

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

cheshire
independent living services



Message from the President and Executive Director

This year will stand out in all of our memories as the year the world came to a halt because of COVID-19. Cheshire staff and clients have been dealing with the impact of the virus on their lives beginning when the province declared a state of emergency in mid-March 2020. We want to thank all of our staff who have continued to work during this difficult time. As many services completely shut down or moved to virtual platforms it was very clear that the services provided by Cheshire would need to continue and we needed to do everything we could to ensure that people were safe. This has been a daunting task but we pulled together as a community and were successful. One of our Program Managers said that the passion and commitment each person in the organization demonstrates on a daily basis “shone through when COVID began”. “Everyone was living in a new world of uncertainty and yet we came together to ensure staff and clients were safe and that clients received services. Tireless hours were put in by everyone and even with the chaos of the world outside, the passion and dedication of each individual was undeniable. It makes me proud to be part of such an amazing team.” As we write this the Province is preparing for Wave 2 of the virus and also planning for how we integrate “living with” COVID into our daily work and lives. It is a different world we live and work in but together we can continue to provide an essential service for people with significant disabilities and frail seniors in Southwestern Ontario and have a positive impact on their lives and the lives of their families.

We began this year with our third accreditation survey with CARF International and when you read the information in this report about the survey you will see that we were successful in obtaining a full 3-year accreditation. It felt like we were just enjoying this success when we abruptly pivoted to dealing with the pandemic.

Our funders and other health system partners have supported us through this difficult year and we thank them for their support.

Together we worked regionally on pandemic planning and adjusted quickly to whatever changes were coming our way. We also continue to work together on Health Service transformation in Ontario. This involves moving much of the decision making to local Ontario Health Teams.

The pandemic will certainly be one of the most memorable events of the 2019/2020 year but it was not the only one. We continue to work with our partners in the Housing sector to create additional accessible and affordable housing and this year we have partnered with the Italian Seniors Project and have 12 units at Residenza Ortona which opened in September 2020. The Board members of the Italian Seniors Project have been an amazing group of individuals to work with. They are committed and caring and have a vision to “build communities”. Claudio DeVincenzo is a board member and said that “anyone can build a square block, fill it with people and close the door, we’re trying to build communities.” We can personally say that we have witnessed this passion in our conversations with various board members. It was truly remarkable that during a pandemic they were able to continue construction of this apartment building and open it on schedule.

We thank all of the members of the Cheshire Board of Directors for their ongoing leadership, guidance and support and for their patience as we all moved to virtual platforms such as Zoom and Webex for communication. Thank you also to the Cheshire staff who supported us through this transition.

We have much to be proud of but cannot stop our relentless focus on providing exemplary service. One of our primary care partners said that we are “reliable, dependable, provide excellent care, are patient focused and these qualities are consistent. Put simply, I can count on your organization.” We will continue to work diligently to live up to this and provide the same high quality service in 2020/2021 and beyond.



Judi Fisher
Executive Director



Grant Inglis
Board President

Accreditation 2020

In our ongoing commitment to Quality Improvement, Cheshire entered into our third accreditation survey with CARF International in January.

Preparing for a survey is no small task and requires a solid year of planning to ensure that we are up to date on established best practices and living up to the standards that we set for ourselves and the organization. All of this work culminates into 3 days of intensive interviews, tours and consultations from which we emerged with a full 3 year accreditation. The result, of course, is that we emerge as a stronger, better organization...and that, when tested, we can demonstrate our commitment to improvement for our consumers and clients, for our staff, and for our community.

Out of 173 standards to be met, we had 8 items to work on – largely related to language changes to policies/reports and consistency in how we maintain our files.

In terms of our strengths however – the list is long, offers so much for all of us to feel proud about and speaks to the very core of who we are as an organization.

I am pleased to report that our efforts resulted in success, and we are awarded with a full 3 year accreditation with exemplary conformance noted in health and safety. “Recognition of exemplary conformance indicates a practice that produces outstanding business or clinical results and/or is innovative or creative and beneficial to be shared with the field”.



To all who have been involved in the preparation, interviews, tours, etc. – we send out a huge thank you!

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To My Soldiers

I saw the fear in the eyes of a PSW last night.

This whole situation became a reality for myself and I am assuming for a lot of our staff. But the amazing thing was, she took a deep breath, asked a couple of questions...put her coat on, said okay and went out to fight this war.

She turned into a Soldier right in front of my eyes.

I wanted to tell her everything was going to be ok, I wanted to give her a huge hug, I could do neither. When she left the office, I wanted to cry for her and every one of you that are out there fighting this battle.

I know the Directors and Managers are so hard at work trying to make the right decisions in this war.

Working on finding ways to make sure everyone is protected.

Everyone has their job.

I just wanted to take a minute to tell the PSWs, our soldiers on the front line, that my heart is with you and could not be prouder of the group of people we have at Cheshire.

Please be safe out there, wear your PPE and I hope we can have the biggest celebration together when this is all over.

~ Bonnie K., Team Assistant, March 24, 2020



On March 11, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 to be a global pandemic.

In the storm that followed, Cheshire staff have been the voice of calm for those that rely on us, many of whom are isolated and in need of reassurance...and the voice of support to each other as they navigate the strange waters that we have found ourselves in.

In the face of uncertainty, this entire organization rallied...and we continue to rally. We have rolled up our sleeves and applied an “all hands on deck” attitude which has successfully guided us over the many months since mid-March.

Our staff are our greatest strength.

They are heroes...They are warriors...

They are the heart and soul of the organization.

Challenges have been overcome, and through it all, we have persevered demonstrating qualities of:

- Resilience – an ability to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions.
- Compassion – an ability to recognize the suffering of others and to take action to help.
- Teamwork – a willingness to work together to achieve a common aim; and
- Courage – an ability to find strength in the face of fear.

Cheshire staff at every level of the organization, demonstrate these values at their very core. These are just a few of their stories.

Resilience

Dianne S. reflects back to March, with the first of our consumers being tested for COVID: “At that moment I was very scared and stressed out”. So much was unknown at this time and she was facing an entirely new situation...”but my thought was that this is my job and this is why I’m here – I just blocked the fear...put my big girl pants on and out the door I went”.

“The fear hit hard at first...it was not just at work but everywhere, especially as a Mom...but it is a lot less stressful now because we have the tools and protection. It’s really amazing how quickly we can adapt.”

Luckily the consumer tested negative, and we have been fortunate to have had no positive COVID cases within the organization so far (staff or consumers).

“It is nice to have the support of our teams. Everyone has been so supportive”.

“For me, it’s not just a job, I am here to be here for people. It is every day helping those in need. It is an honour for people to allow us into their homes”.



Compassion

Luon T. joined Cheshire just prior to the pandemic, coming to us from a nursing home environment and has found that “it is just such a difference” in how service is provided and how teams work together. He states that he feels well supported by his co-workers. “They energize me!”

It is this energy that has allowed Luon to persevere through the difficult pandemic period. “When the pandemic started, my initial thinking was that it would be gone like the flu, but it kept going and going. I became increasingly scared as it went on, especially with a sick parent at home and recognizing the need to take extra precautions to keep them safe as well as our consumers. As a whole organization, Cheshire has been good about putting out information and I always felt safe when working with consumers and staff”.

As a caregiver to a sick parent, Luon had a unique understanding of the stress and concerns that some of our Cheshire consumers face. “Some consumers are very scared...it is our job to be reassuring. When I take care of people, I imagine how I would prefer to be taken care of.” At a time when it would be very easy to decide to stay home and focus solely on his sick parent, Luon instead recognized the role he could play in helping others. In the early days of the pandemic, when Cheshire was desperate for coverage, Luon always stepped up to help out picking up many available shifts across the London hubs. “I understand that many consumers are in the same position as my parents. I understand the stress of being a caregiver” and, at the end of the day, “I love taking care of people”.

Teamwork

Cheshire's Team Assistants are in a unique position of seeing (and feeling) the incredible teamwork that is truly the core of our success as an organization.

Renee C. shared that "it really was like one big family working as one. When sick calls were piling up; the PAs pitched in to make calls and pick up extra bookings, working doubles – Team Assistants were helping out to cover bookings...Program Managers were great at checking in – everyone pulling as one is what kept me positive".

Sarah says "I can remember when I came in in the morning to a whole slew of bookings, I was starting to panic and the PAs really helped to calm me" with encouraging words like "we've got this" and "I can help". Cailey agrees sharing that the staff "really pulled together and got a lot of shifts covered".

Patricia was particularly thankful to her TA team. As a new TA "I was scared at first coming into the office, but there were a lot of encouraging words. The help and support of my team really helped me to build my confidence".

And when the Middlesex program was facing a staffing crisis, it was the TA team who picked up shifts – pulling together to pitch in and help out in unconventional ways. "I was just so thankful when Bonnie said "put me in". She didn't have her PSW, but still drove out to Middlesex to help with meals and other tasks".

Several of our TAs have been working remotely and have had to find new ways to connect and reconnect. Jodi shared that it was a big change and that "she used email and phone calls to stay connected to her team".

Both Jodi and Sharon have relied on each other by keeping in contact between counties "more than we ever did". Sharon shares that "when things got crazy, we knew we had each other. It's not so much about having someone do something for you, but to have someone who will listen, know what your going through, stay positive and know that they have your back. It's about trust".

Renee summed it up by sharing that "the whole organization...the Directors and Program Managers helped us to hold it all together to support the teams in the moment. Everyone pulled together as one team and that speaks volumes".



Courage

East Elgin is where we had our first case of a COVID-positive family member living in the same home as our consumer. The team in East Elgin set aside their fears, donned their PPE and quickly moved forward without skipping a beat.

Sherri B. states “when I first found out that my consumer’s dad was COVID positive, it was gut wrenching, I really focused on my obligation to my clients. I knew the consumer didn’t have anyone else who could do what needed to be done, it was just me and the team”.

Ruth U. shares that she made the decision to quarantine herself during this period. It was important to her to “keep myself safe so I can keep my consumers safe. My job is to help people. Always in my job I look at my clients and think...I can take my own shower and dress myself and they can’t. It was harder on the consumer’s family than it was for me. They all lived under the same roof but were all so isolated. It must have been so hard for them”.

“I was definitely fearful that I would bring it home to my family...did I wash my hands enough? Did I use my hand sanitizer? shares Tanya Y. “Lee Ann was so good about communicating with us throughout and that really alleviated my fear. I flooded her with questions and she was so patient”. At the end of the day, “the consumer depends on us, she doesn’t live her life without us being there. I focused on following all the precautions and just being there to help them when they needed us”.

Maggie M. shared the same sentiment, “I just wanted to be a positive light for the consumer at every booking because she was so scared. I put myself in a positive mind state that this is what I signed up for...this is the job I chose and I knew there’d be risks. I love my job”.



Service Recognition Awards

30 YEARS

Lee Ann S. *Elgin*

25 YEARS

Amy B. *L-Hubs*

Eric K. *Oxford*

Lynda W. *Oxford*

20 YEARS

Amy D. *L-Hubs*

Lisa H. *Elgin*

Stef K. *East*

Judy M. *South*

Lisa O. *South*

Laura F. *Huron*

15 YEARS

Loretta S. *West*

Iwona S. *East*

Marian Z. *South*

Beata N. *L-Hubs*

Amy B. *West*

Tracy P. *Admin*

Jennifer S. *Oxford*

10 YEARS

Kim A. *Perth*

Martina P. *North*

Monica H. *Middlesex*

Sharon O. *Huron*

Rana J. *West*

Tammy M. *South*

Catalina M. *South*

Ana S. *East*

5 YEARS

Jenny B. *South*

Kerrie H. *Oxford*

Marg N. *Oxford*

Rosemary W. *Elgin*

Maria G. *South*

Natasha B. *Huron*

Jennifer D. *Perth*

Patricia H. *L-Hubs*

Gennifer E. *East*

Amy R. *Huron*

Lindsay L. *Admin*

Kristen L. *West*

Tammy M. *Central*

Nicole S. *Central*

Natasha K. *Perth*

Deniz P. *East*

Emily C. *L-Hubs*

Carrie A. *North*

Jordana D. *South*

Melissa W. *Oxford*

Thoeun R. *L-Hubs*

Jan O. *L-Hubs*

Nubia A. *L-Hubs*

Kathleen K. *Perth*

Anne B. *Elgin*

2 YEARS

Julie M. *East*

Tara S. *L-Hubs*

Gerry L. *Central*

Celina B. *Oxford*

Nina C. *Central*

Laurie T. *Elgin*

Gurbat H. *South*

Taylor B. *Admin*

Kelly F. *Perth*

Sue E. *Perth*

Janet S. *Perth*

Destiny G. *South*

Sarah G. *East*

Deeqa A. *North*

Holly D. *Admin*

Robin H. *Central*

Katrina C. *East*

Chijoke U. *L-Hubs*

Ashley G. *Central*

Jessica S. *Elgin*

Katlyn J. *North*

Maria C. *North*

Theodore G. *Central*

Kayla R. *North*

Joseph L. *West*

Dawn B. *Oxford*

Odette H. *South*

Fernando T. *Central*

Ana V. *East*

Congratulations!

Cheshire Homes of London Inc.

Simplified Financial Statements

Operating Fund

Balance Sheet as at March 31, 2020

Assets	2020	2019
The organization keeps cash on hand in the accounts with the Toronto-Dominion Bank	\$ 631,937	\$ 1,223,547
Investments	\$ 134,232	\$
At any point in time we have amounts owing to the organization	\$ 516,083	\$ 403,054
We have prepaid certain expenses	\$ 66,689	\$ 53,985
The organization owns building, equipment, furniture and fixtures used in operations (net book value)	\$ 1,653,912	\$ 1,584,088

	\$ 3,002,853	\$ 3,264,674
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Replacement Reserve Fund

The organization keeps cash on hand in the accounts with the Toronto-Dominion Bank (these funds are used to replace assets at various locations)	\$ 19,825	\$ 52,837
Investments	\$ 110,724	\$ 109,023

	\$ 130,549	\$ 161,860
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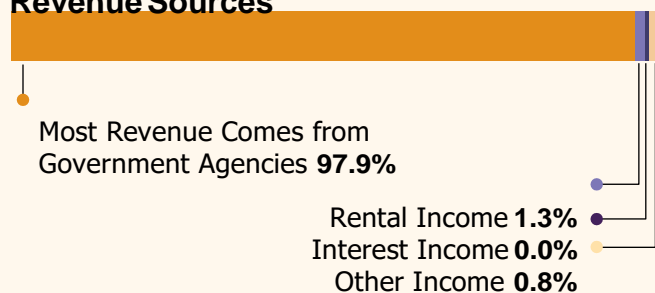
Cheshire Fund

Cash	\$ 314,925	\$ 330,675
Investments	\$ 697,855	\$ 656,562

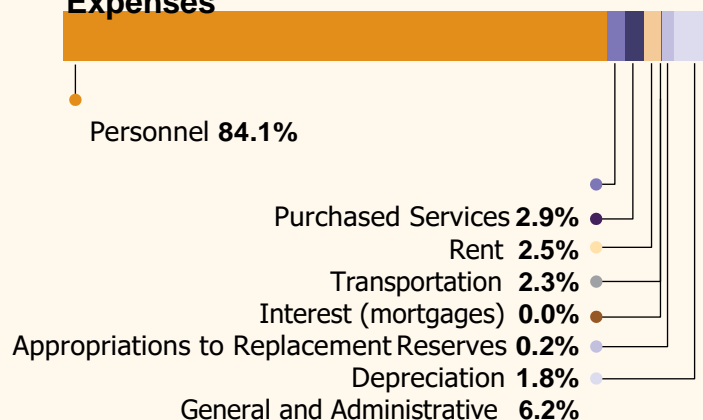
	\$ 1,012,780	\$ 987,237
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Total Assets	\$ 4,146,182	\$ 4,413,771
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Revenue Sources



Expenses



Liabilities	2020	2019
Accounts payable	\$ 2,570,948	\$ 2,590,824
The organization owes mortgages on the buildings it owns	\$ 30,856	\$ 104,484
Fund equity	\$ 401,049	\$ 569,366
	\$ 3,002,853	\$ 3,264,674

Replacement Reserve Fund

Due to Operating Fund	\$ 14,939	\$ 10,269
Fund equity	\$ 115,610	\$ 151,591
	\$ 130,549	\$ 161,860

Cheshire Fund

The organization has established a Fund to finance non-budgeted costs	\$ 1,012,780	\$ 987,237
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Total Liabilities	\$ 4,146,182	\$ 4,413,771
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Income Statement for the year ended March 31, 2020

Revenue	2020	2019
Most of our revenue comes from various government agencies	\$ 16,456,900	\$ 15,174,173
Rental income	\$ 222,941	\$ 232,430
Interest income	\$ -11,676	\$ 21,353
Other income	\$ 141,871	\$ 411,507
	\$ 16,810,036	\$ 15,839,463

Expenses

Personnel: staff salaries and benefits	\$ 14,204,330	\$ 12,782,450
Purchased services: we hire outside help to assist our consumers	\$ 501,685	\$ 455,888
Rent: we rent premises for some of our consumers	\$ 424,297	\$ 458,290
Transportation	\$ 388,541	\$ 321,722
Interest: we pay interest on our mortgages	\$ 774	\$ 873
Appropriations to replacement reserves: we allocated funds to replace worn out equipment	\$ 29,200	\$ 29,200
Depreciation	\$ 298,228	\$ 299,578
General and administrative: all other costs	\$ 1,047,113	\$ 1,107,123
	\$ 16,894,168	\$ 15,455,124

Excess of revenue over expenses for the year	\$ (84,132)	\$ 384,339
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