

Cheshire Chat

Autumn 2024 Edition



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3 Year Accreditation Recipient

WELCOME AUTUMN!



CONGRATULATIONS EVERYDAY HEROES & LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNERS

On behalf of the Board and Senior Leadership, please join me in congratulating the following 2024 Award Recipients, who will be formally acknowledged at our upcoming Annual General Meeting on October 7th, 2024.

Everyday Hero Award

This prestigious award is designed to honour someone who makes a difference everyday by providing person centered support in a way that is respectful, supports independence and embodies the characteristics of an Everyday Hero. Winners must receive a nomination from both a consumer and a team member in order to be considered.

Our 2024 Everyday Heroes are:

· Lan Than, Oxford

"Lan's compassion for each consumer shines in her day to day work."

· Linda Freeburn, Oxford

"Linda is an excellent PSW! Very caring, kind and thorough - she's got a good attitude and is a true joy to be around"

Judith Fisher Everyday Leadership Award

This prestigious award is designed to honour someone who demonstrates the values of Everyday Leadership, and the concept that anyone can be a Leader if they have the passion, drive and commitment to improve themselves and the lives of those around them. Winners must be nominated by a colleague through a comprehensive application process.

Our 2024 Everyday Leader is:

· Carri Broere, IT Coordinator

"I admire Carri for her dedication, not just for her department; but for the whole"

organization!"

Each of our winners will receive a plaque honouring their achievement and a prize of \$500.

Congratulations to you all and thank you for being an excellent representative of the Cheshire Mission, Vision and Values.

Health & Safety Tips for the Autumn Season

- **Watch for new roadway hazards** Going back to school brings traffic changes. School buses, students on bicycles and teen drivers are out on the road. Slow down take extra precautions. Never pass a bus with flashing red lights on
- **Adjust outdoor lighting.** With the sun setting earlier, check the lights in parking lots, sidewalks, and other walkways to make sure they turn on early enough to ensure good visibility.
- **Take advantage of daytime sunlight.** As the days inevitably become shorter, many of us are going to work in the dark and returning home in the dark. Help your staff cope with this seasonal change by encouraging them to get outside for a walk during breaks or lunch while the sun is up.
- **Check your HVAC system.** It really is key to good indoor air quality. Ensure your HVAC system is operating properly, regular maintenance is being done, and vents or ducts are not blocked (e.g., leaves or nests).
- **Effects of time change.** Darker mornings and switch back to Standard Time can affect sleep patterns and lead to fatigue until our bodies adjust. Reminder to employees to take their time getting to work, rather than rushing while tired.
- **Prepare for the first snowfall.** Don't wait until it happens. Check shovels, get salt, and arrange for snow removal services. If you have everything in place now, you'll be ready when the snow comes.
- **Recognize that this time of year may bring more stressors.** When kids return to school and extracurricular activities, juggling their schedules with work can be stressful.
- **Be Alert of Wildlife on roadways.** Wildlife is on the move in the fall, so watch for deer, turkey and any other animals crossing the road in front of your vehicle. They are most active from dusk to dawn. Remember deer's travel in groups if you see one crossing more are bound to follow.
- **Share the road with harvesting equipment.** In rural areas, fall brings the harvest season with large farming equipment on the road. Be alert for slow-moving vehicles, and give them plenty of space. This provides better visibility to you and the other driver. Remember that they may turn unexpectedly into fields or driveways. Just because you can see the equipment does not mean the other driver can see you.



Cultural Humility Corner

There are a ton of local, free and/or low cost events happening in the months of October - December.

[To check out the full list of events, please click here.](#)



Welcoming Wellness

Wellness Committee - Welcoming Wellness

Thank you to everyone who donated items to support the Thames Valley Education Foundation, The Salvation Army and United Way Elgin Middlesex annual backpack drive. These photos show what our staff collected and contributed this year for the [#BestFirstDay](#) program. This program is a community wide school supplies drive collecting backpacks and school supplies for



Thank you 


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Thames Valley District School Board students in need of support for these essential items.

We have also been collecting donations for the Koats for Kids program and will have an update in our next edition!

As we head into the Autumn season, we also head into spooky season! Stay tuned for more information on our pumpkin carving and costume contests!

Mental Health, Mental Illness and Addiction

Mental health and mental illness are often used interchangeably, but they are not the same thing. “Mental health” is a concept similar to “physical health”: it refers to a state of well-being. Mental health includes our emotions, feelings of connection to others, our thoughts and feelings, and being able to manage life’s highs and lows.

Problematic substance use is sometimes linked to poor mental health or mental illness; it can be a coping strategy for untreated trauma, pain, challenging thoughts or emotions, or other health symptoms.

Did you know?

1. In any given year, 1 in 5 people in Canada will personally experience a mental health problem or illness
2. Major depression affects approximately 5.4% of the Canadian population
3. About 1% of Canadians will experience bipolar disorder
4. Eating disorders affect approximately 1 million Canadians
5. Substance use disorders affect approximately 6% of Canadians
6. In Canada, suicide disproportionately impacts Indigenous peoples; the rate of suicide among First Nations is three times higher than among non-Indigenous Canadians, and nine times higher among Inuit.

Causes?

- **Life events such as violence and trauma during childhood or adulthood can give rise to mental health and substance use problems if supports for recovery are not available or sought.**
- Environmental factors play an important role in our mental health: access to safe and affordable housing, meaningful education and employment, leisure activities, the support of a community, access to land and nature, freedom from violence, and good access to health care and mental health services all support good mental health.

Cost?

The economic cost of mental illnesses to the Canadian healthcare and social support system was projected as \$79.9 billion for the year 2021. Because public mental health services are underfunded and have long wait times, many people rely on their employer-based benefits or bear the personal cost of private services. Canadians spend an estimated \$950 million a year on psychologists in private practice. About 30% of this is paid out-of-pocket while the remainder is paid through employment-based private health insurance plans

If you or someone you know is suffering, please know you do not have to do it alone.

Resources for help;

www.cmhatv.ca

www.reachout247.ca

www.lifeworks.com



Privacy Officer Corner

If you are like me you are probably scratching your head when trying to come up with yet a new one and unrecycled password. We need passwords to access our phones, banking information, work stuff. We are told to use complicated and different passwords and not save them on our devices.

Cyber Security Ontario recommends the following:

Passwords

As more services become available online, good password hygiene and practices are more necessary than ever. Where passwords are used, they should be strong and unique, while keeping user experience in mind, to help keep your services safe.

Strong Passwords

Passwords prevent unauthorized access. Passwords limit access to systems and information, ensuring that the right users have access to the right resources at the right time.

With single sign-on (SSO) becoming the norm, one password provides access to multiple services.

How to create and manage strong and effective passwords

Your passwords or passphrases should be easy to remember but difficult to guess. A passphrase is the same as a password but consists of a sequence of words or other text that a user can more easily memorize. A passphrase is typically longer than a password, for added security. The terms "password" and "passphrase" are often used interchangeably.

Strong passwords and passphrases should always be balanced with user experience to avoid forcing users to write down their password/passphrase or pick an overly simple one that is easy to memorize.

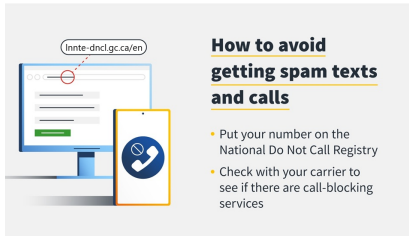
Do use complex passwords or passphrases. Complexity helps thwart password crackers or brute force attacks that attempt to guess your password.

- Use upper and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters
- Do not include words that can be found in the dictionary – instead, use random characters
- Avoid using proper names or popular slang – these often appear in custom attacker dictionaries
- If using a passphrase, pick a phrase that you can remember but replace some of the letters with numbers or special characters. For example, "the quick brown fox" becomes "Th3Qu!ckBrnFX#"
- Do use a unique password/passphrase for each system, device or platform
- Do not reuse passwords/passphrases for multiple accounts. If one website gets hacked and you've used the same password for other sites, a threat actor can use the breached password to gain access to your other accounts
- Do not update your password/passphrases according to an easy-to-detect pattern (e.g., the practice of incrementing one portion in a password in succession). If an older password/passphrase is ever compromised, using patterns will make it easier for someone malicious to guess your new one
- Do make sure your security questions for password resets are difficult to answer.
- Do not share your password/passphrase with friends, colleagues, or even your manager. Your organization may also have rules against this.
- Do not write down your passwords/passphrases.

- Do not use 'remember password' or 'remember me' functions for systems, services, or software.
- Do not create security questions that rely on information easily found on social media, such as a pet's name or your date of birth.

While it is a lot of do's and don'ts please ensure you are doing all you can to protect your data from the hard working hackers.

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Information Technology Tips & Tricks

Did you know you can reduce the number of unwanted telemarketing calls you receive to your phone? Once you register for Canada's National Do Not Call List, you will see fewer telemarketing calls within 31 days. Legitimate telemarketers are required to check the DNCL list and will no longer call you once you have added your number.

You may still receive some unwanted calls and texts, however it is typically very easy to block those numbers directly on your cell phone. Just look for a "block number" option next to the text or call you've received. Registration is easy and takes just a few minutes. Feel free to add your work number as well!

Welcome to Cybersecurity Awareness Month 2024!

As Cybersecurity Awareness Month approaches in October, Cheshire will be rolling out a month's worth of engaging training content to our staff to strengthen our organization's defenses against ever-evolving cyber threats.

Stay tuned for more updates as we dive into Cybersecurity Awareness Month. Together, we can become a great human defense against cyber threats and ensure the continued protection of our organization's assets and data.

The Let's Go Home Program (LEGHO)

This program has continued to expand and adapt to the current health care setting. In June 2024 we began participating in rounds on one of our referring units at Victoria Hospital. This was a recommendation that arose from the Access and Flow table. We not only have been able to meet with patients in hospital before they return home but we have also been able to act as a resource for the community supports sector in London Middlesex. We have been able to link individuals to other supports such as central intake resources and attendant outreach etc.

The Central Intake team has been working on community engagement. We have completed several presentations at partner and other external agencies targeting the population we serve to promote the program. We have been engaging with family health teams and libraries to provide information and promotional material to encourage access to the program.

The Community Support Services Flex fund reached capacity in August 2024 supporting many individuals in the South West access much needed equipment and resources to maintain living independently in their homes. We are hopeful that we will receive an increase in our funding for this fiscal year.

Meet Your Neighbour!

Farah was originally born in Mogadishu, Somalia. In



October 1992, his family left at the onset of the civil war on route to Canada via many stops and experiences. They spent 7 months in Saudi Arabia, a few months at a refugee shelter in Frankfurt, next on to New York city for a couple of months in shelter to finally reach Toronto. While in Toronto his father made some connections, which then guided the family to London in 1993. These experiences have guided and shaped him to who he is today. Quite a journey of language, culture and geography!

It was Farah's grandmother that brought him to work at Cheshire. She had health challenges along with early onset dementia. He observed caregivers that assisted her as he was looking for an opportunity to do something meaningful. He also had a friend that worked as a PSW so with that he enrolled in the PSW program in 2017. While in the program, Cheshire was his community placement. The fit seemed right from the beginning, he recalls feeling welcome and supported and stayed on after his placement. He was quickly able to obtain full time work and has not looked back.

Hoping to apply Farah's work experiences at Cheshire and move into an admin role he enrolled in a post grad Human Resources Management program. Farah worked as the Program Manager Assistant learning more about functionality from a business perspective to gain insight into improving the experience of both staff and consumers. Shortly after a Health & Safety Coordinator position opened up, he gathered additional insight into the role and used his learned experiences to blend with his education so he can continue to grow and develop while in the role. In his free time, Farah enjoys the solitude of hiking he finds many different routes in the community to unwind, relax and see where the trail leads him. He likes to spend time with friends playing volleyball weekly year-round and on other days participates in networking opportunities to mingle with like minded professionals. However, at the end of the day, spending as much time with family is most important to Farah.

Cheshire welcome's Farah to the Health and Safety Coordinator position!

Our Attendance Initiative **"Make the Days Count"** continues and we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the winners for this quarter!

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Congratulations to our
"Make the Days Count"
Draw Winners

Audrey E, Huron Personal Attendant
Winner – "Make the Days Count" PA & TA - \$500

Elena S, Program Manager, LHUBS
Winner – "Make the Days Count" Admin - \$100

Next Draw:
July 2024
(covers perfect attendance for the months of April, May, June)

"DON'T COUNT THE DAYS; MAKE THE DAYS COUNT."
- MUHAMMAD ALI

thank you!
For Making the Days Count

Did you know that Cheshire provides staff with an easy way to give back to our Everyday Dreams program? You can designate any amount to be automatically donated from your paycheck.



Just think - if every employee donated just \$1 each pay the Everyday Dreams Fund that would be over \$300 per pay and over \$7800 a year. A little goes a long way!

To sign up for payroll deductions, please speak to your Program Manager to complete a Payroll Authorizations & Deductions form.

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