

## South East LHIN launches 24/7 access and response to Behavioural Support Services

*Caregivers and health service providers can now get help for seniors with behavioural issues through Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) Connect.*

BSO Connect will provide a centralized access number on a 24/7 basis to Behavioural Support Services (BSS) in the South East. Calls from long-term care (LTC) will be directed to the appropriate BSS office where they will be triaged and staff deployed dependent on the service required. A “Who to Call” algorithm has been developed to guide LTC staff in their decision making. This will be the first BSO 24/7 access and response to services launched in Ontario.

Developed as part of an integrated model to improve access to community services, BSO Connect is based on a philosophy that services are actually engaged, or ‘pulled towards’ the client.

This is a significant change from providing a telephone number to a client who would then be responsible to engage a particular service.

“Stirling Manor has utilized BSO for an extended period of time (April 2012) and has found the service to be a valuable resource. Our staff was able to collaborate with the BSO staff and identify triggers for an aggressive resident in our care. The BSO staff was professional and able to provide one on one care. Stirling Manor has greatly benefited from this new resource and we feel with the 24/7 coverage and access LTC homes will be better served.” Kelly Slawter, Director of Nursing – Stirling Manor

While a single contact approach is expected to ease access and navigation, the BSO Community Model adopted a ‘no wrong door’ philosophy so that referrals for the BSO population can come through a number of channels. BSO Connect goes beyond its centralized intake role with active referrals and linkages, relying on well trained mobile teams available 24/7 being delivered through Providence Care and creating a “warm” connection for clients.

The expected outcomes are that clients and their caregivers will have a single point of entry and active referral to community support services. BSO Connect will allow for improved accessibility, integration and coordination with a focus on reducing duplication within the system.

Providence Care’s Allen Prowse, Vice President Quality, Partnerships & Community Programs, says “BSO Connect is about immediate access to an expert geriatric psychiatry nurse, a much needed resource for long-term care homes in our region.”

Improved collaboration and coordination will lead to improved outcomes for clients and their caregivers, and reduce Emergency Department visits or hospitalizations and early admission to LTC.

**Note:** *Individuals with behavioural issues as defined by the BSO Framework are: Older people with cognitive impairments due to mental health problems, addictions, dementia, or other neurological conditions often exhibit responsive or challenging behaviours such as aggression, wandering, physical resistance and agitation.*

**Background:** *First announced by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) in August 2011, Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) makes a bold prediction: by working together we can reinvent the system of care for seniors across Ontario, their families and caregivers who live and cope with responsive behaviours associated with dementia, mental illness, addictions and other neurological conditions.*

*To this end, BSO is a comprehensive system redesign that breaks down barriers, encourages collaborative work, shares knowledge and fosters partnerships among local, regional and provincial agencies. The result is a cultural transformation that has enabled new ways of thinking, acting and behaving; central to which, is a system that ensures people are treated with dignity and respect, in an environment that supports safety for all based on high quality, evidence-based care and practices.*

*A \$40M provincial Behavioural Supports Ontario investment has allowed local health service providers to hire new staff-nurses, personal support workers and other health care professionals and train them in the specialized skills necessary to provide quality care to these residents/clients.*

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