



# BSO Provincial Pulse

At the Heart of System Transformation

Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) Provincial Newsletter  
Issue 16- Fall 2019



## Welcome

Welcome to our late Fall 2019 issue of the BSO Provincial Pulse. Thanksgiving has come and gone and though reminiscing about past events has many positive effects, we want to touch on the concept of the joy that can come from anticipation. We challenge you to engage in looking forward to something. It could be the fast approaching holiday season, a movie or album release date, an upcoming episode of a beloved series, the final chapter of a real page-turner of a novel, dinner or coffee with a cherished friend, anything of your choosing! As you visualize the experience in advance, connect with the feelings of excitement that surface at the prospects of your chosen activity. Research suggests the enjoyment that individuals gain from anticipation may improve individual's wellbeing and be an important component of life satisfaction. We hope you feel energized by planning your activities in the days ahead.

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## BSO's wool felt Ball coasters SO easy...



We hope you can carve out some time to craft which boosts your creativity and strengthens the connectivity between the brain's left and right hemispheres, in doing so boosting psychological resilience and productivity.

### Materials:

#### 1) Wool Felt Balls

- 1 cm in size or any size you like
- multicoloured or whatever combination of colours you like best
- 90-100 balls per coaster depending on the size

#### 2) Cork coasters

#### 3) Permanent Craft Adhesive

### Steps:

1. Begin by gluing one felt ball to the center of your coaster.
2. You can use a wood skewer to transfer the glue or apply it directly onto the cork.
3. To keep the felt balls as tight as possible, you'll want to stop and allow the glue to dry every so often.
4. Continue working all the way around until your coaster is completely covered.
5. Allow glue to dry thoroughly.

Source: <https://inspiredbycharm.com/diy-wool-felt-ball-coasters/>

## Turn the Volume Down! Dementia & Noise

The noise in our home was always on the louder side. Just before Mary Beth was diagnosed with probable frontotemporal dementia, she started to complain about constant ringing in her ears. Finally, Mary Beth was referred to an Ear, Nose and Throat specialist who diagnosed her with tinnitus. When a person has tinnitus, it means that he or she perceives a ringing noise in the ears. The problem impacts approximately 15 % to 20 % of people in the world. For reasons that are not yet medically understood, the brain receives signals, either from inside the brain or from within the ear, that cause the sensation of hearing a sound.



Mary Beth with new earbuds.

Mary Beth finds that it is most noticeable when she is in a quiet environment, such as in her bed trying to sleep. Mary Beth describes this constant sound as “high-pitch ringing” and it affects both of her ears. Others describe the noise as roaring, rushing, hissing or beeping and can affect one or both ears.

Most cases of tinnitus cannot be cured and can significantly affect quality of life. Mary Beth also experiences fatigue, problems concentrating and trouble sleeping. As a result, she may become irritated with the constant ringing which can result in personal expressions.

There are several different strategies to help live with tinnitus that focus on noise suppression: white noise suppression; hearing aids; masking devices and tinnitus retraining. (See the following link for more details on tinnitus retraining: <https://www.chs.ca/tinnitus-retraining-therapy>)

Mary Beth’s home remedies include:

- ✓ Cover up the noise: in a quiet room, a fan – which is white noise, helps mask the noise from tinnitus.
- ✓ Wear a hood or a toque to cover the ears.
- ✓ Wear custom earbuds to allow for better focus on the sound (e.g. audio book, music) and not the ringing.
- ✓ Listen to Spotify: It has many “Tinnitus Aides” soundtracks comprised of water noises including rain and waves (See the following link <https://open.spotify.com/artist/52O2TNxylxwGKkAj6wyZTH>)
- ✓ Always try to have some type of noise to divert attention from the ringing.

Unfortunately, our story of dementia and noise does not end with tinnitus. In addition to the constant ringing in Mary Beth’s ears, she is super sensitive to loud pitch noises; to the point that it literally causes her pain. Types of noises include: people talking loudly, restaurants, machinery, washing machines, etc. At this point, Mary Beth started to complain about our otherwise ordinary environmental sounds. “Turn down the T.V. volume!” she would demand. And Dawn would answer, “I haven’t turned it up. It’s at its usual volume.” In frustration, Mary Beth would leave the room covering her ears with Dawn wondering what the real issue was.

## Turn the Volume Down! Dementia & Noise - *continued*



Mary Beth meeting with a hearing instrument specialist.

At every doctor's appointment, and there were a lot of them, Mary Beth would bring up that she has become unusually sensitive to noise; to the point that it hurts her ears. The doctor would dutifully write it down, but it would go no further.

Over the last few years, as we spoke to more people, we became aware that many people living with dementia complain about noise and how it hurts their ears. It was in 2016, when Mary Beth was attending a conference via Zoom Technology, when she heard Agnes Houston speak about "Dementia and Senses."

Agnes, a dementia advocate from Scotland, specializes on this topic and has travelled around the world educating people. Agnes spoke about hyperacusis. It was then Mary Beth had an "a-ha" moment as she realized that in addition to tinnitus, she also has hyperacusis.

(See the following link to find: "Talking Sense" by Agnes Houston at <https://www.dementiacentre.com/images/Talking-sense.pdf> pg. 25).

An assessment was scheduled with a Hearing Instrument Specialist (HIS). During Mary Beth's hearing test, Dawn was able to sit outside the audiology sound booth and observe. Dawn could see the physical pain that some noise levels were causing Mary Beth. At the end of the test, the HIS explained to us that normal/comfortable hearing for most of us is 60 decibels. For Mary Beth, her range of comfort is 30 decibels. Therefore, for Mary Beth, what is considered a normal conversation noise level is three times louder than her comfortable noise level.

There are many kinds of earplugs that are designed for the activity you are doing. Dawn worked with the HIS to equip Mary Beth with three special types of earplugs created from custom-made earmolds.

**Musician earplugs:** Reduce sound levels evenly so that music and speech are clear and natural, not muffled. Reduces risk of hearing damage for many noisy venues, such as parades, athletic events and restaurants. It filters out the background noise allowing for better focus of sound. E.g. Mary Beth can comfortably engage at a restaurant without being distracted by surroundings.

**Sleep earplugs:** Unfortunately, due to having tinnitus, using these type of earplugs makes sound louder. Mary Beth does not use them.

**Earbuds:** Mary Beth uses custom earbuds for listening and participating in online meetings, cell phone use, for music and audiobooks.

Looking back, when we reflect on how things might be improved; should they be: started, stopped or continued. We suggest to **START** completing hearing assessments upon receiving a diagnosis of dementia, including receiving education on dementia and hearing. **STOP** normalizing certain symptoms with a diagnosis of dementia as being common. **CONTINUE** to work for solutions. Mary Beth's next step is to work with an HIS to experiment with different hearing aids to see if they can help with her tinnitus and hyperacusis.

Stay tuned!



## Ontario's Best Practice Exchange BSO Acute Care Collaborative

In November 2019, the BSO Provincial Coordinating Office & brainXchange launched the new BSO Acute Care Collaborative as part of the Ontario Best Practice Exchange.

### **Purpose of the BSO Acute Care Collaborative:**

To bring together health care professionals, leaders and individuals with lived experience in order to promote and spread best/emerging practices in providing person and family-centred behavioural supports within acute care/hospitals.

### **Next Steps:**

Collaborative members recently engaged in a ranking exercise to weigh and prioritize possible Acute Care collaborative projects.

The first priority/project has surfaced as a **Needs Assessment** leading to advocacy for resources and system change.

Some of the questions that will be explored may include:

- What behavioural supports currently exist in Acute Care?
- Who are these behavioural supports serving?
- What populations are in need of behavioural supports in Acute Care/hospital?
- What are the needs of this patient population in Acute care?
- What are the gaps?

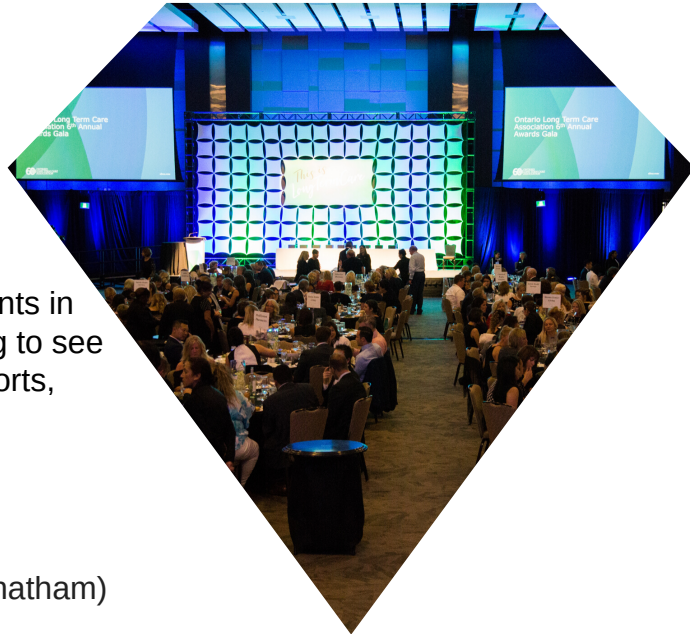
### **Current Membership:**

- 45+ members with representation from across the province including clinicians, managers/administrators and system leaders

### **Are you a clinician working in Acute Care who wishes to join our BSO Acute Care Collaborative?**

If so, please consider joining our monthly meetings by contacting Jillian McConnell ([jillian@brainxchange.ca](mailto:jillian@brainxchange.ca)) and/or Debbie Hewitt-Colborne ([Debbie.Hewitt-Colborne@nbrhc.on.ca](mailto:Debbie.Hewitt-Colborne@nbrhc.on.ca)).

## Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA) This is Long Term Care 2019 Award Winners



Congratulations to this year's recipients for their achievements in quality, innovation, excellence and leadership. It is inspiring to see so many BSO team members being recognized for their efforts, passion and dedication!

### **Quality & Innovation**

**Q&I Innovation of the Year:** Southampton Care Centre

**Q&I Team of the Year:** Meadow Park Long Term Care (Chatham)

**Q&I Workplace of the Year:** Regina Gardens

### **Best New Product or Service Award**

BookJane

### **Lifetime Achievement Award**

Edward George Gilbert, Errinrunc Long Term Care Home, Thornbury

### **Clinical Support Tools Excellence Award**

Eatonville Care Centre - Selene Pancho

King City Lodge Nursing Home - Shellie Hill

MacKenzie Health LTC (Universal Care) - Anica Vlastic

### **Resident-Centered Home of the Year**

Chartwell Westmount Long Term Care Residence

### **Nursing Leadership Awards**

#### **Leadership Excellence:**

Janet Iwaszczenko, Bloomington Cove, (Sienna Senior Living), Stouffville

#### **Nursing, RN & RPNs:**

Kelly Batson, Trillium Villa Nursing Home (S&R Nursing Homes), Corunna (RN)

Ermias Abraham, St. George Care Community (Sienna Senior Living), Toronto (RN)

Orpha Macasa, Silverthorn Care Community, (Sienna Senior Living), Mississauga (RPN)

Joanne Malubay, The Village of Riverside Glen (Schlegel Villages) (RPN)

#### **PSWs:**

Sylvia O'Brien, Village Green LTCF (Omni Health Care)

Dragica Petrinjac, Cawthra Gardens LTC (Chartwell Retirement Residences), Mississauga

Lisa Brillinger, Glen Hill Strathaven (Durham Christian Homes), Bowmanville

Isma Besic, Granite Ridge Care Community (Sienna Senior Living), Stittsville

## Comfort and Well-Being Found in a Chair

New offering to experience the Wellness Nordic Relax® Chair found to enhance quality of life for individuals supported by BSO Team Members in the Champlain LHIN

It was a fortuitous day when our Manager of Nursing, Brenda Paul, witnessed a demo of the Wellness Nordic Relax® Chair at a conference. It was equally fortuitous that she requested the Chair be trialed at The Glebe Centre long-term care home. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Under the supervision of the BSO Champions, the trial period was used to determine the effects of the wellness chair on individuals communicating via responsive behaviours/personal expressions.

The automated chair rocks gently and includes several pre-set program features such as duration time, soothing music, tactile stimulation and varying swing speeds. Each setting is adjustable with the touch of a button. Additional comfort may be provided by introducing an eight-pound weighted blanket and a u-shaped cushion for arm support all the while the individual reclines and enjoys the unique and calming multi-sensory experience. If a person living with dementia expressed hesitancy when first invited to sit in the wellness chair, it soon changed to an expression of willingness to participate and sit independently upon subsequent offerings.

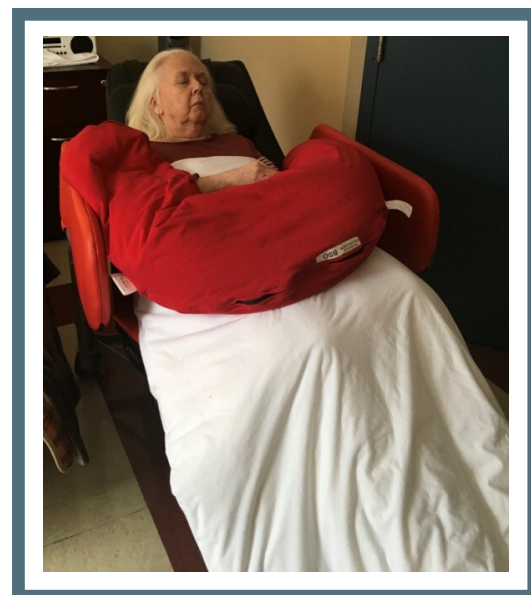
The effects were noticeable and measurable from the outset. Responsive behaviours/personal expressions that included verbal expressions, exploring/searching, pacing, sadness, insomnia and responsiveness to personal care shifted to states of calmness and relaxation which also provided the opportunity to reminisce about past life events.

Individuals who were ordinarily reserved uttered a **“thank you, this is nice, wonderful”**. As a result, individuals also benefitted from improved sleep and were more accepting of the provision of personal care.

Once the trial period was over, it became clear to all who witnessed the many calming effects and benefits of the wellness chair that we needed to fundraise in order to buy one. Fundraising efforts included BSO Champions, Lisa and Kathy, mailing out letters to families and staff inviting donations. A portion of GlebeStock profits and a fundraising event made it possible for the Glebe Centre long-term care home to purchase the Wellness Chair in 2019 and staff celebrated its installation.

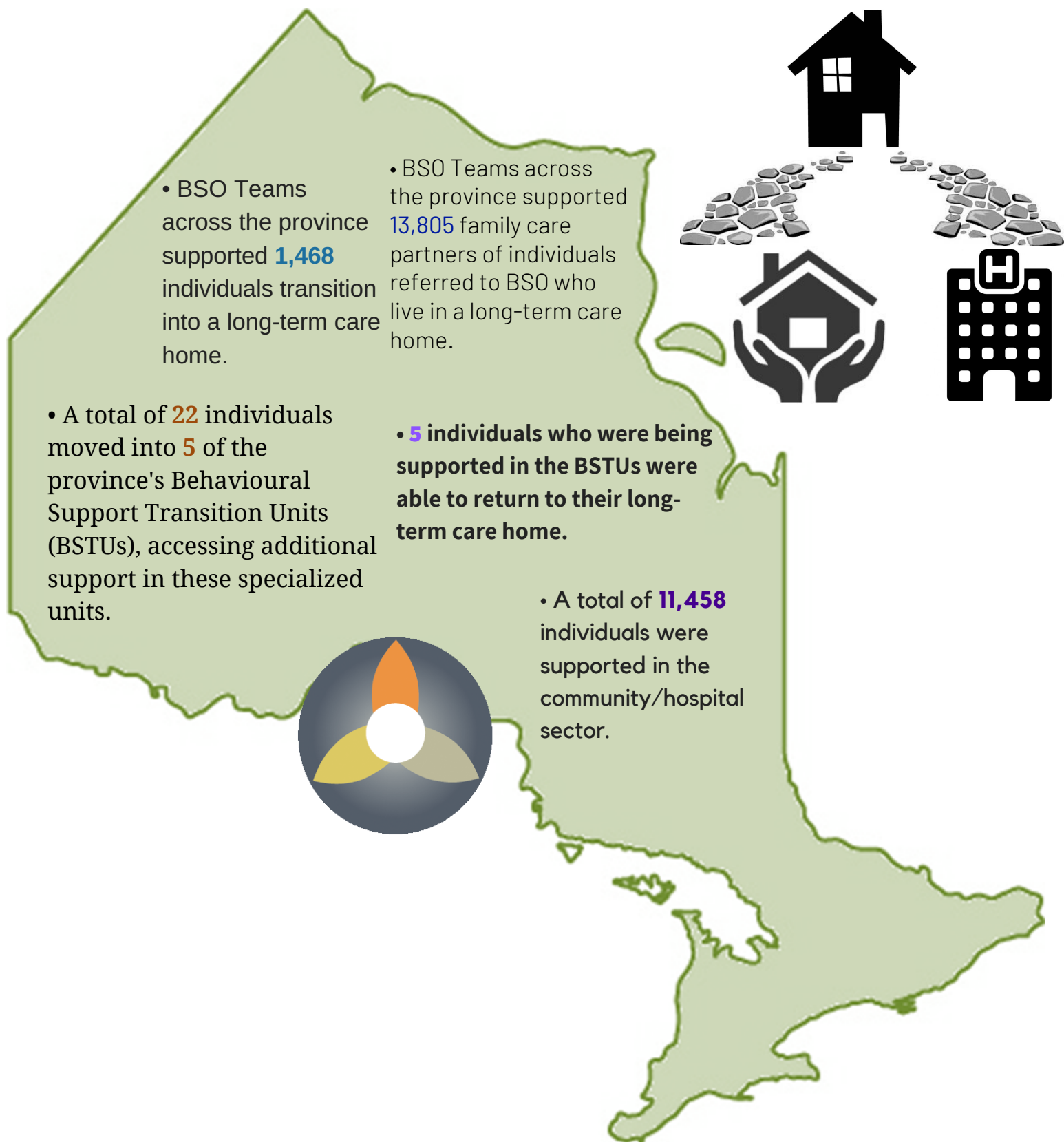
Typically, we use the Wellness Nordic Relax® Chair with individuals that are supported by BSO team members. To date, 14 individuals have enjoyed the effects of the wellness chair. During the day the wellness chair is used between the hours of 10-11:30 a.m. and 1-2p.m. or any time of day when needed. In the evening, the part-time BSO Champion, Nina, uses the wellness chair as often as possible; usually after supper, before bed and as needed. Night personal support workers and nurses who have been trained on its use are able to offer the chair in the late evenings. Most individuals enjoy the relax program which is a 20-minute session.

The wellness chair continues to be a great addition to the BSO Champions' tool box and all other team members who are trained on its use and are able to offer and deliver its healing, calming properties to individuals throughout the care setting. And that makes it a win-win for us all.



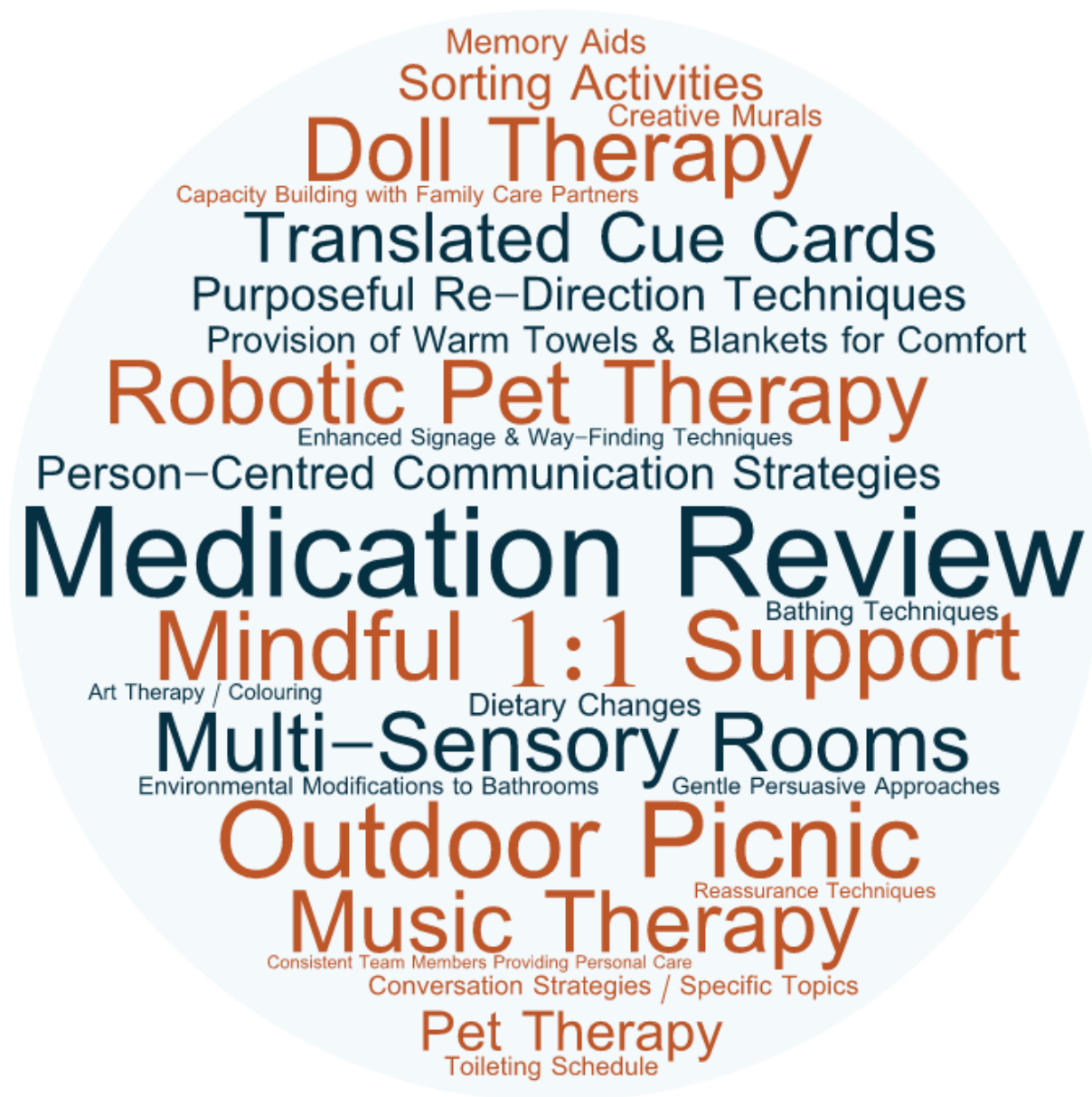
**An individual, supported by BSO team members, relaxing in the wellness chair.**

## Crunching the Numbers: 2019-20 Quantitative Metrics



## Interventions listed in Q2's BSO Provincial Qualitative Stories

The following word cloud depicts all of the successful interventions trialed by BSO Teams in the second quarter.





# Professional Development & Upcoming Events

Please consider the following resources to expand your professional development and/or schedule some time to catch up on archived webinars.



## brainXchange Events Calendar

<http://brainxchange.ca/Public/Events.aspx>

## brainXchange Archived Webinars & Events

<http://brainxchange.ca/Public/Events/Archived-Webinars-Events.aspx>



## Ontario Centres for Learning, Research and Innovation in Long-Term Care (CLRI)

### Webinar Recordings Catalogue - Updated December 2019

The most recent Person-Centred Language webinar "Enhancing the Use of Person-Centred Language in Your Long-Term Care Home" may be found on **page 10** of the catalogue. *\*Please note, it will become available early in the new year.*

<https://clri-ltc.ca/files/2019/12/Final-Webinar-Recordings-Catalogue-Dec-2019.pdf>



Did you know each month a themed reading list is shared with the e-newsletter Linkages? These PDFs include links to and summaries of a variety of resources.

Due to our article on hearing, we wish to highlight a sample of a recent reading list on the subject of "Speech, Language & Hearing in Older Age". Click [here](#) to access.

Click [here](#) to sign up directly to receive Linkages.

You may click [here](#) to peruse recent and past newsletters.

Our lines of communication are **always** open for feedback.  
Contact Information: BSO Provincial Coordinating Office



Call us at **1-855-276-6313**



Email at [provincialBSO@nbrhc.on.ca](mailto:provincialBSO@nbrhc.on.ca)



Or visit us at <http://www.behaviouralsupportsontario.ca>

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North Bay Regional  
Health Centre



Centre régional  
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Behavioural Supports Ontario

Soutien en cas de troubles du comportement en Ontario

Supported by: / Financé par :



Ontario

Local Health Integration  
Network

Réseau local d'intégration  
des services de santé

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*Happy Holidays!*

With deep gratitude,  
Behavioural Supports Ontario  
Provincial Coordinating Office Team

*Joyeuses Fêtes!*

Avec profonde reconnaissance,  
L'équipe au bureau de coordination provincial  
Soutien en cas de troubles du comportement en ontario