

# SAFE PLACES FOR AGING AND CARE

*July 2023 Research Bulletin*



THE GOAL OF THE SAFE PLACES PROJECT IS TO LOOK AT HOW TO PREVENT VIOLENCE IN LONG-TERM CARE. WE ALSO WANT TO PROMOTE THE SAFETY OF EVERYONE LIVING, WORKING, OR VISITING LONG-TERM CARE. OUR RESEARCH TEAM IS KEEN TO LEARN FROM STAFF, RESIDENTS LIVING IN LONG-TERM CARE, AND FAMILY MEMBERS.

## HOW WAS THE RESEARCH CONDUCTED?

Since 2021, the research team has been collecting information in different ways in Manitoba and Nova Scotia. Recently, the research team collaborated with a Personal Care Home to see what promising practices for violence prevention look like. In this part of the research, the team spent two weeks in a Personal Care Home (June 19th-30th). The research team took notes about what was happening in the common areas. They also spoke with staff and residents about their experiences in the Personal Care Home. As a team, we learned a lot from what we saw and heard.



## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED FROM OUR TIME OBSERVING IN LONG-TERM CARE?

- We saw various strategies for preventing violent situations in use including the use of physical touch and affection, getting down to eye-level and speaking directly to residents, re-directing residents to another area or topic, and giving residents time and space when they say no.
- We saw different staff use the same approaches with individuals who required more care and attentiveness to agitation and/or wandering (e.g., affection, enthusiasm, and physical touch).
- A range of recreational activities throughout the day and in the evening were central to preventing situations that could potentially cause violence.
- Some residents expressed a desire for activities that better suited their diverse cognitive and physical abilities as well as their identities (e.g., as a man or woman). Supporting residents' choice and autonomy may reduce conflict and violence.
- During our observations, one-to-one support for a wandering resident was effective in reducing the risk of violent encounters from the resident wandering into another resident's room. Engaging this resident involved tremendous skill, creativity and energy over the course of a shift. Sustaining one-to-one support requires financial and human resources.
- Having access to the courtyard appeared to have a calming influence for some residents.
- Familiarity with other residents and staff seemed to promote respect for others and a sense of home.
- We noticed that agency staff sometimes presented challenges such as calling residents by the wrong name, not asking for more information about and from the resident when providing support, not being aware of how to do a transfer without causing pain, not delivering medication at the appropriate time, and rushing feeding or other care. In general, it appeared challenging for agency staff to develop trusting relationships with other staff, get to know the residents and their routines, and use relational/interpersonal techniques all of which are central to preventing violence.

## WHAT WILL WE DO NEXT?

We will continue to recruit staff and family members to get a more complete picture of violence prevention in Personal Care Homes. To learn more about participating in an interview, you can email [safeplaces@brandonu.ca](mailto:safeplaces@brandonu.ca) with any questions you have. We plan to conduct interviews throughout the month of August. We also look forward to presenting more research findings to all those involved in the fall of 2023.