



**Meals on Wheels and More  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN  
2012 – 2013**

## About Meals on Wheels and More

North York Central Meals on Wheels Inc. was founded in 1969 by members of Newtonbrook and Forest Grove United Churches. The actual meal delivery grew from 3-5 meals a week, prepared in Newtonbrook United Church's basement.

Over the years, supported by government funding, the services offered by this small agency increased and professionalized. Active partnerships with the community, funders, corporate sponsors, and other service agencies allowed us to implement new and innovative ways of serving the clients in our area.

Community volunteers started our service. They have supported the agency through many changes, and continue to be the element that makes our service delivery possible. We value the great work they do so willingly.

In 2007 the Board of Directors, recognizing the limitations facing a small independent organization, began a move to integrate with The Don Mills Foundation for Seniors. This integration took effect on April 1st, 2009. We are proud to say that the benefits to staff of working with a larger organization are undeniable and our clients are receiving the same careful attention, support, and high-quality service they have come to expect.

We **deliver low-cost nutritious meals** 7-days-a-week. Delicious hot meals. Convenient frozen options. Boxes of fresh fruit and vegetables. Friendly, trained volunteers will bring the comfort of a balanced meal straight to your door.

We offer an economical daily **transportation service** for clients who have medical appointments or need help getting to social events, shopping, etc.

We also offer **counselling and assistance** for clients (and their families) who need help maintaining their independence in the community. Our social worker provides information, coordinates community services and offers crisis intervention when needed. Caregiver support groups are also held monthly in conjunction with North York Seniors Centre.

## Introduction

For over 40 years, Meals on Wheels and More has been providing critical services to frail seniors and vulnerable adults in North York. Our services help people stay independent so they can continue to live in their own home.

Meals on Wheels and More values the input of community members and health-care professionals to help inform our planning and decision-making process. Our community engagement activities will enhance our capacity to address health priorities in our community and will reflect the ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of the community.

As part of the Local Health Integration Network, we are pleased to share our community engagement plan for 2012-2013 to further our accountability and transparency with stakeholders in our community.

This document is not intended to identify all community engagement plans or activities that will be carried out during this time period and sub-engagement plans may be developed in-year to assist with meeting the engagement plan objectives.

## What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement refers to the methods by which health care organizations interact, share and gather information from and with their stakeholders.

The purpose of community engagement is to:

Inform	Educate	Consult	Involve	Empower
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## Community Engagement Areas of Focus

Meals on Wheels and More is committed to improving the health care system and has identified four key areas of focus for community engagement in 2012 – 2013 to involve stakeholders in both health care or health service planning *and* decision-making:

- Sharing information
- Enhancing stakeholder engagement
- Collaborating with health partners and gatekeepers
- Outreach and referral generation

Meals on Wheels and More will report back on key findings from undertaking the range of engagement activities outlined in this plan, and will also consult with health service

providers and community members through its networks on the progress in implementing the plan over the course of the year.

## **FOCUS 1: SHARING INFORMATION**

Meals on Wheels and More is already working to **educate** and **inform** seniors and adults with disabilities, caregivers, and health service providers about emergency and safety issues that impact people as they grow older in order to prevent or reduce health complications. Meals on Wheels will engage with key stakeholders in the following ways:

- **Information sharing** via letter campaigns providing emergency and safety information. This information is also posted on the agency website and social media.
- **Direct engagement** via interaction with meal delivery volunteers and staff.

## **FOCUS 2: ENHANCING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Meals on Wheels and More will continue to **involve** and **consult** with our clients and volunteers in decision-making and planning via:

- **Satisfaction survey** with clients to ensure that all health programs and services are client-focused and with volunteers to ensure retention and ongoing improvements to the program.
- **Program Advisory Committee** that will help guide collaborative planning and decision making.
- **Information sharing** that takes place through web and email updates, printed materials (newsletters) and social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter)
- **Training with volunteers** to raise awareness and provide opportunities for two-way information sharing.

## **FOCUS 3: COLLABORATING WITH HEALTH PARTNERS AND GATEKEEPERS**

Meals on Wheels and More will **consult** and **collaborate** with current and new partners to gain feedback and support with problem solving.\* Shared knowledge of programs

and services means increased referrals and clients are able to transition seamlessly amongst different organizations. Trends, patterns, best practices in health care can also be shared. The following community engagement tools will be used:

- **Information sharing** will take place through web and email updates, printed materials (fact sheets, progress reports, newsletters), press releases and social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter)
- **Meetings** with organized groups, **fairs and events**, and other outreach methods will raise awareness and provide opportunities for two-way information sharing with partners.

\*These include (but are not limited to): City of Toronto, North York Seniors Centre, North York Elder Abuse Network, Community Care Resource (CCR) database, Doorways to Care, Better Living Health and Community Services, CCAC, CSS Network, Central LHIN.

## **FOCUS 4: OUTREACH AND REFERRAL GENERATION**

Meals on Wheels and More has a lot to offer seniors and adults living with disabilities. We will **educate** and **inform** residents in North York and broader communities to ensure that residents within – and outside of - our catchment area are aware of our programs and services. This is especially important as it's often caregivers/family members who refer clients to Meals on Wheels and More.

- **Information sharing** will take place through website updates, printed materials (newsletters, brochures, advertisements), press releases and social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter).
- **Fairs, events, tours, volunteer orientation sessions** and other outreach methods will raise awareness and provide opportunities for two-way information sharing with a range of stakeholders.

### **Opportunities to Participate**

In an ongoing effort to keep our communities informed, Meals on Wheels and More will use its website ([www.mealsonwheelsandmore.ca](http://www.mealsonwheelsandmore.ca)) for regular posting of news, events and information of interest to our stakeholders, including key findings from community engagement activities.

Meals on Wheels and More also uses social media to inform, educate, and involve its stakeholders in an ongoing fashion:

- 1 Facebook fan page: <http://www.facebook.com/MyMealsOnWheels>
- 1 Twitter account: <https://twitter.com/#!/MyMealsOnWheels>

## Evaluation of Annual Engagement Plan 2012 – 2013

Meals on Wheels and More will undertake an annual evaluation of the community engagement plan to ensure that the key outcomes are being achieved. The community engagement plan will be adapted as required.

Meals on Wheels and More will report regularly to stakeholders on key findings generated from all community engagement activities – over the course of the year via online and print updates. This information may also be used to inform items brought forward to the Don Mills Foundation for Seniors' Board of Directors.

Meals on Wheels and More's partners, which are comprised of members from across our health service providers and other key experts, represent another important form of engagement and will be consulted regularly for feedback and advice.

Participants in the community engagement sessions will have the opportunity to evaluate their participation as well as ask questions and offer suggestions to help improve Meals on Wheels and More's approach to community engagement.

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