through education opportunities at VHA are great examples of this.

Secondly, knowledge is crucial for understanding job responsibilities within a healthcare system. Knowledge and continuous learning are fundamental for career growth.

Thirdly, a positive attitude, including motivation and a willingness to collaborate, is vital for successful relationships with colleagues, team members, families, and clients.

A professional attitude includes respect for every individual. I believe that a

positive attitude in the workplace is essential for productivity, fulfillment, and successful relationships.

Finally, I acknowledge the achievements, experiences, challenges, and lessons learned over the past years in our organization's history. We should encourage the next generation to be resilient, work together, and provide continuous support to the team for the next 100 years.

**- SUSAN LLENO DIOCARES**

*VHA Personal Support Worker*







# Recognition Parties



RECOGNITION PARTY 2024



It was an honour to be part of the VHA Recognition Party as one of the nominees for the Clients Choice Award ❤️

Submitted by Weda Causing, PSW







### Staff Recognition Party - a fun theme

Submitted by Stacey Ryan, Client & Family Voice Specialist



RECOGNITION PARTY 2024

**VHA Home HealthCare**  
Creating More Independence



RECOGNITION PARTY 2024

**VHA Home HealthCare**  
Creating More Independence





# FROM CAREGIVER *To Advocate*

## *The Spectacular Care Story of VHA's Client Partner Mike Vince*

Mike's connection to VHA began after his wife Corinne was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease at 75, and they started receiving personal support services in their home.

"We were both able to retire early—I worked for the former municipality of East York and my wife was a teacher," Mike reflects fondly. "We were really lucky to spend 15 years travelling the world and enjoying our time together before my wife became ill."

At first Corinne didn't require much support as Mike was physically strong and deeply devoted to his role as caregiver. "But these visits were always so helpful for both of us, especially as the disease progressed," he adds.

Mike quickly formed connections with their PSWs and was soon asked whether he'd be interested in volunteering as a client partner and member of the Client and Carer Advisory Council. The Council is made up of clients and caregivers who are receiving or have received services from VHA and brings the client voice to the planning, development and evaluation of care. "Initially I wasn't sure what I could contribute, but you do learn so much navigating the system as a caregiver," he says.



*Mike with his wife Corinne*

His professional career also gave him valuable insights. Through his work in East York's community and recreation services, and later in by-law enforcement, Mike developed strong mediation skills and an understanding of community needs and municipal systems. "I guess running camps with 250 kids or dealing with unethical landlords does leave you with some valuable life skills," he laughs.

Despite his humble nature, Mike has always been someone who jumps in and gets involved. While caring for his aging parents, he served on the patient committee at his mother's nursing home, and when Corinne attended day programs at Providence Healthcare, he played an active role there as well. Even in his spare time, Mike has dedicated many years as a volunteer and board member with his local lawn bowling association.

**"I've always said that if you want to keep an eye on things or make changes, it's better to get involved. Too often, people just want to complain," he says.**





*Mike Vince, VHA Client Partner*

## **CHAMPIONING CHANGE AND INNOVATION**

One of the aspects Mike enjoys most about the Council is the range of expertise and diversity of perspectives. “There are healthcare professionals, business leaders, community activists and more—each bringing something unique to the table. That’s what makes this work interesting and valuable,” he says.

Mike has also found fulfillment in tackling complex challenges, from addressing racism against care providers to navigating funding barriers and sector competition. He says that he’s always been impressed by VHA’s resiliency and commitment to evolving, despite the many challenges.

“Over the years it’s been rewarding to see partnerships form with hospitals, watch services expand into new areas like pharmacare and to help with the development of innovative systems like the myVHA Client Portal—all of which I know will improve care,” Mike says.

## **COMMITMENT THAT ENDURES**

Three and a half years ago, Corinne passed away at home at the age of 83 after living with Alzheimer’s for eight years. While stepping down from his commitment at VHA would have been understandable, Mike chose to remain involved and has been a valued client partner now for nearly seven years.

“I could have quit and I definitely thought about it. But every so often, I feel like I can offer insight that might help steer things in a better direction. And it keeps my mind going,” he explains.

His ongoing commitment hasn’t gone unnoticed. “Mike has always made strong connections with all Council members and his work experience and interest in client safety have made for great contributions to our meetings,” says Stacey Ryan, Client and Family Voice Specialist at VHA.

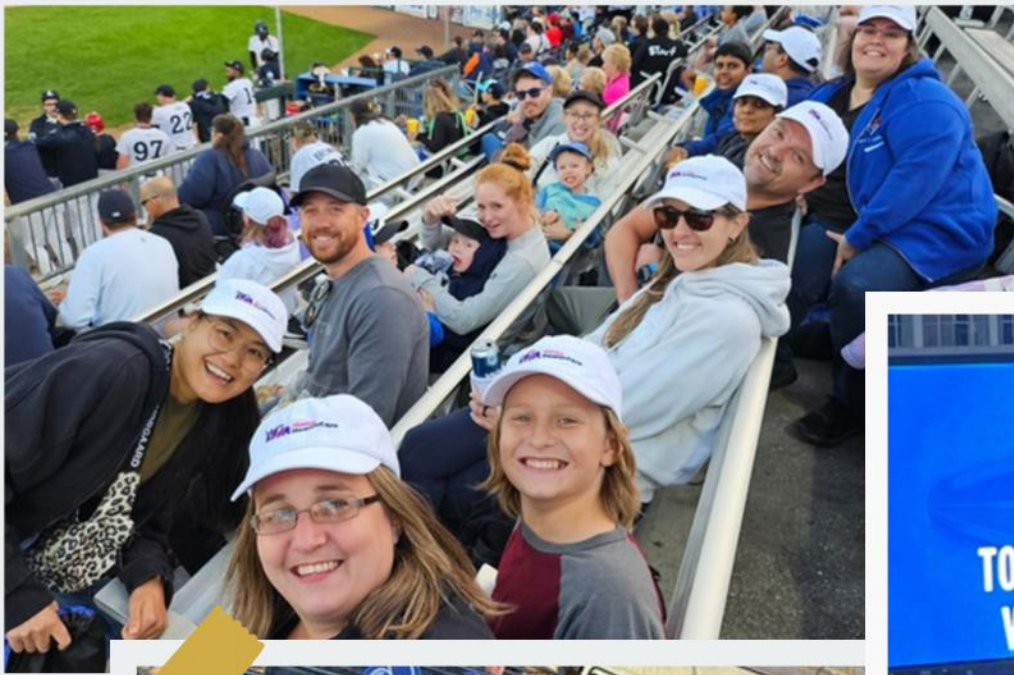
## **BUILDING ON A CENTURY OF CARE**

As VHA marks 100 years of spectacular care, voices like Mike Vince’s remind us why our work matters. We are proud to honour Mike and countless others who have dedicated their time and energy to making a difference. Their passion, resilience and commitment form the foundation on which VHA was built and will continue to inspire us for the next 100 years.











# NURSING FORGING THE WAY

1998



## DEBORAH SIMON

*Former VHA employee and CEO of the Ontario Community Support Association until June 2025*

I am proud to have played a small part in supporting and expanding nursing services for VHA back in 1998.

VHA had a strong and unwavering history of delivering personal support and I was hired to assist them with this new service.

With humble beginnings in providing short term facility placement and private nursing in homes, we went on to win government contracts and expand our nursing workforce. Congrats to VHA on such a strong community commitment!!



## Board Chair Announces New President and CEO



**O**n behalf of our Board of Directors, I am pleased to announce that Carol Annett has been selected as the new President and CEO of VHA Home HealthCare effective August 1, 2004.

Carol passionately supports our mission and values, having served as VP of Business Development, Quality Management and Contracts since joining VHA in 1999. In addition to building the team that spearheaded VHA's tremendous growth and diversification, Carol was also responsible for significantly enhancing our quality improvement program, including two successful accreditation processes.

Carol holds a Masters of Social Work from University of Toronto and a Masters of Business Administration from York University's Schulich School of Business. Committed to service excellence and innovation, Carol has a track record of accomplishments in both the health care and social service sectors in various leadership and consulting roles. She has worked in acute and long term care facilities, as well as community-based organizations and served as the Executive Director of Discoveries Child and Family Centre, a children's mental health centre, for ten years prior to joining VHA.

We have every confidence that VHA's longstanding tradition of strong and collaborative partnerships with other organizations in our sector will continue under Carol's capable leadership. The Board members and I join with VHA's many friends in congratulating Carol, and wishing her the best in her new role at VHA.

*Alan Ely, Board Chair*

# 2004

An article that features our Board Chair Announcing New President and CEO - Carol Annett. Carol would serve as VHA's President and CEO until her retirement in 2021. That's over 17 years of VHA legacy!

## VHA's Nursing Program is Growing and Going Strong!

**W**hat do the communities of Wallaceburg,

Petrolia, Port Perry, and Beaverton have in common with each other and the GTA?

If your answer is that they are all in Ontario and all have great people residing in them, then you're right of course. But they also are, or will be soon, receiving in-home nursing services from VHA Home HealthCare!



VHA's nursing program is rapidly expanding. Through the Community Care Access Centres' (CCACs) competitive tendering (Request for Proposal) process, VHA has been awarded three new nursing contracts this year...two in Durham Region and one in Southwestern Ontario, i.e., Chatham/Kent and Sarnia-Lambton. Our not-for-profit, quality-conscious philosophy, our professional nursing skills, and our long experience in community health will serve our new communities well.

As VHA has been a personal support and homemaking provider for the Durham Access to Care for some time, this Region is very familiar to us. However, we are newcomers to the Chatham/Kent and Sarnia-Lambton areas. We are looking forward to joining the service community and working with new partners to help meet the home health care needs of individuals and families.

To inquire about services, Durham Region residents should contact our office at 1-888-314-6622, and residents of the communities of and around Chatham/Kent and Sarnia-Lambton should contact VHA's new branch in Chatham, 48 5th Ave., Suite 210, (519)351-4414.

Deborah Simon, VP Health Services for VHA, is leading the transition teams for both contracts. "We are thrilled to be able to serve these vibrant communities. The CCAC staff, the other professionals and organizations in the community, and our new clients have been very welcoming."

# 2004



VHA's Nursing Program is also highlighted in the newsletter as a program that continues to grow in services throughout Toronto and the rest of the Greater Toronto Area.



# *interprofessional* **collaboration**











# 2023

# DESIGN DAY

**Bringing VHA's team together to develop a collaborative approach for clinical leaders so they can offer better support to their teams and provide even greater person-centred care to clients.**

On March 22, 2023, VHA staff, service providers, and client partners gathered for Design Day.

More than 90 participants from different roles and teams across VHA were involved in this fun and informative daylong event.

Participants learned about interprofessional care, explored what VHA can do to enhance leadership and interprofessional competency for leaders, and offered important feedback to help kick start the co-design of a "One Team" interprofessional model at VHA.





# 2024 Strategic Plan

## MOBILIZATION EVENT



As VHA prepared to launch an exciting new chapter in ***Leading the Future of Health and Independence at Home***, we brought together team members, Client Partners, Board Members and external stakeholders across our community to collaborate and mobilize our 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. The event, held on September 11, 2024, was filled with thoughtful discussion and innovative ideas to deliver on our purpose of ***Care at Home. Delivered with Heart. Led by Science.*** over the next 5 years.



# LET'S CELEBRATE

2018 Durham Nursing Week Celebration



2019 Central East Scarborough Party



Submitted by Doris Amankwah, Manager of Client Care and Operation



Central Team 2024 Year End Get Together at Scaddabush Restaurant, Shops at Don Mills



2018 London Party

2017 Central East Durham Party



2018 Ice Cream Social!







Happy 100 Years VHA from the Scarborough CSC team!  
Submitted by Marika Torres-Palibello, PS Coordinator



2011

# Softball

GAME



2019 Community Support Mandarin Dinner



Team members at Christmas dinner

Submitted by Jing Guo, PSW



VHA and COTA 10 Year Anniversary in 2019





# SIGNATURES

100 years of care,  
compassion and community!  
Greatful to be part of a  
team that puts heart into  
everything we do. ❤️  
Pasang Chamling

Congrats on 100 years,  
VHA! Keep up the  
compassionate and quality  
care  
Winnie, OT

So happy to be part of the  
VHA team for the past 12  
years (and more to come!).  
What a great team to be  
part of and an organization  
to be proud of!  
Cheers to 100 more!  
Renee Egan

Happy to be celebrating  
100 years with VHA  
I've been here 101 of that.  
Great job.  
Christine Froude PSN



Cheers to 100 years! Looking  
forward to make more  
memories with our great VHA.  
I am so proud to be part of  
the nursing Team...RPN Grelyn  
Taganas

Isabel Terrell

Congratulations VHA on this  
incredible milestone! I am  
so proud to be a part of  
this organization  
Rena Kimia OT

Congratulations on your 100  
year anniversary! - Stephanie  
Ko, SLP



# SIGNATURES

*Congratulations VHA, on 100 incredible years of service. Here is to a century of excellence and many more to come.*

*Keren Winer, Rehab Supervisor*

**DREAM BIG**

*Congratulations VHA !!*

*The most Important practical lesson that we can give as PSWs is to do what nobody else do, a way that nobody else can do, in spite of all we go through is to be a PSW, have a heart that never hardens, a temper that never tires, a touch that never hurts. As dedicated PSWs preserves even when hope seems to lost. As a PSW I have a unique opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of others.*

*Marie Persaud*

*I am so blessed to be part of such an incredible organization. Cheers to VHA for the past 100 years and cheers to the next 100. Dan Uzelac*

*Congratulations VHA! Cheers to another 100 years of service! Anamaria Aleksiev*



*Congratulate for 100 years V.H.A. and many more to come!*

*I am pround to be a part of you.*

*2008 - 2025  
Vieng Pheth Hok*





# SIGNATURES

Congratulations VHA on 100 years! Proud to be a PSW and part of a team that makes a difference every day. Cheers to many more years of care and compassion! -carmela barlaan



Congratulations 🎉 VHA 100 more to go as a employer for 25 year thank you  
Congratulations 🎉

congratulations VHA! I am proud to be part of this amazing organization :) Emmelie Mohammed



Congratulations on 🎉 years of dedicated & compassionate service!  
Sharifa Sheikh



Happy 100 years to VHA!  
Proud to be working here!  
Linna Chercover

Congratulations VHA on 100 years!! What an incredible milestone!

- Emma Perera



Congratulations VHA for reaching 100 years in providing excellent care to the community.

Vincent Chio



Congratulations on your 100 years VHA! Proud to be a part of the company since 2011!



# SIGNATURES

Congratulations to VHA on 100 incredible years of service and care! I'm truly proud and grateful to be part of such a remarkable organization. Here's to a legacy of compassion, excellence, and many more years of making a difference! - Monica O CTS



Feeling privileged to be a part of the 100 year VHA legacy. I am sure this organization will continue to provide important services for another 100 years.

Will Lomas

Senior Director, Integrated Client & Community Care.

Congratulations to VHA for 100 years of community impact. Cheers to 100 more!  
Sonia Nizzer

Congratulations on 100 Years VHA! So proud to be part of such an incredible organization since 2011! Looking forward to all the amazing things VHA will do in the next 100!

Stephanie Tersigni, HR

Congrats to 100 years VHA! I'm so glad to have joined such an amazing team!

Rebecca Briell, Nursing Supervisor - Palliative

Congratulations to 100 years of excellent service and extraordinary care. Best to all in the years ahead!!!  
Marsha Dzieciol psw





# SIGNATURES

Congratulations VHA on 100 years! Proud to be a PSW and part of a team that makes a difference every day. Cheers to many more years of care and compassion! -carmela barlaan

congratulations VHA! I am proud to be part of this amazing organization :) Emmelie Mohammed



Congratulations 🧡 VHA 100 more to go as a employer for 25 year thank you  
Congratulations 🧡

Congratulations to all of us and happy 100yrs making people life matters. More years together.  
😊RiggieViray😊



100 years of amazing care,  
here is to another 100 years  
Fiona

Happy 100 years to VHA!  
Proud to be working here!  
Linna Chercover

Congratulations on your 100 years VHA! Proud to be a part of the company since 2011!

Congratulations to VHA on 100 incredible years of service and care! I'm truly proud and grateful to be part of such a remarkable organization. Here's to a legacy of compassion, excellence and many more years of making a difference.





# SIGNATURES

be happy

Happy centenary centenary  
to VHA

Sheyi Aworinde

Happy centenary celebration  
to VHA

Sheyi Aworinde

Very proud to work for such  
an amazing organization that  
changes the lives of people  
everyday! Blessed. Ahamad  
Mohammed

be happy



Happy Birthday VHA!  
Very proud to work for  
an organization that has  
provided 100 years of  
spectacular care and  
service. Cheers to 100

more!  
Kathryn Nichol

I feel so fortunate to be part  
of team VHA! Here's to  
another century of providing  
high quality compassionate  
care, helping people live  
independently at home where  
they most want to be, and  
playing a key role in the  
health care sector. And  
here's to leading the future  
of health and independence  
at home! Tracey Turriff (VP,  
Public Relations & Chief  
Communications Officer

# SIGNATURES

Happy birthday VHA! It is a privilege to work alongside so many quality people who not only do their job well but also care for me as a person. Love being part of the VHA family!! Vicki MacCallum



Good 

Congratulations VHA!  
So happy to be able to be a part of this incredible team!

Kylie Caibaiosai  
CTS GE-4



Congratulations to all the staff and members of VHA Home HealthCare. Cheers to all the hard working staff members, it is a pleasure to work



Farbiola Williams

Started as a personal support in 1998, worked as RPN and eventually as RN working in both home and school for medically complex children. VHA is such a great place to work, providing simple care and support to families is such a blessing for me as a person because I am able to share the talent that I was given. Looking forward to another 100yrs of great service to the community. Proud to be part of VHA family!! Thank you! Janeth Valenciano



VHA, I cannot believe you are 100 years old! Happy birthday! It has been a pleasure to be with VHA for the past 16 years.  
-Nicole Jones,





# SIGNATURES

*Happy 100 birthday VHA.  
So, grateful to be part on  
this incredible people who  
works with tender loving  
care, very compassionate to  
our clients. Let's cheers our  
success business. I love you  
VHA*

*Perlyn*

*Happy 100 years VHA!*

*Shelley Tzogas, VHA Finance*



VHA Home HealthCare continues to exceed expectations across our great community of care providers. I look forward to working with the amazing team and I wish VHA success as they move towards the next century of total care.

Regards,  
Dawn Thomasjones

*Happy 100th Birthday VHA.  
I feel Very fortunate to work  
at VHA for 44+ years. It has  
been a long Journey and  
most Memorable Times to  
work with many very  
Talented, Compassionate  
people. Every one is very  
helpful and compassionate in  
their different roles.*

*A Big Thank You to the  
Management and Staff at  
VHA. I am very Happy to be  
a part of this very  
Memorable year at VHA.  
Best Wishes for Great  
Success.  
Maya Majmudar OT.*



*Lotoya Williams*

*Happy 100th VHA!  
Here's to a century of  
compassion, care and  
community. Proud to be part  
of an organization that  
embraces the future while  
keeping people at the heart.  
Here's to 100 more years!  
-Jordan D'Souza*

# SIGNATURES



*Congratulations to VHA on reaching its 100 year anniversary. I'm so happy to be apart of this team, making history and providing exceptional care to our clients everyday! Thank you.*  
-Farhia Husein



*Congratulations on 100 Years!*  
*Congrates to VHA on a century of dedicated services. As we celebrate this milestone, we honor the legacy of carte and the people who made it possible. Here's 100 year of service - and to a fututre guided by the same enduring mission.*  
RUSHITA PATEL - PT

*Happy 100th anniversary VHA*

*Congratulations to VHA on 100 years of service! Thanks to the many staff and service providers who have contributed dedicated hours to improving the lives of others! Our care for clients in their greatest time of need is truly appreciated by clients.*

-Cynthia C, RN



*Happy 100th Anniversary VHA! A century of caring, compassion and community care. Proud to be part of a legacy that continues to make a difference - here's to the next 100 years of exceptional care!*

Nazia Khan





# SIGNATURES



So proud to be part of  
the vha  
Congratulation for 100  
years anniversary  
I am so glad to be  
staff of vha as psw  
and help people who are  
in need .  
Thank you!

*Happy 100th Anniversary!*  
*Truly proud to be part of*  
*this remarkable legacy. A*  
*hundred years of excellence*  
*and service-what an*  
*incredible milestone!!! May*  
*the next century bring even*  
*more achievements, joy, and*  
*inspiration to everyone*  
*touched by VHA. It's an*  
*honor to work alongside*  
*such amazing teams. Cheers*  
*to VHA and to a bright*  
*future ahead!*  
*Reshmi Antony*



*Congrats to VHA's 100 year*  
*milestone! I'm so proud to*  
*be part of such a great*  
*organization and I'm looking*  
*forward to what the future*  
*has in store for us.*

*Amanda Nichols*  
*Community Supervisor,*  
*Extensive Needs Respite*  
*Service*



*Happy 100th! I'm so excited*  
*to be part of an amazing*  
*team and company.*  
*- Debby Zinger, Durham*

# SIGNATURES

Congratulations VHA on  
100 year anniversary!  
Proud to be a part of  
the centenary  
celebrations and excited  
for the journey towards  
the next 100!

David Yam



"Congratulations VHA on  
reaching 100 years of  
spectacular and innovative  
care"

I'm indeed proud and grateful  
to be a part of this stunning  
organization since 2015.

"Happy Work Anniversary to  
all of us"

Neda ERT

I'm so proud to work for  
VHA - happy 100 year  
anniversary! Chalsey



*A century of dedication,  
and perseverance, cheers  
to 100 years !! I am  
blessed to be a part of  
this amazing organization,  
for 20 years.*

*Susen Abraham, OT*

VHA has been a wonderful  
place to work over the years  
and I'm grateful to be a part  
of the VHA family! Here's to  
another 100 years of  
innovation, serving our most  
vulnerable communities and  
fostering a collaborative and  
inclusive work culture.

Samantha Jani





# SIGNATURES



## You Do You

*A century of memories, milestone and meaningful moments. For 100 years, VHA stood the test of time - growing stronger and more efficient with each passing years. This celebration is not just about the years, its about the people, the stories, the hard work & the legacy.*  
Jay Patel (Reg. PT)

*Congratulations on a century of compassion, innovation and unwavering dedication to client and community care.*  
Komal Ismail

*Happy 100 Years and many more to come !!*  
MNarvaez

*CONGRATULATIONS ON AN INCREDIBLE 100 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE, DEDICATION AND IMPACT. HONOURED TO BE PART OF THIS LEGACY! – CM*

*Grateful for the memories, lessons, and amazing people I've met along the way. Here's to continued growth and success for us all 🤝*

*happy birthday to you VHA continued the good jobs*  
Magnan

*Ujunwa Nwafor*  
Gcl8412

*Celebrating 100 incredible years of making a difference in the lives of others. To every caregivers, clients and Family I say a Big thank you for being part of the Jorney. As a proud PSW I'm honored to be part of this legacy built on Compassion, dedication and dignity.*  
*Congratulations VHA*  
*-- Omorovbiye Izedonmwon*

# SIGNATURES

Blessed to be part of this great community! Happy 100th and many more to come! And because avocados :)

Dorothy M,



Happy 100th birthday, VHA!  
I am proud to have spent my 20 year career at VHA.  
Here's to another 20! Leslie Coulter

Congrats VHA for your 100 years. I am lucky to be at this amazing organization. Cheers to 1000 more years!  
Ernesto Sequera

Happy 100th VHA!  
Grateful to be here to celebrate this momentous milestone, and looking forward to many more to come!  
- Katie Chan



Congratulations VHA on 100 years of service and to all those who have contributed to serving VHA clients with care and compassion.  
Maureen Wieler

Happy 100th Year VHA! A century of service, commitment, and compassion, what an incredible milestone. -  
Renukgeetha Karunakaran



# SIGNATURES

Congratulations to VHA and all its staff, service providers, volunteers and client and family partners on this incredible milestone! 100 years leading the future of health and independence at home - wow!

Here's to the next 100!  
-Trevor H.



CONGRATULATIONS VHA ON GETTING TO A CENTURY. RAISE YOUR BAT FOR A BRILIANT 100. AN AMAZING ACHIEVEMENT BY AN AMAZING ORGANIZATION. - SAUL COBBING



congrats VHA!! So proud to be part of this amazing team of inspiring and deeply caring people who are truly the heartbeat of VHA. cheers - Kelley M.  
P.S. we're not getting older, we're getting better

never change

A century of providing care, what a milestone! VHA's Dedication has touched many clients in our communities, and I am honored to be a part of this journey.

Proud to serve, and even prouder to belong.

- Sam K.

# SIGNATURES

Happy 100th VHA!  
What an amazing  
milestone-100 yrs of care,  
compassion & community! I  
feel so lucky to be part of  
this incredible VHA family.  
A whole century of making a  
difference & the best part -  
we're continuing to grow,  
lead & do even more good  
together. Here's to all the  
trailblazers who came before  
us & to each of us who gets  
to help write the next  
chapter.

Let's keep the heart, the  
hustle, & the humour alive  
as we build on this legacy  
for the next 100 years.

- Hemjot Mal :)

Congratulations VHA on 100  
years of compassionate  
service. Here's to the next  
100 years of care! - Jacklyn  
Baljit

What an amazing  
milestone! So honoured to  
celebrate and continue  
the hard work to lead  
with heart and science!  
Sandra Li-James

Thank you VHA for 100 years  
of community service, and  
for being a fantastic  
employer.

For my 8 years working  
in vha I'm very thankful  
and blessed to be part  
of this company. Happy  
100th yes.

Ten years of care? No VHA  
is now celebrating its  
hundredth!!!

Happy birthday VHA! Proud  
to work for an amazing  
organization and community.  
Looking forward to the next  
100 years of VHA leading the  
future of health and  
independence at home.

-Glenda Providence-



# SIGNATURES



*Happy 100 anniversary!*

*Happy 100 Years!! What an amazing milestone to reach. I am so lucky to be part of such an incredible organization.  
Jen Townsend*



*Cheers to 100 Years of making the difference in so many lives VHA! I am very blessed and humbled to be part of the story for this amazing organization and momentous milestone!  
Rosalie Young*



*Happy 100 years VHA! Your growth as a company is has been remarkable. Thank you for continuously adapting with the changes over time to remain as a testament of determination, compassionate and vision of a great health care company! - Priscilla W.*

*100 YEARS AMAZING!  
Happy to be part of this great experience...caring, sharing and all inclusive atmosphere.  
Cynthia Dor*

# SIGNATURES

Happy 100 Years VHA!!!  
It is truly an honor to be  
part and witness this  
incredible milestone.  
Continue to impart positively  
to many lives and livelihoods  
across the province!! Joyeux  
Anniversaire VHA!!  
Kizzy Pinelle



Happy 100 years of VHA!!! It  
is a time of reflection and  
appreciation of all that we  
have accomplished over the  
past century. I feel so proud  
and glad to be part of this  
incredible celebration!!!  
Reshma Patel

Happy 100 Years to VHA, so happy to  
witness such a milestone with the company.  
Wonderful and great employees who strive to  
make VHA a positive and impactful company  
to work for. It's a great time to celebrate!  
Caroline David

have fun

be happy

Happy 100 years of VHA  
It is truly happy to be part  
of VHA team and I really  
appreciated all the great  
things I've learned and  
continue to be part of VHA  
Thanks a lot VHA, all the  
best!!!

Carmen Bayle

Happy to start my career  
at VHA

SWATIBEN PATEL

I'm proud to be working  
here! Happy 100 year  
anniversary VHA!  
-Johnathon D'Arcy

Happiest 100 Year  
Anniversary VHA  
HURRAYYY



# SIGNATURES

BEING PART OF VHA MEANS BEING  
PART OF SOMETHING TRULY  
MEANINGFUL FOR 100 YEARS, VHA HAS  
STOOD UP FOR COMPASSION,  
INNOVATION, AND CARE – AND THAT  
LEGACY IS BUILT BY PEOPLE LIKE US.



We have fun ,We love  
what we do,We work  
hard,We do great  
things,We strive for  
excellence and the best  
is we are a team  
GOD BLESS VHA!

I'M PROUD TO BE PART OF A TEAM  
THAT'S NOT ONLY HONORING THE PAST  
BUT ALSO SHAPING THE FUTURE.  
WHETHER IT 'S THROUGH EMBRACING  
NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN HOME CARE  
SCIENCE, OR CREATING SUSTAINABLE  
WAYS TO WORK – WE'RE LIVING OUR  
STRATEGIC VISION EVERY DAY!

GGaldones@vha.ca

HAPPY 100TH VHA!



CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF CARE  
THAT CHANGES LIVES.

HERE'S TO SHAPING THE NEXT  
CENTURY OF CARE – TOGETHER!

HONOURED TO CONTRIBUTE TO A  
LEGACY BUILT ON DIGNITY, DEDICATION  
AND HEART.

PROUD TO WORK ALONGSIDE THE MOST  
CARING AND COMPASSIONATE  
COLLEAGUES.

--HERBERT D.

CHEERS TO MORE INCREDIBLE YEARS  
AHEAD! ~KATHY S.

*It is an honor to represent a  
client-centered organization  
that's leading the expansion  
of homecare delivery and  
quality. Here's to another  
100. – Ian Griffiths*

*I am with VHA Home  
health care since 2013,  
proud working as a  
Community Physiotherapist  
with VHA since 12 years.  
Happy 100th to VHA.  
Cheers!  
Neha Patel*

# SIGNATURES

*Congratulations and thank you to all of the wonderful people from VHA who have provided dedicated care and support to so many people and families over the past 100 years. What an amazing legacy!*

*Sue Grundy  
Board Member*

*Happy 100th to VHA and all of the dedicated people who have made the amazing world we do come to life! VHA, driven by the world class staff has left a positive impact on so many clients and their families lives!*  
*Mike Kenigsberg*

*Congratulations, VHA, on 100 years of service excellence! The staff, management and board of VHA, through compassion and dedication, have been making a difference in the lives of those they serve for a century!! Wow!! A milestone that deserves to be celebrated in a BIG way!! Thank you VHA for your significant leadership in home and community care and for making a difference in the lives of clients for a century!!!!*

*Karen Waite, former VHA  
Board Member*

*Honoured to be part of VHA's celebrations for this incredible milestone of 100 years of dedicated service to clients and families. A heartfelt thank you to those who came before me and helped build this amazing organization. Here's to many more years of making a difference in our community!*  
*-Shawna Fraser*

*I am so happy to be apart of the VHA team during its 100th year! Keep up the good work. To more years of success to us and our clients.*

*- Marisa*





# SIGNATURES

*I am with VHA Home  
health care since 2013,  
proud working as a  
Community Physiotherapist  
with VHA since 12 years.  
Happy 100th to VHA.  
Cheers!  
Neha Patel*

*A blessed 100th VHA!  
Looking forward to greater  
things ahead!!! 😊😊  
-Decerie Cueto RPN*



*Congratulations on this  
amazing milestone and 100  
years of compassion and care.  
The whole VHA team has such  
an amazing impact to so many  
people and to the community!  
- Bryan Dinh*



**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY VHA!**  
**MEEK NKRUMAH**

*Happy 100th VHA! I had  
been with VHA since 2009.  
Love the people, love what  
VHA stands for. Very  
happy to be part of this  
family!*

*Emma Gardiman*

*Happy 100 Years VHA! I am  
proud to be a part of an  
organization that cares about  
its patients and staff! VHA  
is a cut above the rest!  
-Zaid Majoo*

# SIGNATURES

We honor the legacy of every VHAer who came before us - visionaries, caregivers, and leaders - whose dedication shaped VHA into the remarkable organization it is today. Baton firmly in hand, it's our turn to carry this legacy forward, expanding VHA's impact, deepening its influence, and continuing the journey of compassion, innovation and excellence. Shine on VHA - 100 years never looked so good! Congratulations to all on this remarkable milestone.

Christine Proulx



100 years of service is a truly remarkable milestone to celebrate. VHA is no doubt special - its mission, its dedicated and skilled staff and the clients and families served. Exceptional home and community care delivered with great heart has been at its core since its inception and will continue into the future. Congratulations to all who are a part of such a great organization. Your contributions make a huge difference in the lives of countless people.

Carol Annett

100 years of service is a significant milestone. Congratulations to all of the VHA team!

CLASS OF 2012  
Congratulations VHA for 100 years of excellent service. I am so proud to be an employee of this great organization. Looking forward to many more years of dedicated service. Mamzel Linton

100 Years. Wow! Thank you to all the staff and volunteers who have contributed over the years to build such a wonderful client-centred organization. Truly a great legacy.

And here is to the next 100 years!  
Ian Brunskill, VHA Board chair



# SIGNATURES

Happy 100 years VHA!!!  
May the next 100 years be  
as successful and impacted  
as the last!

Thank you for the  
opportunities for professional  
growth, collaboration and  
inclusion!!!

I'm so grateful and proud to  
be part of this prestigious  
Company!

God bless and  
Congratulations!!!

Raquel Gabriel  
PS Coach



It's no surprise with its  
incredible work and mission,  
VHA has been around for 100  
years. Here's to many more  
years of supporting and  
caring for even more people.  
Best wishes for a happy  
centennial. Congratulations  
VHA!

Amr Elimam



Happy Centennial  
Anniversary VHA!!!

Congratulations on the 100th  
years of making a difference  
in the lives of clients, staff  
providers and families.

More power!!!

15 Years of service,  
Cynthia Matundan



A century of caring, a legacy  
of compassion.

Congratulations on this  
incredible milestone! Your  
dedication to health, wellness,  
and community has touched  
countless lives. Here's to  
many more years of healing,  
helping, and making a  
difference! Happy 100th  
anniversary! -Reshell Agpalza

Happy centenary VHA!  
Here's to another 100 years  
of great care.  
James Foster

# SIGNATURES

*Congratulations on 100 years of excellence VHA.*

*It has been a privilege to work with such an amazing organization, and I am proud to be a part of the journey. Cheers to another 100 years of providing excellent service across Ontario.*

*Stephanie McCalla*



*What an honour to be part of 100-year-old organization!*



*Thank you for always striving for the best service and empowering us employees. Cheers! Michelle Park*

*Happy 100 years VHA 🥳  
Rogelyn Agati CE2 Coach*

*Forever grateful to be part of VHA for 9 years who believed and accept me to service's clients at home that bring excellent prospective in home health care .*

*Thank you for the support and empowering health care system. Cheers! for 100 year and more! Raquel A.*

*Congratulations to VHA on 100th birthday! It has been an exciting journey working at VHA for the past 19 years and have always loved the work culture and the support provided. Wishing more power and good wishes to VHA to continue providing excellent health care services in Ontario.*

*Neetu Kumar*



# SIGNATURES



Many Happy Returns to  
VHA on it's 100th  
Anniversary! Awesome  
work at every level! Now  
more than ever we need  
VHA to lead the industry  
of home healthcare and  
continue to raise the  
bar for excellence while  
providing meaningful  
care. Here's to the next  
100.

All the Best for a  
bright future!!  
Linda Dunlop, PSW2

*Happy 100th Anniversary! So  
fortunate to be at VHA for  
this moment. I can't wait to  
see what the future of  
homecare brings, excited to  
be part of the action.*

*Mandy Wong, OT*

*Congratulations to VHA for a  
century of excellence! I am so  
pleased to be able to contribute  
to the governance of this terrific  
organization.*

*Julia Hanigsberg,  
Board of Directors*

*Way to go VHA, glad to  
be in this company. To all  
my peers who dedicated and  
show passion of their work.  
We can pat our shoulders for  
all the hard work .*

# SIGNATURES

*Happy 100th Anniversary  
VHA!!!*

*So fortunate to be working  
for an organization who is  
always seeking innovative  
solutions to improve client  
care in the community. I  
am excited to see what we  
will bring to homecare in the  
near future.*

*Cheers to an awesome  
organization with a BIG  
heart!!!!*

*Nicki Gosal - People and  
Culture Advisor*



*On 100 years to a company  
like no other, VHA!*

*How fortunate to bear  
witness over the years of  
the growth and  
accomplishments this  
organization has created, the  
bridges it has built and the  
positive impact it has had in  
healthcare.*

*To another 100 years of  
innovation and finding ways  
where no one else has.*

*THANK YOU!*

*Kimberly McFadden*

*PS Care Team Coach CE-7*



# SIGNATURES

*Happy 100th Anniversary  
VHA!!*

*It's a true honour to serve on  
the Board of such an  
amazing organization. Our  
people and service are second  
to none! Thank you for all  
that you do.*

*Looking forward to another  
100 years of incredible client  
service, leadership in the  
home healthcare space and  
more!*

*With gratitude,  
Rob Lee*

VERY HAPPY CENTENARY TO THE  
ENTIRE VHA TEAM! THANK YOU FOR  
ALL THAT YOU DO EVERY DAY TO  
SUPPORT PEOPLE IN ONTARIO TO  
REMAIN SAFE AND HEALTHY IN THEIR  
HOMES, AND FOR THEIR CAREGIVERS TO  
HAVE MUCH NEEDED SUPPORT AND  
PEACE OF MIND. IT WAS AN HONOUR TO  
TAKE PART IN YOUR SERVICE AWARDS  
CELEBRATION!

BEST WISHES,  
ANNA GREENBERG

Happy 100th to you, VHA! It's an  
honour to support your  
incredible mission which helps so  
many people get excellent care  
in settings that are most  
familiar to them. You make a  
difference every day in the lives  
of so many people. I look  
forward to many more  
celebrations.

Happy Birthday!  
Sarah Downey

# SIGNATURES

*Happy 100th! No surprise that the values of helping those in need that started VHA 100 years ago is still the heart of VHA today.*

*At the centre of VHA are the incredible people that make VHA great. No doubt in the next 100 years VHA will continue to be a leader in home and community care by making an impact for those we serve, their families and our communities.*

*Thank you for all that you do and can't wait to see what's next. Former VHA Board member and Board Chair Karen Singh*

*I am very proud to work for VHA. Congratulations! Happy 100 years - and many more.*  
*-Josenia De Vera, PSW*



*On behalf of the Ontario Community Support Association, congratulations on reaching this remarkable milestone of 100 years of service! As one of OCSA's founding members, VHA's vision and commitment helped build the foundation of our sector. Your legacy lives in the lives touched, families support and communities strengthened!*

*With sincere gratitude,*  
*Lori Holloway, CEO*  
*Ontario Community Support Association*



**100**  
1925 • 2025

**VHA** Home  
HealthCare  
Creating More Independence for Over 100 Years