



brainXchange

Environmental Scan of Ontario's Behavioural Support Transition Units (BSTUs)

PUBLIC SUMMARY

VERSION 2.0 | SEPTEMBER 2023

Report produced by the BSTU Collaborative, led by the
Behavioural Supports Ontario Provincial Coordinating Office &
brainXchange



What are Behavioural Support Transition Units (BSTUs)?

Behavioural Support Transition Units (BSTUs), also known as Behavioural Support Units, Specialized Behavioural Support Units or Transitional Behavioural Support Units, are specialized units located in Ontario long-term care (LTC) homes. First introduced in 2010, these units provide time-limited support to individuals who can no longer have their behavioural care needs met in their current environment. In comparison to regular LTC home units, BSTUs offer a higher intensity of specialized care provided by specially trained staff with enhanced knowledge and skill in supporting individuals presenting with complex responsive behaviours. The goal of BSTUs is to reduce the incidence and prevalence of residents' responsive behaviours so that residents can transition to a lower level of care, such as a regular LTC space, once they have achieved their clinical goals. To do so, BSTU residents undergo a thorough assessment, care planning, treatment, and monitoring before their discharge. Governance of all BSTUs falls under the Fixing Long-Term Care Act (2021).

What is the BSTU Collaborative?

The BSTU Collaborative is a group of healthcare professionals and individuals with lived experience that meet on a monthly basis with the following shared objectives:

- To surface and spread promising and best practices in the provision of specialized person-centred care in BSTUs.
- To identify emerging trends related to BSTUs and inform research, quality improvement and evaluation opportunities.
- To foster knowledge sharing, collaborative problem solving, and mentorship opportunities for BSTUs.

For more Information, visit the [BSTU Collaborative webpage](#).

The [Behavioural Supports Ontario](#) Provincial Coordinating Office and [brainXchange](#) co-lead the BSTU Collaborative.

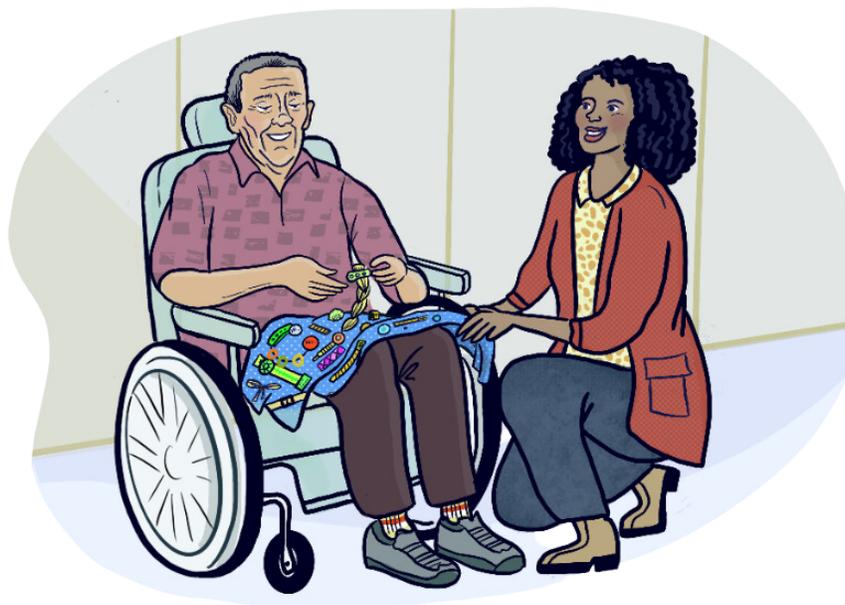


Environmental Scan: Objective and Process

This public summary of the BSTU environmental scan serves as an update to a previous version released in 2017.

The objective of this environmental scan is to offer an overview of the current state of BSTUs in Ontario. The information gathered through this scan enhances the collective understanding of the BSTU landscape, identifies quality improvement activities, and informs future planning for BSTUs in Ontario.

In January 2023, the BSTU Collaborative conducted a survey designed to collect information for this scan. All operational BSTUs at that time (n=14) received voluntary invitations to participate in the survey. LTC Administrators, Directors, BSTU Managers, or allied health team members completed the survey on behalf of their respective BSTU. The data in this environmental scan is self-reported information, and there was no verification conducted for the data. A list of participating BSTUs is provided on the following page.





List of BSTUs

Ontario Health West:

- Grey Gables Home for the Aged, Markdale (18 spaces)
- Linhaven T. Roy Adams Regional Centre for Dementia Care*, St. Catharines (23 spaces)
- McGarrell Place, London (29 spaces)

Ontario Health East:

- Bendale Acres LTC, Scarborough (15 spaces)
- Fairview Lodge, Whitby (26 spaces)
- Extendicare Rouge Valley, Scarborough (32 spaces)
- The Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre, Ottawa (20 spaces)

Ontario Health Toronto:

- Cummer Lodge, North York (16 spaces)
- The Jewish Home for the Aged, North York (23 spaces)

Ontario Health Central:

- Cooksville Care Centre, Mississauga (30 spaces)
- Georgian Manor Home for the Aged, Penetanguishene (16 spaces)
- Sheridan Villa LTC Centre, Mississauga (16 spaces)

Ontario Health North:

- Finlandia Hoivakoti Nursing Home, Sudbury (8 spaces)
- Hogarth Riverview Manor, Thunder Bay (32 spaces)

View the locations of all of Ontario's BSTUs on a [map](#).

*Note: Linhaven is home to two BSTUs; one funded by Ontario Health and the other funded through the 2019 Ontario Government pilot project. Although funded as two distinct units, the data from these two BSTUs is reported collectively as a single unit due to their completion of a single survey.

BSTU Overview

Number of Spaces:

BSTUs vary in size, with the smallest having 8 spaces and the largest having 32 spaces. On average, BSTUs have 22 spaces.

Accommodation Types:

The majority of BSTUs (n=8) feature a combination of private (i.e., solo) and semi-private (i.e., shared) rooms. A total of 5 BSTUs exclusively house residents in private rooms while 1 is solely comprised of semi-private rooms.

Location:

All BSTUs are situated in a specific area within the home, with the majority of these areas being secured (n=12). There are only 2 BSTUs operating in open-access areas.

Environmental Design:

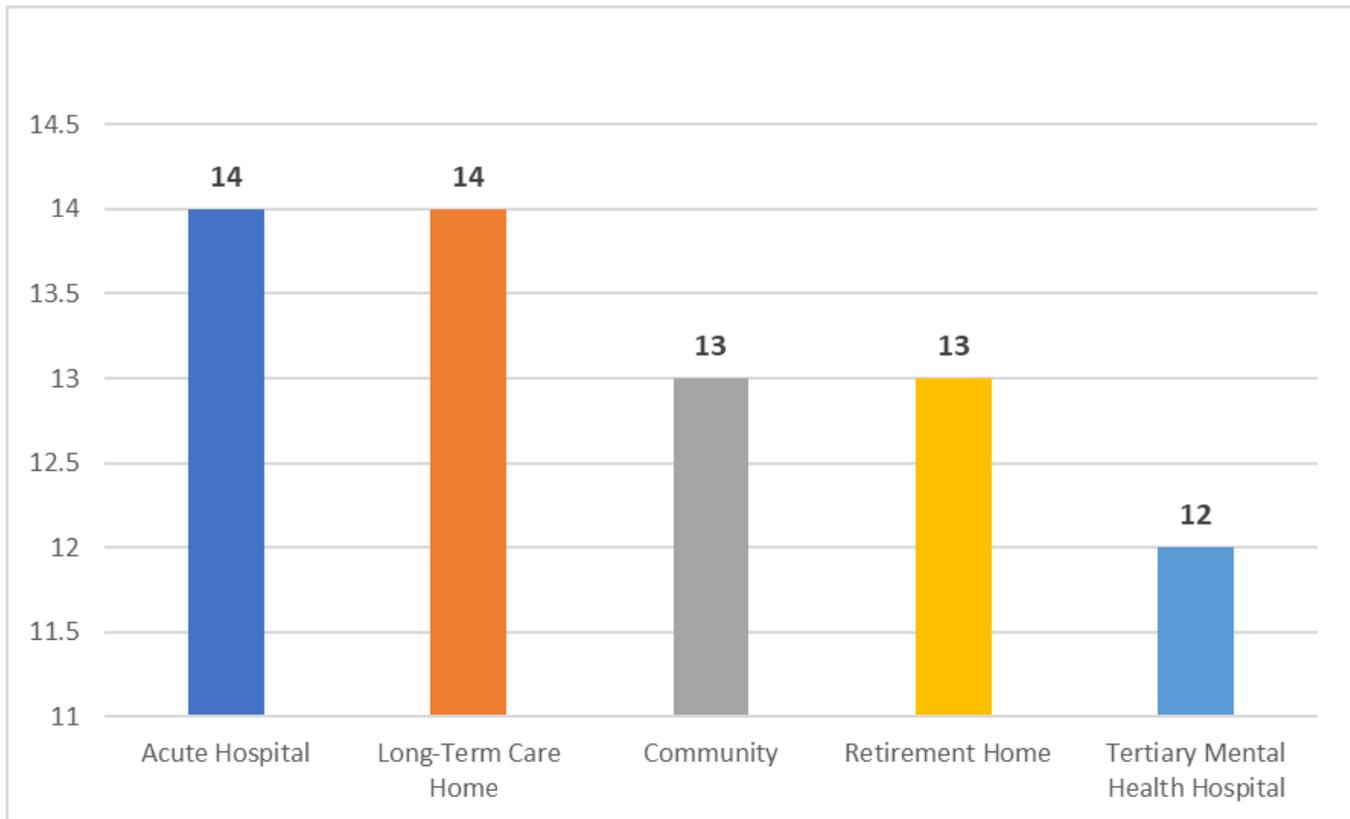
In preparation for their specialized unit designation, all BSTUs underwent various small renovations or environmental changes.

BSTUs implemented the following improvements:

- Addition of wall murals to enhance home-like atmosphere
 - Installation of wayfinding materials and signage to indicate room functions
 - Disguising of entrances and exits
 - Creation of dedicated therapeutic spaces, such as multisensory rooms, calming rooms, nurseries, and garden spaces
 - Integration of interactive wall installations, including ABBY™, busy boards, interactive diversion doors, and Lucynt Interactive Magic Tables
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Accessing the BSTUs Admissible Referral Sources



All BSTUs accept Ontario-wide referrals from patients in acute care hospitals and residents in LTC homes. Furthermore, the majority of BSTUs also accept Ontario-wide referrals from other sectors, such as from individuals living in the community (n=13), retirement homes (n=13), and tertiary mental health hospitals (n=12).

Accessing the BSTUs

Admission Criteria

The admission criteria for BSTUs varies from unit to unit. The table below provides a list of admission categories, their respective specific criteria, and the number of BSTUs adhering to each requirement.

Category	Admission Criteria & Corresponding Number of BSTUs Adhering to Each Requirement
<p>Age</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be 65+ (n=3)* <p>*Since BSTUs operate under the LTC Act, all BSTU residents must be aged 18 or older</p>
<p>Diagnosis(es)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have a diagnosis of dementia or cognitive impairment due to mental illness or other neurological condition (n=14).
<p>Behavioural Care Needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have behavioural care needs that can no longer be met in their current environment (n=14)
<p>Medical Care Needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have healthcare needs that can be met in a LTC home (n=14)** <p>** Since BSTUs operate under the LTC Act, all BSTU residents must have healthcare needs that can be met in a LTC home.</p>
<p>Repatriation agreements for admissions from LTC homes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have a repatriation agreement made for return of resident to the LTC home that they came from (n=6)
<p>Use of other available services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have utilized available behavioural support and/or specialized geriatric services (n=3) • Must be assessed by two geriatric psychiatrists (n=1)
<p>Assessment Score</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have a score of 4 or more on the Aggressive Behaviour Scale (n=1)
<p>Openness to Treatment Strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be open to both pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatment strategies (n=1)
<p>Physical Function</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be ambulatory or 1-2 person transfer status. (n=1)
<p>Involvement of Care Partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substitute Decision Maker (SDM)/Power of Attorney (POA)/Public Guardian and Trustee (PGT) must be actively involved in decision-making (n=1)

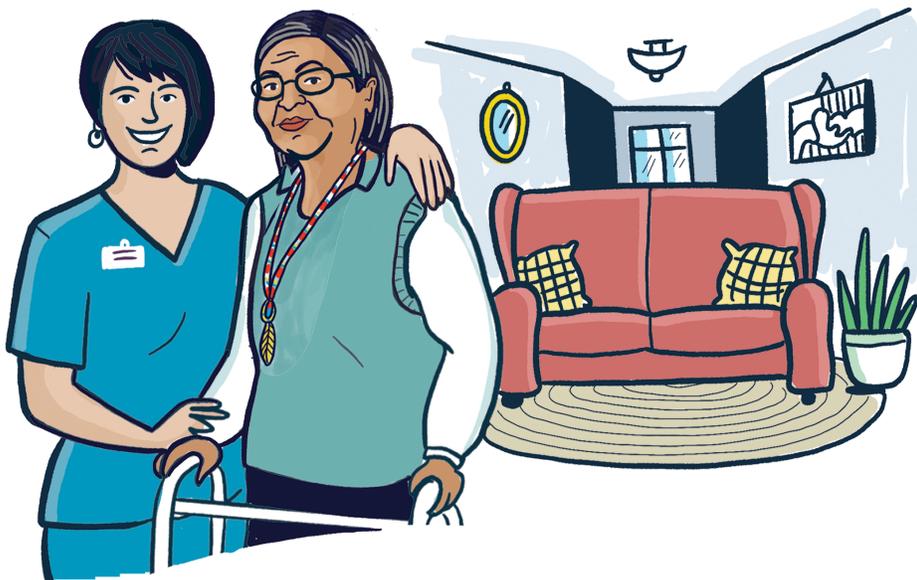


Conclusion

This public summary of the BSTU environmental scan provides insight into the specialized behavioural support services offered by BSTUs in Ontario. The data highlights fundamental elements, including BSTU size, design, primary referral sources, and admission criteria.

This information holds value for healthcare planners, healthcare providers, and individuals with lived experience, enabling them to develop a deeper understanding of BSTUs. It is particularly relevant, as the Government of Ontario has announced plans to invest in new BSTUs starting in 2023-24.

Moreover, this scan serves as a solid foundation for ongoing collaboration and dialogue among members of the BSTU Collaborative. It offers a comprehensive overview of the current state of BSTUs, fostering further discussions and identifying potential areas for improvement or additional research.



Acknowledgements

A special thanks to:

- BSTU Collaborative members for informing the environmental scan survey design and overall project process.
- BSTU representatives who responded to the environmental scan survey
- BSTU Collaborative Co-chairs, Sarah Clark, Nurse Manager, BSTU, McGarrell Place and Allison Corby, Social Worker, Fairview Lodge their sharing their insight and expertise as well as their leadership and dedication to this environmental scan.

We welcome your feedback.

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Behavioural Supports Ontario
Soutien en cas de troubles du comportement en Ontario

The logo for brainXchange features the word "brain" in blue, "X" in orange, and "change" in blue. Above the "X" is a decorative arc of colored dots in blue, orange, and yellow.