



September 20th, 2016

Dr. Kathy McGilton
Senior Scientist, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute
University Health Network
130 Dunn Avenue
Toronto, ON M6K 2R7

Dear Dr. McGilton:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the members of the Ontario Dementia Advisory Group (ODAG), to share our support for your proposed **CIHR – Operating Grant** research project: **Building Capacity to Promote Social Inclusion for Persons with Dementia Living in Long-Term Care Communities.**

As you know, ODAG is a group of Ontarians living with dementia. Our mandate is to influence policies, practices and people to ensure that we, people living with dementia, are included in making decisions that affect our lives.

We firmly believe that all persons with dementia, regardless of age, stage, or place of residence, have a fundamental right to help define and feel included in their communities. In Ontario, where a large percentage of people living in long-term care communities have dementia, it is especially important to ensure that the physical and social environments in these communities promote the inclusion and engagement of persons with dementia in the community's everyday life. Furthermore, according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), an international treaty, Article 19 states that access to community support to live and remain in the community is our right as people with disabilities. Also, Article 3 specifically references the right for participation, inclusion and opportunity on an equal basis of non-disabled people.

We are encouraged to see that your proposed research is community-driven and will be informed by the needs and priorities of all persons – residents, staff, and family members – who are part of the everyday life in long-term care communities. We are also glad to see that part of your work includes offering education about dementia to persons in long-term care communities. This will certainly increase awareness about the experiences of persons with dementia among community members and help to change attitudes about persons with dementia in the community.

Currently, ODAG is in the early stages of spearheading an initiative to help build a Dementia-Friendly Ontario, with support from other stakeholder and decision-maker groups, such as the Alzheimer Society of Ontario and the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Thus, we strongly support the objectives of the research proposed by you and your team and believe that this work will make an important contribution to furthering our vision for a Dementia-Friendly Ontario.

nothing about US without US

The members of ODAG are pleased to work with you and your team and to reach out to Ontarians with dementia, living in long-term care communities, their co-residents, and their family members to help create capacity to build Dementia-Friendly long-term care communities.

This proposed project will surely have a substantial impact on improving the quality of life of Ontarians with dementia living in long-term care communities. We welcome the opportunity to share our experiences and perspectives with you and your team and will be pleased to collaborate in and advise on different aspects of your research.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Wighton". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mary Beth Wighton
Chairperson - Ontario Dementia Advisory Group (ODAG)
www.odag.ca