



Regional Best Practice Coordinators for LTC Initiative - Backgrounder

About the Initiative

This is an exciting new initiative that has been developed by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. This initiative will support long term care homes in adopting evidence-based practices that will support systematic and consistent approaches to providing quality care for residents.

Through the **Best Practice Coordinators in Long Term Care Initiative**, regional coordinators have been hired as a resource to long term care homes that may be interested in implementing Best Practice Guidelines, such as those developed by the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO), American Medical Directors Association (AMDA), and University of Iowa College of Nursing.

The expected benefits of this program include:

- enhanced capacity for knowledge transfer in geriatric health and evidence-based practice in the long term care sector;
- improved quality care in long term care homes;
- supports for nurses and staff in the organization; and
- improved quality of work life for staff.

What are best practice guidelines (BPGs)?

BPGs are systematically developed statements based on best available evidence meant to assist practitioners and clients with decisions about appropriate health care. The guidelines are a resource tool, to be used in assessing current practices, developing policies, procedures, protocols, educational programs, quality standards, and assessment and documentation tools, within a practice setting.

It is important to note, that the Best Practice Guidelines are not the same as the Long Term Care (LTC) Home standards of care. This initiative is not mandatory however, this is an important opportunity for facilities to find ways to reach a new level of excellence in patient care.

Who are the BP Coordinators?

In the left column is the list of the eight Regional Coordinators and their phone and email contact information.

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Do the RNAO BPGs have to be used for this initiative?

The Ministry of Health and Long Term care has provided funding to the RNAO to develop a set of internationally recognized best practice guidelines for nursing care. Recognizing that some LTC homes have developed or identified their own evidence-based guidelines, the coordinators will work with homes to find the resources that best support their needs.

How will the BP Coordinators help in implementing guidelines for evidence-based practice?

Regional coordinators will be developing regional plans with the goal of working with as many long term care homes over the next two and half years as possible. The coordinators will be identifying homes that may be interested in participating in this initiative, as well as promoting the importance of evidence-based practice among homes that are not aware of the guidelines or how they may be used.

Specific activities of coordinators may include:

- To develop and mentor individuals in LTC homes who will promote and support knowledge transfer within their region;
- To provide operational support for best practice integration within LTC homes (e.g. assisting homes in complete pre-implementation evaluation assessments, providing support and information for business cases);
- To network with other regional coordinators, regional champions and individuals endowed with an Advanced Practice Clinical Fellowship to ensure sharing of lessons learned in implementation and best practices; and
- To develop/organize regional training session for representatives from LTC homes.

Is this initiative linked to compliance reviews or the new standards?

No, the BPG Coordinators in long term care is a separate initiative that is intended to help nurses and staff in long term care homes adopts best practices and incorporate evidence- based practices into patient care. Long term care homes will not be penalized for not participating in this initiative.