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3 Year Accreditation Recipient



HAPPY NEW YEAR



WINTER SAFETY TIPS

As winter weather intensifies, please take a moment to review these critical safety points to prevent injuries:

Mind your step - Assume all wet or shaded surfaces are icy. Walk slowly, take short steps, and use handrails. Keep your hands free and out of your pockets to aid in balance.

Maintenance of Walkways and Ramps - Keep paths clear: Ensure all sidewalks, driveways, and ramps are kept clear of clutter that could create tripping hazards.

Snow and Ice Management - Prompt clearance: Commit to clearing snow and ice promptly after precipitation. Freshly fallen snow is easier to manage than compacted or frozen layers.

Focus on High-Risk Areas - Pay special attention to porches, steps, and sloped ramps, as these are the most common locations for serious falls.

Commute Safely - If driving, slow down, maintain a larger distance between cars, and ensure all snow and ice are completely cleared from your vehicle windows and roofs before driving.

Adequate Visibility and Lighting - Visibility is critical when path ways are uneven or slippery. Poor lighting can turn a mild hazard into a significant danger after dark. Verify that exterior lights near entry doors, garages, and along primary walkways are functioning. Replace burned out bulbs immediately.

Cheshire is ready for our 4th CARF Accreditation Survey!

Cheshire is proud to announce that our **4th CARF Accreditation Survey is scheduled for January 26–28, 2026.**

This milestone reflects our steadfast commitment to excellence, accountability, and continuous improvement in the services we provide.

CARF Accreditation is a voluntary, internationally recognized evaluation that assesses the quality of our programs and strengthens the outcomes we deliver. The process begins with an internal self-assessment

and culminates in an on-site survey conducted by CARF's expert reviewers, who evaluate our performance against more than 1,500 standards.

Pursuing CARF Accreditation enables Cheshire to:

- Demonstrate accountability through an independent, respected review
 - Showcase our exceptional services
 - Ensure safe, effective supports that align with global best practices
 - Receive constructive feedback that drives growth and enhances service for individuals, families, staff, and partners
- We look forward to sharing this important journey with you and keeping you informed about the results!

Strategic Planning Update

As the 2022-25 strategic planning calendar closes, we are pleased to share **key successes** in alignment with our strategic priorities:

Deliver Excellent Quality, Person-Centred Services

- **Performance Outcomes:**
 - Missed visits at historic lows, service continuity exceeding targets, **90% consumer satisfaction** (+6%), 3-year CARF accreditation.
- **Consumer Engagement:**
 - Revitalized Consumer Advisory Council, consumer newsletter, Back to Basics program, consumer portal.
- **Program Expansion & Innovation:**
 - Let's Go Home (LEGHO) Program sustainability and expansion, Central Intake expansion, hospital transition support, Assisted Living expansion
- **Training & Quality Assurance:**
 - Quality & Patient Safety training (IHI), privacy officer training, UWO student collaboration for ongoing team training, improved onboarding process

Be the Employer of Choice

- **Performance Outcomes:**
 - Staff turnover down **38%**, vacancy rates below **10%**, staff satisfaction up **8%**, exit interview ratings +21%, recommendation rate +19%.
- **Workforce Scheduling & Flexibility:**
 - 12-hour shifts in Perth, Oxford schedule realignment, on-call hour adjustments, added program hours to reduce split shifts.
- **Recruitment & Retention:**
 - Recruitment & retention plan, online screening tools, Workwolf platform, new benefit package, wage compression funding for higher increases,
- **Staff Development & Training:**
 - Mentorship programs (Pathways for Development), quarterly leadership training, Program Manager & Team Assistant role reviews, cultural humility, Equity Diversity & Anti-Racism training, Truth & Reconciliation training, conference attendance, reinvigoration of All-Staff Meetings.
- **Wellness & Engagement:**
 - Wellness Committee, stress management initiatives, staff contests, male focus groups, Cheshire Cheer program, privacy "roadshow."
- **Process & Communication Improvements:**
 - Employee Portal, Program Manager Training Manual, Cheshire Quarterly ED report, payroll fixes and improvements.

Be a Systems Change Leader

- **Partnership Building:**
 - Stronger hospital connections (Access & Flow, hospital rounds), Ontario Health Team committee participation, municipal collaboration, housing partnerships (Pond Mills, Zerín Group)
- **Advocacy & Representation:**
 - Co-chair roles and representation at local, regional and provincial tables, Board seat at Ontario Association of Independent Living Service Providers, advocacy with MPPs, hospital CEOs, OCSA membership.
- **System Innovation:**
 - Complex Resolution Table, supportive housing business plan, primary care integration discussions, collaborative education.

Strengthen Our Sustainability

- **Funding Growth & Optimization:**
 - base funding increases, one-time and expansion funds for Central Intake and the LEGHO program, rapid funding responses, 8 new Assisted Living spaces, multi-year training program funding.
- **Collaborative Models:**

- Shared finance director with DBIS, shared educator for CSS partnership, collaborative housing proposals, primary care integration test of change.
- **Infrastructure & Process Improvements:**
 - Payroll transition to GC, building assessments and improvement plans, IT integration analysis, system audits and clean-up, process documentation.
- **Capacity & Partnerships:**
 - Increased staffing to reduce burnout, post-secondary partnerships for placements and projects, target reduction requests.

Our new Strategic Planning process is well underway, with a goal of having a **new Strategic Plan ready for implementation in April 2026**. We are just wrapping up our research, and environmental scan work and will be heading into the brainstorming and planning phase. Stay tuned for more information!



Celebrating our three-year partnership with University of Western Ontario's Community Engaged Learning Program!

Over this time, we have had the privilege of collaborating with more than 40 students from the Occupational Therapy, Knowledge Synthesis, Applied Project Management, and Politics of AI courses.

Their contributions have played a vital role in advancing and enhancing Cheshire's work across several key areas, including:

- Strengthening Health & Safety training related to ergonomics and adaptive equipment
- Developing resources for staff and consumers on MAID, EDITH, burnout and social isolation
- Improving Cheshire's "Back to Basics" training for staff
- Supporting initiatives to enhance staff engagement and recruitment
- Creating a comprehensive resource manual on disabilities
- Enhancing materials for our CSS and LEGHO programs
- Improving materials and developing training videos for our Consumer Advisory Council and Consumer Portal
- Updating our Privacy Training to ensure alignment with current legislation

We are deeply grateful to the students for their professionalism, expertise, and the meaningful value they continue to bring to our organization. Their partnership has been instrumental in strengthening the services we provide to our community.

As mentioned above, Cheshire recently partnered with a group of Western students from the Ivey Business School to work together to explore the use of AI at Cheshire. The Ivey Community Consulting Project (ICCP) partners undergraduate business students partner with non-profit organizations like ours to solve business challenges.

They were asked to help us identify appropriate tasks where the use of AI can enhance and expedite workflow, and to also develop strategies that allow us to keep confidential employee and consumer information safe. Their work will help us develop policy guidelines outlining the use and misuse of AI, and they have created some very thorough training resources for us to incorporate into our Technology.

We look forward to sharing the results of this collaboration in the coming months!

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 1 to November 30, 2025**, the LEGHO Program supported **540 individuals**.

From **April 2024 to March 31, 2025**, a total of **700 individuals** received support.

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.

As the Lead Agency in London and Middlesex, Cheshire provides Centralized Intake for individuals seeking access to Community Support Services. The Central Intake Team assesses needs and connects individuals to services offered by 20 community support organizations across the region. With Central Intake, clients and caregivers can inquire about and register for multiple services with one phone call, eliminating the need to repeat their story to each organization separately. Most supports are offered on a fee-for-service basis, with subsidies available for those who qualify.

Services include:



Privacy Corner

How safe is your information? While cyber criminals are always working hard, Cheshire is working even harder to keep your information protected. Whether you're working from the office or from home, it's important that both consumer and employee information stays secure.

Here are practices we have in place to ensure safety of information:

DESK SECURITY

- Store confidential files in lockable cabinets or drawers.
- Keep office doors closed and locked when you leave.
- Never leave keys in office doors.



SCREEN & COMPUTER SECURITY



- Always lock your computer when stepping away (CTRL + ALT + DEL → Lock).
- Use a password-protected screensaver that activates after 3-5 minutes of inactivity.
- Turn off computers, monitors, and printers when not in use.

PRINTERS, FAXES & PHOTOCOPIERS

- Pick up printed documents immediately—don't leave papers in trays.
- Switch off and lock photocopiers outside working hours.
- Clear all office machines of documents regularly.



MAIL HANDLING

- Make sure that incoming/outgoing mail points are supervised or secured so letters can't be lost or stolen.

Cultural Humility Corner

Winter and early spring are full of opportunities to connect, learn, and celebrate community! From Indigenous storytelling circles to Muslim youth nights, arts exhibits, public skates, and family-friendly gatherings, there's something for everyone in London, St. Thomas, and Oxford County.



Most events are free or low-cost, making it easy for everyone to participate. Check out some upcoming highlights below:

Indigenous Community Events

- Weekly Wednesdays, 5–7 PM – Youth Drop-in & Cultural Circle, N'Amerind Friendship Centre, London – Arts, storytelling, mentoring – Free

- 2nd Saturday of each month, 1–4 PM – Family Cultural Workshop, N'Amerind – Crafting, traditional foods, drum/ceremony teachings – Free
- 3rd Friday of each month, 6–8 PM – Indigenous Film & Story Night, London Public Library / N'Amerind Partnership – Short films, discussion – Free
- Weekly Thursdays, 10 AM–12 PM – Elder Tea & Community Conversation, N'Amerind – Coffee, stories, wellness discussions – Free

Muslim Community Events

- Weekly Fridays, 7–9 PM – Youth Night / Sports & Games, London Muslim Mosque – Social, sports, mentorship, free snacks – Free
- Weekly Sundays, 1–3 PM – Quran & Cultural Learning Circle, London Muslim Mosque – Family-friendly, open to all – Free
- 1st Saturday of each month, 2–5 PM – Women's Workshop / Cooking & Community, MAC London / LMM – Affordable / donation-based
- 3rd Sunday of each month, 3–5 PM – Interfaith Open House / Dialogue, LMM / MAC London – Open to all – Free
- Seasonal / March 2026 – Ramadan Preparation & Family Workshop, LMM / MAC London – Food, learning, volunteering – Free or low-cost
- Feb 17 - March 18 - Ramadan (daily) Stratford Mosque, Free or low cost
- March 19 - Eid ul-Fitr - Stratford Mosque, Celebration, Free or donation

General Community Events

- January – April 2026 – Free & By Donation Exhibits, Arts & Music Series, TAP Centre, Museum London, and local galleries – Ongoing – Free / by donation
- Public Skates & Recreation – London, St. Thomas, Oxford County arenas – Times vary; check local rec centre calendars – Free / low-cost
- Early March (March Break) – Oxford County Library “Carnival of Creativity” – Craft, games, drop-in activities – Free / low-cost
- Saturdays (Winter 2026) – Horton Farmers' Market, St. Thomas – Indoor winter market supporting local farms & artisans – Free to attend
- Weekly Museum drop in tours - Stratford Museum - Local History & Indigenous Context, Free/Museum Admission

Accessibility in Elgin County

Elgin County is committed to accessibility through its compliance with the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#) (AODA) and its Joint Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, which outlines strategies for removing and preventing barriers in county services, programs, and facilities.

Accessible transportation options in St. Thomas and Elgin County include Parallel Transit Services, a personalized door-to-door service for those unable to use the fixed-route bus system. Both services require pre-registration and have associated fees, though financial assistance may be available.

https://www.stthomas.ca/living_here/localmotion/our_services/parallel_transit

Accessible parking in St. Thomas and Elgin County is located in designated spaces, and vehicles with a disabled person parking permit can use them. While permits grant access to these spots, permit holders are still generally required to pay standard parking fees where they apply.

Accessible parks and outdoor spaces in the St. Thomas and Elgin County area include **Pinafore Park**, which has a splash pad and accessible playground, and **St. Thomas Elevated Park**, a wheelchair-accessible park on a former railway bridge. **Waterworks Park** is also noted for its scenery, and **Greenview Aviaries Park and Zoo** has a wheelchair-accessible playground, splash pad, and picnic areas. <https://www.elgintourism.ca>

- **Port Burwell Provincial Park & Beach:** Offers trails and beach access along Lake Erie.
- **Springwater Conservation Area:** Beautiful trails and a pond, great for leisurely walks or biking.
- **Barn Quilt Trails:**

A driving tour of large painted quilt murals on barns, perfect for viewing local art from your vehicle.

Culture & History

- **Port Stanley Railway (PSTR):** Take a historic train ride (check for accessibility details).
- **St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre:** Showcases local art.
- **Elgin County Railway Museum:** Explore railway history in St. Thomas.
- **Ska-Nah-Doht Village & Museum:** A recreated Indigenous village at Longwoods Conservation Area, offering insight into local heritage.
- **Port Burwell Marine Museum & Lighthouse:** Learn about the area's maritime past.

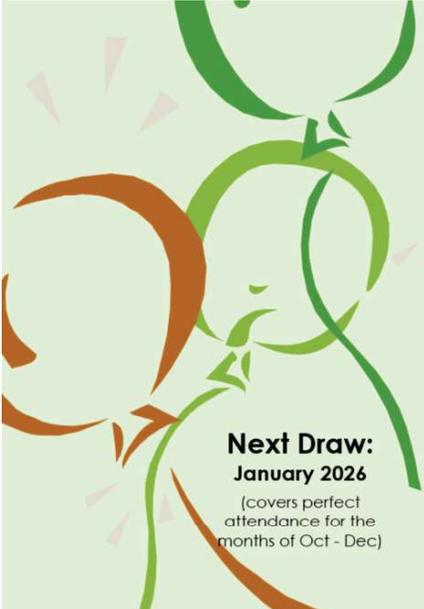
Shopping & Local Flavors

- The Booseum (Dairy Museum): Offers seasonal family fun and exhibits.
- Port Stanley Fire Hall Market: Local goods and treats in a historic building.
- The Kneaded Knook Bakery & Café: Homemade pies and coffee.

2025 Annual Pumpkin Decorating & Halloween Costume Contest

Congratulations to this year's winners! Your creativity truly shined through, making this event unforgettable. We had a blast celebrating all the fantastic submissions—thank you for bringing your A-game and spook-tacular spirit!





cheshire
independent living services

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

Stella B, London and Huron-Perth PA
Winner – "Make the Days Count" PA & TA - \$500

Chevy C, Intake Assistant
Winner – "Make the Days Count" Admin - \$100

**Next Draw:
January 2026**
(covers perfect attendance for the months of Oct - Dec)

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

thank you!
For Making
the
Days Count

Looking for a family physician in London Ontario?

The following clinics are currently accepting new patients:

Thompson Medical Centre, <https://thompsonmedical.ca/>, two locations:

TMC on Thompson Road, 130 Thompson Road, London, Ontario N5Z 2Y6, 519-601-8621, option 1

TMC on Hyde Park, 990 Gainsborough Road, London ON, N6H 5L4, 519-601-8621, option 2

Health Park Medical Clinics, Suite 300 - 140 Oxford Street East, London Ontario, 519-850-3234,

<https://healthparkclinics.com/london-new-patients/>

Nixon Walk-In Clinic, 510 Southdale Rd East, London, Ontario, 519-914-5204,
<https://www.nixonwalkin.ca/>

Hamilton Road Medical Clinic, 204 Hamilton Road, London, Ontario, (905) 595-9126,
<https://hamiltonmedclinic.com/> **Serenity Medical Centre**, 272 Oxford Street, W, London, (548) 866-0248
<https://serenitymedicalcentre.com/>

Oakridge Medical Centre, 3-666 Wonderland Rd. N, London, (519) 513-2717
<https://oakridgemedicalcentre.ca/> - this Centre has a Walk-In-clinic for general public

Southwest Medical Health Centre

All new patients must register through <https://ontario.ca/healthcareconnect>

Tillsonburg Unattached Care Clinic

[Tillsonburg Unattached Care Clinic – Oxford OHT Website](#)

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

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