

Mississauga – Government Services branch:

Keeping it all together with teamwork



Bayshore Home Health's Mississauga – Government Services branch is actually like three branches in one, and its service area extends far beyond Mississauga, Ont.

The branch serves clients through contracts with four Community Care Access Centres (CCACs), each affiliated with a Local Health Integration Network (LHIN): Central, Toronto Central, Central West and Mississauga Halton. (The Ontario government has 14 LHINs, non-profit corporations that work with local health providers and community members to determine health service priorities in each region.)

The branch has three busy sites. The Mississauga location is open seven days a week; the Richmond Hill office is open five days; and there is a satellite office in the former Toronto borough of North York. The branch also operates two ambulatory care clinics, located in Mississauga and Maple, and two infusion clinics, in Mississauga and Richmond Hill. To meet the demand for home health care services, the branch has a large staff: 285 nurses and personal support workers and 34 administrative employees.

"We provide the same services that other Bayshore branches do, including wound care and palliative care, but only through government contracts," explains Anne Hardy, Area Director, who has been at the branch since 2001. "The only time we provide service in the community outside of contracts is if we're already working with a CCAC client and they want additional services. For example, if we're going in to see Mrs. Smith three times a week and she wants us to visit five times, we can investigate her funding options for the two additional visits. She also has the option to pay for services privately."

The demand for services varies from region to region. For example, in Peel Region, which the branch serves through contracts with the Mississauga Halton and Central West LHINs, it provides mainly pediatric care; for the Central LHIN, the branch predominantly serves seniors.

The branch has an incredibly multicultural team, very likely the most diverse in Canada. The staff who report to the North York branch alone represent 56 countries. "Our clientele

is equally diverse," says Hardy. "We hire our employees to match our clients' needs and cultural attributes."

Because it handles government contracts, the Mississauga – Government branch promotes its services differently than other Bayshore branches. Every few years, it must compete to secure CCAC contracts by submitting proposals and having on-site evaluations. "It's a very competitive process," says Hardy. When the branch wins new contracts, it goes to great lengths to ensure that the transition for clients is smooth, even hiring their personal support workers from competitors to provide an uninterrupted relationship.

To keep staff from its three sites connected, the branch publishes its own newsletter. Its clinical managers hold monthly team meetings with nurses, and they are available at the North York office to meet with personal support workers. Each year, the branch holds two open-house events to present service awards to staff.

The branch also holds a number of social events, including fundraisers for charitable projects in the community. Employees participate in Hike for Hospice to support North York's Alliance Hospice. In May, a team of 14 walkers raised over \$5,000, led by Deborah Sloan, Manager of Clinical Practice for Central Nursing clients and Paula Brundia, Human Resources Assistant.

Hardy says that the branch takes pride in how it handles multiple sites and its wide variety of activities. "We're proud of our complexity and our ability to manage it. It's not just the cultural diversity – we've got a very complex structure, and you have to be committed to this type of work in order to be happy doing it. I see this commitment everywhere in the branch."

She adds that branch employees always have a positive attitude and support each other. "My staff are fabulous. Although we work from several sites, we all work as one team."

For more information, please contact ahardy@bayshore.ca

Staff from the Mississauga-Government Services (top) and Richmond Hill (bottom) offices.



Better care for a better life

www.bayshore.ca

Bayshore
Home Health