

Oshawa branch:

Rising to the challenge and thriving under pressure



Since it opened in 2006, Bayshore Home Health's Oshawa branch has been a sought after provider of nursing and personal care, as well as an important health care resource for its community.

The branch serves Durham Region and the surrounding area, including Kawartha Region. Its seven administrative staff and 65 field staff handle hundreds of cases each year, including many clients referred through an overflow contract with Central East Community Care Access Centre. The branch also provides care at more than a dozen long-term care facilities and retirement homes in Durham Region, and it offers monthly blood pressure clinics at the Oshawa Senior Citizens Centre, Clarington Senior Centre and several seniors' independent-living homes.

"There is a lot of competition to provide home health care services in Oshawa, including large nursing agencies and smaller companies that only offer personal care," says Diane Moore, Area Director, who has been with the branch since it opened. "What makes us stand out is that we offer services over and above what others may have – such as our infusion clinic and self-injection training. Our staff go above and beyond, even responding to calls on their days off when needed to make sure all clients' needs are met."

The branch is located in downtown Oshawa. Its infusion clinic is open several days each week and overseen by two physicians from the Oshawa Clinic, a large medical office across the street. The branch also has a contract with Veterans' Affairs Canada in Peterborough to provide advisory nursing at an assessment office and also assists with safe patient transfers between hospitals for Ambutrans, a non-emergency ambulance transportation service. The branch is also involved in Code STEMI, a pilot program that provides transfers for cardiac patients who require testing at the catheterization lab at Rouge Valley Centenary in Toronto's east end. The branch also serves as a supply depot for infusion/specialty pharmaceuticals and supplies.

The branch is usually bustling as staff handle day-to-day staffing co-ordination as well as urgent care requests from local referral sources or Bayshore's National Service Centre.

"We don't usually have too much trouble filling urgent requests, because our field staff are very eager. We'll do what we need to do to meet the need, especially for palliative clients. We give them as much support as we can," says Moore.

The branch is very active in engaging its field staff. In May, it celebrated Nurses Week by hosting a barbecue for all staff. The branch sends out a bi-monthly newsletter, featuring branch news, events and even recipes contributed by staff members. Health and safety is another focus. "We keep staff informed about issues such as the H1N1 virus, and the activities of our Joint Health & Safety Committee," says Moore.

The branch also has a big heart. For the second year, the branch's administrative staff participated in the annual Walk of Life charity event for Lakeridge Health's Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation Program, raising more than \$3,500. "We also set up a booth for blood-pressure testing and checking cholesterol. We will be doing this again next year, and we appreciate our field staff who participate in this wonderful cause," says Moore.

The branch sponsors Durham Hospice's fundraising gala and often collects food for the Durham and District Food Bank. It does additional health education in the community by setting up booths at seniors' expos. The branch also offers flu clinics every year in its office, pharmacies and long-term care facilities, and Moore hopes to expand this program.

She is justifiably proud of her team's community spirit and ability to work together when the pressure is on. She credits her staff members' positive attitude and the branch's "family" atmosphere. "We're always willing and eager to meet requests on short-term notice – we can accommodate almost any request. We have that reputation in Durham, especially with the CCAC, that we do our best, even with the shortage of nurses in Ontario," says Moore. "We've developed a really good reputation for providing quality service and care, and we're proud to serve our community."

For more information, please contact dmoore@bayshore.ca.

Front row, left to right:
Jennifer Hall, Dave Stamp,
Diane Moore, Laura McNiff.
Back row, left to right:
Jenny Loney, Erin Wilczynski,
Joan Birkell.



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