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3 Year Accreditation Recipient



## SPRING INTO SAFETY: Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls

While we're all happy to say goodbye to the snow, springtime brings its own unique set of risks. Between "April showers" and spring cleaning, staying upright requires a little extra focus.

### Watch Out for "The Wet Factor"

- Rainy days mean slippery floors. Even a small puddle tracked in from the entry mat can turn a hallway into a skating rink.
- Wipe your feet: Spend an extra five seconds on the walk-off mats.
- Report spills: If you see a wet spot, don't walk past it. Clean it up or mark it with a caution sign immediately.

### Mind the Mud

Thawing ground creates mud and loose gravel, which can act like ball bearings under your boots.

- Check your tread: Ensure your footwear isn't clogged with mud, which reduces traction when you step back onto hard surfaces.
- Take the path: Avoid taking shortcuts through landscaped areas that may be soft or uneven.

### Spring Cleaning & Clutter

We're clearing out the old, but don't let the "clutter" become a hazard.

- Cords and Cables: If you're moving desks or equipment, ensure power cords aren't stretched across walkways.
- Clear the Aisles: Keep boxes, bins, and tools off the floor. If it's not in use, put it away

### The "Eyes on Path" Rule

The biggest cause of falls isn't the floor—it's distraction.

- Put the phone away: Looking at a screen while walking is the easiest way to miss a transition in flooring or a stray cleaning bucket.
- Use handrails: They aren't just for show; use them on every staircase, every time.

### The Bottom Line: Safety is a team sport.

If you see a hazard, fix it or report it. Let's keep everyone on their feet this season!

## Cheshire Earns Fourth Consecutive Three-Year Accreditation!

Cheshire is proud to announce that we have successfully earned a Three-Year Accreditation for the fourth time following our recent CARF Accreditation Survey conducted January 26–28, 2026.

This achievement reflects our ongoing dedication to excellence in service and care. This accreditation decision highlights Cheshire's commitment to applying CARF standards for the benefit of the people we serve, their families, our staff, and our broader community of stakeholders.

This milestone reinforces our strong commitment to quality care and services, as guided by our mission and values. It also recognizes our organization's ability to grow, evolve, and respond effectively to an ever-changing environment.

This announcement proves that Cheshire has.

- Demonstrated consistent quality and performance over many years
- The ability to maintain and improve standards
- A strong track record in meeting requirements

## Did you Know?...

### Annual Staff Education Event

Cheshire and the Staff Education Committee are pleased to announce the Annual All Staff Education Event to be held this summer. We are taking a new approach to delivering education this year by hosting an *Education Fair* that will feature a variety of internal and external topics for staff to enjoy.

Some internal expected topics will include, a refresh of clinical skills, sharps safety, a spotlight for our CSS and LEGHO programs, and updates from our IT department. We will also be working with some Local External Partners to showcase additional services available in our communities and to provide insight on frequently requested topics like mental health and addictions and end of life care. We are looking forward to hosting this year's event at BMO Centre on June 10th, 11th, 16th and 23rd.

### Orientation Update

Cheshire is excited to share that our Staff Educator, Taylor M., has recreated the Cheshire New Staff Orientation to move from a 2-day Orientation to a 5-day Orientation week!

The goal for the new Orientation is to better prepare new staff to meet and deliver services to our consumers by receiving all necessary and mandatory training in one week. In addition, there will be spaces available for existing staff to sign up and attend any skills renewal as required by the Cheshire Education Plan.

For now, this will run as a pilot. The pilot will operate for 3 months beginning **Monday April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026** and will run once a month on the first pay period of the month respectively. The dates will be as follows:

Round 1: Monday April 6<sup>th</sup> – Friday April 10<sup>th</sup>

Round 2: Monday May 4<sup>th</sup> – Friday May 8<sup>th</sup>

Round 3: Monday June 1<sup>st</sup> – Friday June 5<sup>th</sup>



The graphic displays the schedule for Cheshire Independent Living Services Orientation Week, organized by day and time slot. The days are Monday through Friday, each with a specific time range and a list of topics to be covered.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>0900-1600</b> Day 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• History</li><li>• Mission, vision, values</li><li>• Understanding the independent living movement</li><li>• Payroll</li><li>• IT</li><li>• PM - common PA tasks, hub delivery model</li></ul>	<b>1000-1630</b> Day 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Health and safety introduction</li><li>• Reporting</li><li>• Sharps safety</li><li>• PPE/Infection Control</li><li>• Safe Driving</li><li>• Disaster preparedness</li><li>• Fire Safety + Fire Evacuation</li><li>• Back Care</li></ul>	<b>0900-1500</b> Day 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clinical Skills Training<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Legislation</li><li>◦ Medications</li><li>◦ Bowel/Bladder care</li><li>◦ G-tubes</li><li>◦ Wound support</li></ul></li></ul>	<b>0900-1500</b> Day 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Person Centred Care</li><li>• CPI</li></ul>	<b>0830-1630</b> Day 5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Online learning modules<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ AODA</li><li>◦ FIRE</li><li>◦ WHMIS</li><li>◦ Workplace violence</li><li>◦ DEI</li><li>◦ Infection Control</li><li>◦ Preventing abuse/neglect</li><li>◦ safe driving</li></ul></li></ul>

## Information & Technology Corner

### **Why you should never give your personal information to AI**

Artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming a bigger part of our daily lives. For example, AI chatbots can help with customer service to AI tools can create unique content. However, AI comes with risks, especially when it comes to sharing personal information. It's important to understand why you should be cautious about what you share with AI. Learn how to protect yourself from potential threats with these tips.

### **Be careful about what you share**

It's important to be cautious about what information you share with AI. Many companies use AI chatbots for customer service to help answer questions. While chatbots can be a helpful tool, you should never share sensitive information with them. This includes your social insurance number (SIN), financial information and account credentials. This information can be stolen by cyber criminals if the company's system is compromised. It's common for chatbots to ask for details like your account or order number. However, you should not share other sensitive details. If you are asked to share personal information, it's safer to contact the company directly, like over the phone instead.

### **Losing control of your information**

A big concern about sharing personal information with AI is not knowing how your data will be used or saved. AI tools may share your information with other companies. That means you can't be sure who has access to your information. Avoid sharing images and information with generative AI services. Once you provide your data, you lose control over where it goes and who can see it.

Also, AI tools learn and improve by analyzing data. Your personal information could be part of that. This information could be used to target you with ads, be sold to other companies or stolen by cyber criminals.

## Learn how to spot spoofed websites

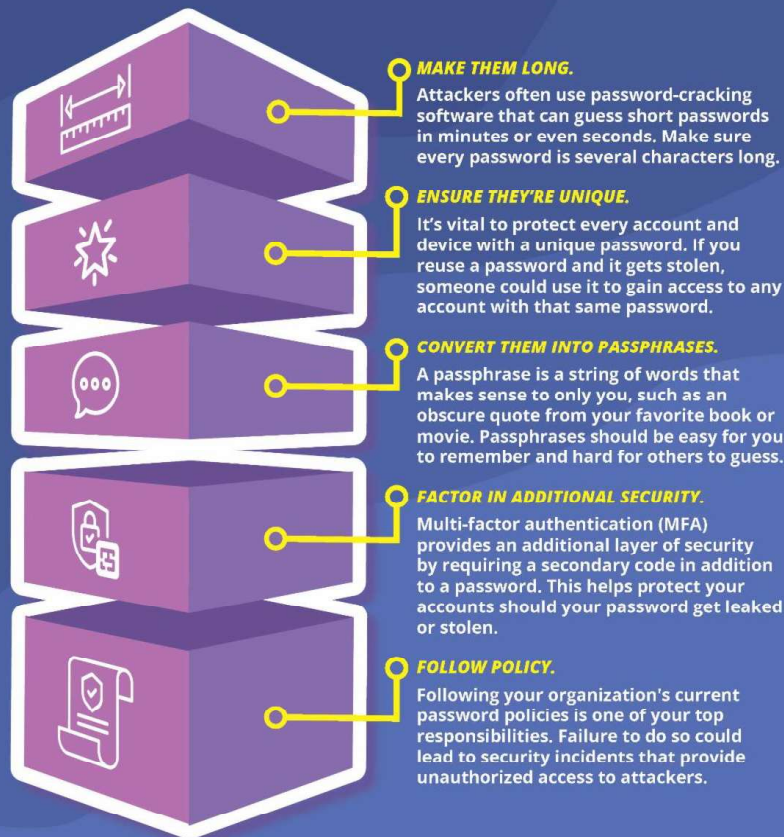
Cyber criminals sometimes create spoofed websites – fake websites that look like real ones to steal your money or personal information. And now, it's not just websites; cyber criminals are creating fake AI tools or AI websites, also to steal personal information. They may do this by creating fake apps or browser extensions. They may make their malicious AI website look legitimate by using script spoofing – using a legitimate website name, but with a typo in it. Once you enter your information on these fake websites, your information gets stolen and could be used for malicious purposes like identity theft or financial fraud. Spotting fake sites can be difficult as they are very convincing, using the same design, logos and language as the real websites they are pretending to be. Cyber criminals can use AI to create this content, so it's important to recognize the signs and learn how to spot AI online. Stay cautious and don't enter personal information on any website that seems suspicious.

## Conclusion

As AI continues to play a larger role in our lives, it's important to stay cautious about the risks, especially when it comes to sharing personal information. Being aware of these risks and taking steps to protect your personal information can help you get cyber safe.

## Layer up for World Password Day!

Passwords represent one of the most critical aspects of security. Protecting your accounts can be as simple as adhering to the basics of strong passwords and implementing additional layers of security. Here's how:



## Lead Agency Updates

### Let's Go Home (LEGHO) Program

The London Middlesex CSS Let's Go Home (LEGHO) Program supports hospital-to-home discharges for high-risk seniors and adults with permanent physical disabilities who are at risk of institutionalization. Individuals referred by an Ontario Health at Home Care Coordinator are connected with a Community Service Planner, who assists with navigation and access to Community Support Services across London and Middlesex County. Funded by Ontario Health West, the LEGHO Program helps remove barriers to discharge and supports a smooth transition home.

The program provides the following services free of charge for four weeks:

- Transportation to two medical appointments within four weeks
- London: Non-accessible transportation through Meals on Wheels London; accessible transportation can be coordinated through an accessible taxi/transport service.
- Middlesex: Accessible and non-accessible rides provided by VON.
- Two weeks of free frozen meals
- Includes 14 frozen meals supplied by Meals on Wheels London or VON Middlesex.

- Home Help
- Up to three hours over a three-week period, based on assessed need, provided by VON or an alternate provider.
- Intensive Caregiver Support
- Up to three hours over a four-week period.

Throughout the four-week period, the Community Service Planner maintains regular communication with the individual and ensures that any additional services needed are arranged, helping them feel supported and confident as they settle back into their home.

From **April 2025 to February 28, 2026**, a total of:

- 757 individuals received support.
- 6736 Meals Provided
- 515 Rides to Appointments Provided
- 834 Housekeeping Hours Provided

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the dedicated London Middlesex LEGHO Team for building strong, positive relationships with hospitals and community-based organizations to ensure the best possible outcomes for individuals returning home from hospital. We also thank all partner organizations for their continued collaboration in making this program possible.

### Supporting Rural Health Through Community Partnerships

We are excited to continue strengthening our work in primary care through the development of the region's first Rural Community Wellness Hub. This initiative is focused on improving access to services and supports for residents by bringing together healthcare and community resources in one accessible location.

As part of this work, we are actively identifying gaps and opportunities within the community to better understand how services can be enhanced to meet the needs of local residents. Our goal is to support individuals not only through primary care connections, but also by ensuring they have access to the broader network of community supports that contribute to overall health and well-being.

To help support this effort, we currently have an Intake Coordinator on site two days each week. In this role, they work closely with the primary care team to assist with community support navigation, service registrations, and connecting residents with appropriate programs and resources.

This collaborative approach helps ensure individuals can access the right supports at the right time, strengthening community wellness and improving outcomes for residents across the region.

## Cultural Humility Corner

### Accessibility in Perth County

Accessibility matters—everywhere, for everyone. In Perth County, communities are working toward a future where barriers are removed and inclusion is the standard—not the exception.



Guided by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, local municipalities are improving access to public spaces, services, transportation, and communication. From accessible customer service to inclusive community planning, the goal is simple: ensure everyone can fully participate in daily life.

Perth County offers several accessible outdoor spaces featuring paved trails, modern inclusive playgrounds, and accessible picnic areas, particularly in Mitchell and St. Mary's.

Top locations include the Mitchell Optimist Accessible Playground, the West Perth Thames Nature Trail, and Wildwood Conservation Area, which provides varied accessible nature experiences.

#### Key Accessible Parks and Trails

- **Mitchell Optimist Accessible Playground (Mitchell):** Located in Mitchell Lions Park, this area features specialized equipment designed for accessibility.
- **West Perth Thames Nature Trail (Mitchell):** Offers accessible walking paths along the river.
- **Wildwood Conservation Area (St. Mary's):** Features accessible hiking opportunities, as well as rentals for kayaks and canoes.
- **Grand Trunk Trail (St. Mary's):** A scenic, widely accessible trail connecting areas of St. Mary's.
- **T.J. Dolan Natural Area (Stratford):** Features well-marked, manageable trails for a natural experience.

#### Accessible Amenities

- **Animal Park (Mitchell):** Located within Mitchell Lions Park, adjacent to the accessible playground, providing views of animals and nearby accessible picnic areas.
- **Perth County Trails:** Many trails in the region are designed to be accessible, including sections of the G2G Rail Trail near Monkton.
- **Seasonal Activities:** The Stratford Perth Museum provides accessible outdoor experiences, including walking trails and seasonal snowshoeing

Click here to learn more about accessibility initiatives in Perth County  
<https://www.perthcounty.ca/en/living-here/accessibility.aspx>

### Need something fun to do in your local community?

[Click here to check out all the free or low-cost and accessible events!](#)

## 2025 Annual February Fitness Challenge

Congratulations to all of the 2025 Annual February Fitness Challenge participants!

We hope this challenge prompted you to continue or start up a new fitness journey for the coming year and beyond!

## Attendance January - March 2026 Make the Days Count Winners!



**cheshire**  
independent living services

Congratulations to our  
**"Make the Days Count"**  
Draw Winners

**Emma Mac Isaac, Elgin PA**  
Winner – "Make the Days Count" PA & TA - \$500

**Philip De Jager, HR Coordinator**  
Winner – "Make the Days Count" Admin - \$100

**Next Draw:**  
April 2026  
(covers perfect attendance for the months of Jan - March)

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

*thank you!*  
For Making the Days Count

Cheshire | 2-1111 Elias Street | London, ON N5W 5L1 CA

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