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“Partnering Together for Change” at Bloomington Cove

Culture Change in a dementia-specific care context:

Bloomington Cove Specialty Care is a 112 bed long-term-care (LTC) home in Whitchurch-Stouffville Ontario and one of the four PiDC Alliance Culture Change sites. Bloomington Cove is one of very few LTC settings in Ontario that focuses exclusively on care for persons living with dementia. This culture change coalition has recently re-named themselves “Partnering Together for Change”.

Like the PiDC Alliance’s other three sites, this group has a diverse membership, including front line staff and management from a broad array of departments and shifts, family partners in care, and a volunteer. The Partnering Together for Change group has used creative, arts-based approaches to include the voices of their residents throughout the project. The group has been hard at work for nearly 18 months and has just completed Discovery, the second phase of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) journey.

After having spent the better part of the year collecting data, positive stories and experiences from as many members of the Bloomington Cove community as possible, and working together to analyze this data, the Partnering Together for Change

team has recently entered the third phase of the AI process, Dream. By reflecting on the data from Discovery phase, the team is collaborating to imagine an ideal future for Bloomington Cove and create aspiration statements that reflect that future.

Notable Events at Bloomington Cove (BC)

In February 2013, Jennifer Beninato — a Partnering Together for Change team member and BC staffer — presented alongside PiDC Alliance researchers at the Ontario Long Term Care Association Education Day event in Toronto. Jennifer shared Bloomington Cove’s experience with the culture change process so far.



Jennifer Beninato, Corinne Chiasson and Jodi Rennie with data about what works best at Bloomington Cove.

What’s Happening this Winter and Spring?

- The Huron County Culture Change Coalition (CCC) is finishing the *Discovery Phase* by completing analysis of the data collected from community partners in Huron County, Ontario.
- The Yee Hong CCC is about to enter the *Discovery* phase of the Appreciative Inquiry Process. In the next few months the group will decide what data to collect, how, and from whom in the broader Yee Hong community.
- The Reaching for New Heights team at The Village of Wentworth Heights continues to work together to implement their aspiration statements.
- PiDC Alliance researchers created a webinar on [The Dawning Phase of the Appreciative Inquiry Culture Change Journey](#)

Promoting inclusion through Arts-Based activities

“ This arts-based approach is reflective of an industry-wide shift from an institutional model of care which assumes that decisions must be made for individuals living with dementia. The PiDC Alliance approach supports a social model of care, in which decisions about care and life are instead made with persons living with dementia. The Bloomington Cove team really wanted to gather the experiences of individuals with limited or no verbal ability and include their invaluable perspectives throughout their culture change process. This desire, combined with Dr. Meschino’s art background, led us to this innovative, inclusive data collection activity”. – Co-Principal Investigator, Dr. Sherry Dupuis

Facilitating culture change in dementia care that is reflective of an [authentic partnership](#) approach requires the active engagement of all members of community who are affected by dementia. The PiDC Alliance has found that persons living with dementia are often silenced and excluded from dementia care practices and their expertise is commonly overlooked within culture change efforts.

Designing for Inclusion:

When the Partnering Together for Change team decided to collect data about what works best at Bloomington Cove during the Discovery phase of their [Appreciative Inquiry](#) journey, it was important that the voices of all residents, including those with limited or no verbal ability were heard. In collaboration with team members Dr. Lisa Meschino and Jessica Luh, the group designed and implemented a series of art-based activities to gather the perspectives and experiences of residents with limited verbal ability. The team sought to find out what is working best at Bloomington Cove by asking residents “what makes you happy?” and “what would make life better for you?”

How does it work?

During activities, residents were introduced to the idea of art as a vehicle for expression. They were then asked to create an art piece focused on what they enjoy about life at Bloomington Cove or what makes them happy.

Working closely with art facilitators and using images culled from magazines and other mediums (which were chosen based on data already collected), residents experimented with a range of art materials as a way of visually representing their ideas about what makes them happy.



The results, such as the image on this page, demonstrate the sorts of activities and interactions that make Bloomington Cove residents happy. The Partnering Together for Change Team analysed the arts-based data to answer *Discovery* questions just as they did with focus group responses from staff, care partners, and other residents. All of their findings will be used in the current *Dream* phase of the Appreciative Inquiry Process and will help develop Aspiration statements for Bloomington Cove.

Directions for these and other Culture Change activities are available free of charge in the PiDC Alliance [Culture Change Living Toolkit](#).

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To join the PiDC Alliance, please contact Dr. Sacha Geer, sgeer@uwaterloo.ca, 519-888-4568 ext 35280