



Covenant Health  
Network of Excellence in  
Seniors' Health and Wellness



# NETWORK

HELP SHAPE SENIORS CARE CAMPAIGN

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# 2015 HELP SHAPE SENIORS CARE CAMPAIGN

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The 2015 Help Shape Seniors Care Campaign generated insight and descriptions of the characteristics of care that truly honours seniors.

Between October 2, 2015 and November 30, 2015, the Network initiated a web-based Help Shape Seniors Care Campaign, asking a broad cross section of stakeholders to respond to three open-ended questions:

- Q1:** When you think of care that honours seniors, what does it look like?
- Q2:** What does it look like when care does not honour seniors?
- Q3:** When you think of care that honours seniors, what is most important?

The website had nearly 1500 visits from more than 1200 individuals and 400 individual responses.

## What we heard

Care that honours seniors delivers equitable, affordable and accessible support that:

- Respects human dignity
- Responds to individual needs
- Promotes social wellbeing



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## CARE THAT HONOURS SENIORS RESPECTS HUMAN DIGNITY.

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- Seniors are supported to have lives of value and meaning.
- Seniors are cared for, mind, body and soul.
- Seniors are treated as fully capable adults.
- Seniors are known and valued as individuals – their histories, their experiences, and their contributions to society.
- Seniors care is sensitive to differences in culture and values.
- Seniors care respects differences of sexuality, religion, culture, status, and age.

### What is care that does not honour seniors?

“The subtle and complex needs are often overlooked by members of the health care team due to time constraints, lack of understanding, and a culture that does not see the needs of seniors as a priority. Especially in hospitals, seniors are often viewed as a hassle to care for if they have impairments such as dementia, delirium or depression.”

### What is most important?

“Preservation of dignity, independence and self-determination wherever possible. Recognizing as a society that we all have the right to make bad decisions. Just because someone doesn’t agree with the decision(s) of a senior doesn’t automatically mean they lack capacity.”

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## CARE THAT HONOURS SENIORS RESPONDS TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS.

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- Seniors are informed of care options.
- Seniors have decision-making power about their care.
- Seniors’ choices are heard and respected.
- Seniors care is designed for the individual, rather than for the age or illness.
- Seniors care is flexible and responsive to changing and diverse needs.

### What is care that does not honour seniors?

“...We need to begin by asking, “What do you need?” rather than figuring out what might be available within the constraints of the health care and/or continuing care system.”

“It is structured to meet the needs of the organization and staff...driven by rules and regulations, making everyone fit into a mold...It is sterile, and stark, uncaring.”

### What is most important?

“Consider each exchange as being on their turf (no matter where the location) and we are the guest. It’s ok to agree to disagree. It is our role to empower seniors and work together when offering care.”

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## CARE THAT HONOURS SENIORS PROMOTES SOCIAL WELLBEING.

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- Seniors at all levels of care enjoy high-quality social interaction and activities and programs they enjoy.
- Senior couples stay together.
- Seniors' families are involved.
- Seniors are able to age in place, in their own homes and/or communities and remain a part of the broader community.
- Seniors' independence is supported at all levels of care.
- Seniors' caregivers are supported.

### What is care that does not honour seniors?

“Separating spouses when they are being placed in facilities because they don't both have the exact same care needs...”

“Care that does not honour seniors focuses disproportionately on the medical aspects of care and neglects activities that promote a more holistic quality of life.”

### What is most important?

“Maintaining wellness through independent activities and choices. Wellness is a balance of community involvement, health, physical activity, social activity and mental activity.”

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## CARE THAT HONOURS SENIORS IS HIGH QUALITY, EQUITABLE, AFFORDABLE AND TIMELY.

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- Seniors can access care where they need it and when they need it.
- Seniors' care is adequately resourced, sufficiently staffed and well coordinated.
- Seniors receive support from caring and knowledgeable staff.

### Care that does not honour seniors

“Seniors should not be living in hospital inpatient units or other inappropriate settings waiting until an appropriate placement becomes available.”

### Care that honours seniors

“Enough staff on rotating shifts (during staff meal times) to always be able to respond to residents' needs, to answer call bells within at least 15 minutes, and to supervise the hallways and residents.”