

# Transforming medication reconciliation in long-term care with digital health solutions

## Award winning model implemented at peopleCare Communities

How do you free up hundreds of hours of resident care time in long-term care (LTC), improve medication reconciliation by 43 per cent, reduce the delay in time for a resident to get their first dose of a new medication by eight hours and reduce a backlog of weekend hospital beds tied up by long-term care residents awaiting re-admission? This is all happening through a revolutionary clinical pharmacy model at peopleCare Communities in south west Ontario (SWO), empowered by digital health solutions.



Pictured above is peopleCare's Jenn Killing, who led the team in piloting the clinical pharmacy model in long-term care, which was awarded a Quality Improvement Innovation Award from the Ontario Long Term Care Association.

In the current model, when a LTC resident returns following a hospital stay and has been prescribed new medications, there is a major bottleneck.

"Across the province, it happens in the same way: residents have to wait for the next day's delivery of meds to get their first new dose," explains Jenn Killing, peopleCare's Vice-President of Quality and Innovation. "If it's the weekend that means we can't admit the resident until Monday. So they're without a drug they need - imagine the health implications of that - or they're tying up a hospital bed for the weekend simply because of this medication delay. We knew we had to improve this."

peopleCare was the first LTC home in the province to implement eConnect, a single-sign on solution that links provincial electronic health record (EHR) data available through the cSWO Regional Clinical Viewer, ClinicalConnect™ to the PointClickCare system, which is used in 95 per cent of LTC homes. Through a partnership with Hogan Pharmacy, the team at peopleCare was able to install secure medication dispensers at its homes in SWO - the same pharmacy systems that hospitals employ. On-call pharmacists are able to lead the medication reconciliation process now through the

tele-pharmacy component of the model, and the entire care team is able to access the resident's EHR and medication lists through the provincial Digital Health Drug Repository (DHDR) viewable through ClinicalConnect's Pharmacy module. peopleCare can now admit residents at any time, as the medication reconciliation can be performed efficiently and accurately through the clinical model.

**"The effects of working together to implement the clinical pharmacy model in long-term care are enormous," says Jenn. "We're able to free up hundreds of hours of staff time back to resident care because of the clinical pharmacy model. This is all because the team has the tools and information at their fingertips."**

Research shows that having the on-call pharmacists leading the medication reconciliation is also supporting quality decision-making, resulting in fewer residents taking unnecessary medications - which is safer and more cost-effective.

"In the past, without an electronic health record, we couldn't loop the pharmacy team together with nursing in real-time," says Jenn. "Now we can loop in a multi-disciplinary team to support the care of residents. All long-term care residents in Ontario would benefit significantly from this solution - better pharmacy care and more nursing hours. And the best part is that the tools are there to further expand this solution."

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## Chatham ophthalmology office realizes efficiencies with access to digital records

### Viewer provides quick access to necessary tests

The office of a Chatham ophthalmology specialist is reducing the number of duplicate tests after being introduced to the cSWO Program's Regional Clinical Viewer, ClinicalConnect™ by the local Change Management and Adoption Delivery Partner (CM&A DP) TransForm Shared Service Organization (TransForm) site coordinator Tricia Boersma.

"We are able to obtain CT scans, MRIs, and blood work," writes one of the ophthalmology assistants in the office of Dr. Robert MacMahon in cSWO's user survey to provide feedback on accessing Electronic Health Records (EHRs) viewable through ClinicalConnect.

ClinicalConnect "should lower the need and use of repeat scans and tests," wrote the assistant who strongly feels the viewer will aid in improving patient care.

Dr. MacMahon's ophthalmology practice is among the 4,670 specialists authorized to use ClinicalConnect and among the 45,918 health care professionals in south west Ontario who access the viewer regularly to inform their patient care decisions.

## Additional data from Independent Health Facilities now viewable

Diagnostic imaging data (reports and images) from various Independent Health Facilities (IHF) can now be viewed in the cSWO Regional Clinical Viewer, ClinicalConnect™, by users at organizations authorized to access the Province's Diagnostic Imaging (DI) Common Service. This adds to the DI data already available in ClinicalConnect from acute care hospitals in south west Ontario, plus many others across the Province that contribute such data to the DI Common Service.

Data from True North Imaging is one IHF that's long been available (via ClinicalConnect's integration with the DI Common Service), and at the time of writing, data from 14 additional IHFs is also accessible. eHealth Ontario expects that data from additional IHFs in Ontario will soon be viewable in south west Ontario's regional clinical viewer. For a current list of data contributors to DI Common Service, please click [here](#) and the information can be found under the *Features* section.

Access to the DI Common Service and other provincial repositories are widely available to view through ClinicalConnect when approved health service providers meet additional provincial requirements. To learn more, contact your local [cSWO Change Management and Adoption Delivery Partner](#).

## Electronic health records enable better medication management says pharmacist

The General Internal Medicine Rapid Assessment Clinic (GIMRAC), located at the McMaster University Medical Centre (MUMC), houses various medical specialists under one roof to encourage interaction and coordinated care. The clinic provides care for patients who require timely follow-up to an Emergency Department visit. Alice Poulouse, the pharmacist of the clinic, is an integral member of the team who is committed to advancing patient-centred care. She consults with patients who have complex medical conditions, answers physicians' questions, makes medication recommendations and monitors the effectiveness of patients' drug therapy.

Alice has found the cSWO Regional Clinical Viewer, ClinicalConnect™, to be an integral tool in reducing the amount of time she spends contacting other clinicians for test results, and validating information provided to her by patients.

"ClinicalConnect has helped me tremendously in preparing for the clinic day. Accessing the laboratory data and trending the data helps me in monitoring drug therapy. Previous consult notes from other facilities have been helpful in understanding drug therapy changes. The availability of the pharmacy home meds module, specifically the 7 years of data available, helps me understand past medication history and medications that have been tried," said Alice.

Alice has benefitted from using the Home Meds information from the Digital Health Drug Repository (DHDR), including data from Ontario Drug Benefit program, the Narcotic Monitoring System and, most recently, OHIP +.

If you want to learn more about how Alice has benefitted from ClinicalConnect, contact Wanda Hemsworth, Benefits Realization lead, cSWO Change Management and Adoption Delivery Partner in the HNHB LHIN, HITS eHealth Office: [hemsworth@hpsc.ca](mailto:hemsworth@hpsc.ca).

The cSWO Program is a partnership of four change management and adoption delivery partners (TransForm SSO, South West Region, eHealth Centre of Excellence and HITS eHealth Office), the ClinicalConnect solution delivery partner (Hamilton Health Sciences), and program manager (London Health Sciences Centre). The regional digital health program is funded by eHealth Ontario as part of the ConnectingOntario initiative.

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# Enriching patient care with digital health solutions

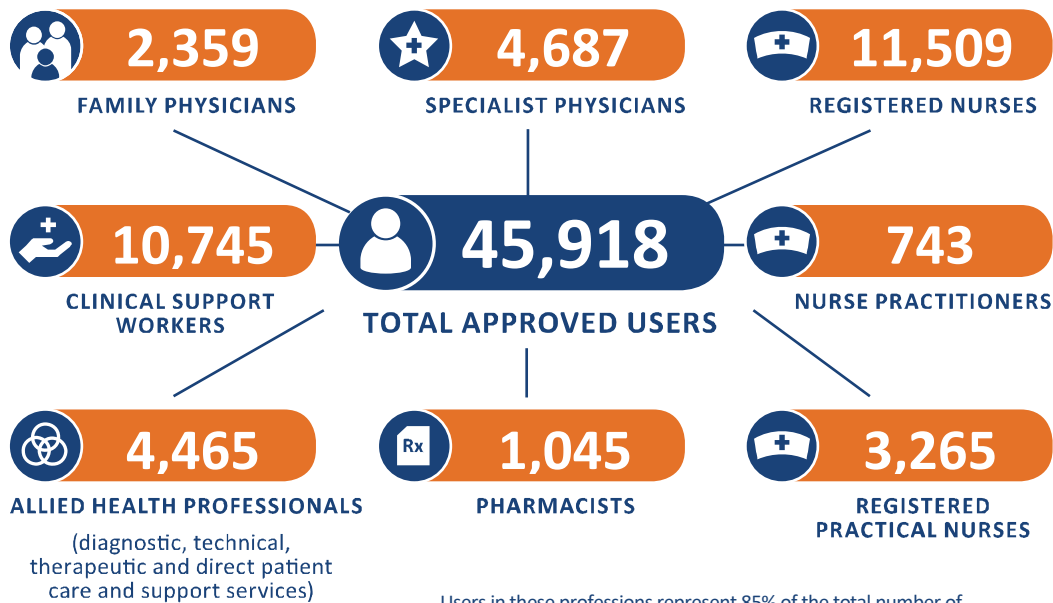
Important real-time patient care information and data for 3.6 million south west Ontario residents is available online for approved health care professionals. The electronic health record system is in place from Windsor to Tobermory to Guelph and through Niagara Falls. Electronic health records provide quick and easy access to the information that health care professionals need to make proactive decisions and support positive patient experiences. Patient information that is available includes records from hospitals, cancer care centres, and home and community care services.

- ✓ Electronic health records make patient information – from lab reports and medication history to x-rays – available in one place for approved health care professionals.
- ✓ Electronic health records are safe, secure and designed to protect patients' privacy.
- ✓ Access to electronic health records helps reduce medication errors and the need to repeat lab and diagnostic tests.
- ✓ Providing physicians and other health care professionals with fast and secure access to their patients' information helps them make informed decisions to enhance the delivery of care.

Electronic health records can be viewed using the secure, web-based portal, ClinicalConnect™, which supports care in health care organizations:



Electronic health records, viewed through ClinicalConnect, are being used by approved health care providers:



Users in these professions represent 85% of the total number of approved users, working in both acute care and community care organizations.  
All information is of April 30, 2019.

## LATEST DIGITAL HEALTH NEWS

A recent cSWO Program analysis and research case has highlighted how, through the use of electronic health records (EHRs), primary care practitioners provide more informed, thorough and safe care to patients with language barriers.  
[Read the case here.](#)