



AGE congratulates  
**Columbia Forest Long Term Care Home**

**The resident is not giving you a hard time,  
the resident is having a hard time.**



The comment (*above*) was one of the first things that Kathy Grieco, BSO Lead and in-house GPA Certified Coach at Columbia Forest, mentioned in the home's award submission. "The philosophy at our home is much the same as GPA and has been strongly influenced by GPA education. We have been doing GPA since 2010. For the first two years, our PRC came in to do it. Now we have three in-house GPA Certified Coaches," says Kathy. In the GPA way, a person-centred approach to care rules here. Upon admission, each resident is carefully assessed by nursing and recreation staff in order to better understand their life history, personal preferences for care and special interests.

**GOOD THINGS HAPPEN WHEN  
CARE PHILOSOPHIES  
CORRESPOND**

The home's approach to GPA is multidisciplinary. "Originally, we were only training PSWs in GPA, but we have since seen the need for training registered staff, dietary, housekeeping, etc.," Kathy says. GPA philosophy and Revera's own in-house 'Dementia and Behaviour Care Guidelines' blend well. Both

embrace a care approach which requires knowing the person behind the disease; knowledge of the disease and its progression; understanding that responsive behaviours have meaning; behaviour screening and monitoring; comprehensive care as well as pain assessments; recognition of delirium; knowledge of non-pharmaceutical interventions; and knowing when to refer a resident to specialists.

**MOST NEW STAFF ARRIVE  
ALREADY EDUCATED IN GPA**

New PSWs and RNs coming into positions at the home are often already trained in GPA through their college and university studies. They are confident in the daily care of residents who are struggling with responsive behaviours. In their second year, these staff receive an in-house GPA Recharged (GPA-R) session to refresh their knowledge and skills.

**A STORY ABOUT CONFIDENCE**

Boosting confidence is GPA's main goal. Kathy relayed a wonderful story that illustrates the growth of confidence. "A Food Service employee approached me one day to tell me she'd picked up a shift on the Special Care Unit but was afraid of the residents, especially when alone with them. We immediately scheduled her into a GPA session. A few weeks later, she came back to tell me how helpful the session was. One thing that really stuck with her was how



**2016 | 2017 AWARD RECIPIENT  
GPA LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE  
IN PERSON-CENTRED CARE**

important it is to understand a resident's needs. She had always been nervous in the servery when residents approached her or came up behind her. Suddenly, the 'light' went on. After GPA training, she understood that a resident might come in simply because they were hungry or thirsty. She just needed to offer them something to eat or drink." The woman has since taken a full time line on the Special Care Unit and is much more comfortable interacting with residents.



**About REVERA | Columbia  
Forest Long Term  
Care Home**

Columbia Forest in Waterloo, Ontario is home to 156 residents who are cared for by 130 staff and 40 volunteers. Almost 80% of the residents have some type of dementia, with responsive behaviours. [Learn more](#) about the team at Columbia Forest.