

MEMO

To: All Ongwanada Staff

From: Lorrie Heffernan

Date: January 3, 2025.

Re: Important Updates and Clarifications for 2025

Good afternoon,

Happy New Year! 2024 is behind us, and we are hopeful that 2025 will be a year of stabilization, development, and positive outcomes for us all.

As we start the new year, I want to provide information on the latest developments and clarify a past initiative.

Earlier this week, the staff at our Cassidy Street Home were notified that they will also be reassigned to the community homes. This reassignment and past reassignment with Community Participation Supports Program staff ensures we have enough direct care staff to provide the support each individual needs and deserves during this time of extreme staff shortages. This reassignment, unlike the first with CPS programs, will be a permanent transfer as we work through discussion with Community Living Kingston and District and our MCCSS Program Supervisors to plan around for the future needs of the individuals who reside at the Cassidy Street Home and the future of the program itself. An external staffing group will be supporting this home while we plan for future services. More information will be shared as we develop a plan and receive appropriate approvals.

I also want to take this opportunity to clarify the intent and eligibility of the enhanced stat pay during the holidays. While we recognize that all staff at Ongwanada have worked hard, been impacted by the stress of the times, and been dedicated to ensuring this organization continues to provide the services and supports which we are responsible for delivering this enhanced pay in the form of a stat pay was directed at those staff who:

- 1 – work directly with the individuals we support
- 2 – would require replacing if they were not able to come to work (i.e., due to illness or vacation).
- 3 – would be forced to stay if their replacement did not come to work.

While every job is important, it is the direct care staff who are here during the holiday season and are responsible for ensuring the individuals we support have a good holiday. In recognition of this and to ensure staff coverage over the holiday season, we put this enhancement in place. We are continuing to ramp up our hiring. We are also looking at our staffing models and other organization efficiency in order to get past the current situation and staff shortage.

This past year has seen many changes as we work to modernize our approaches and service offerings. We will continue to provide updates on operational changes, assignments, and the general vision and direction of the organization through these memos. We will look at adding additional methods to ensure we are listening, communicating, and keeping everyone informed of the progress.

Happy New Year. I wish our staff, your families, the individuals we support, and their families all the best for 2025.

Sincerely,

Lorrie Heffernan
Chief Administrative Officer