

REPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY



2024 - 2025

The
Birches

As I reflect on my first full year as Executive Director of The Birches Nursing Home, I am very proud of the remarkable progress we have made together. Over the past 15 months, our home has undergone a period of growth, innovation, and renewal.

The commitment to quality improvement and modernization demonstrated by our team has been the most significant I have witnessed in my career, and every member of our community deserves to be commended.

This year, we have taken bold steps to enhance care, support our staff, and enrich the lives of our residents. Our achievements are many, and they reflect the strength of our shared vision and the dedication of our staff, residents, families, and community partners.

These accomplishments are a powerful reflection of the strength of our team and the impact of true collaboration. As we look to the future, our commitment to continuous improvement, innovation, and compassionate care remains unwavering. Grace Hopper, the pioneering computer scientist and U.S. Navy Admiral who helped shape modern computing from the 1940s to the 1980s, once said, "The most dangerous phrase in the English language is: 'We've always done it this way.'"

This year, you have all demonstrated the courage to challenge the status quo and embrace change. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this remarkable year — together, we are shaping a brighter, more resilient future for The Birches.



Suzanne

Executive Director

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Strategic Staffing Enhancements

- Promotion of staff to Director of Care who is local to community
- Promotion of staff to Operations Manager
- Promotion of staff to Resident Engagement Manager
- Added 3 full-time Long-Term Care Assistant roles and 1 LPN position
- Added a shared Quality Coordinator and Health & Abilities Specialist with Ocean View

Quality Improvement

- Excellent compliance with Licensing standards
- Regular auditing process for continuous quality improvement
- Dedicated quality team in collaboration with Ocean View

Work Process Modernization

Major system upgrades:

- Staff Schedule Care Software and APP for self-scheduling
- Electronic Health Records (EHR)
- HR recruitment and onboarding software
- Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) software
- Nurse Call Real-time location services (RTLS)

Innovation Funding & Scheduling Optimization

Secured a combined total of \$100,000 in innovation funds from the Health Association of Nova Scotia to optimize CCA scheduling at both The Birches and Ocean View:

- Improved shift balance
- Creation of new CCA full-time positions
- Implementation of Smooth week schedules for CCA 12-hr shift rotations

Home Beautification & Reorganization

- Completion of renovation project of admin offices and several resident rooms.
- Purge and Organization Efforts
- New glider rockers for residents

Education & Professional Development

- Two staff completed GPA Coach Certification
- Facilitated 8k+ staff education funding through the Health Association of Nova Scotia
- Reintroduced CPR training
- Full-day education sessions on PACE, assisted feeding, dementia care, and resident equipment offered in collaboration with Ocean View.

Foundation-Funded Enhancements

Secured funding for:

- Outdoor living furniture
- 3 glider rockers
- 42 What Now books for families at admission

Fundraising & Community Engagement

Launched a recurring RaffleBox fundraising campaign to support resident care



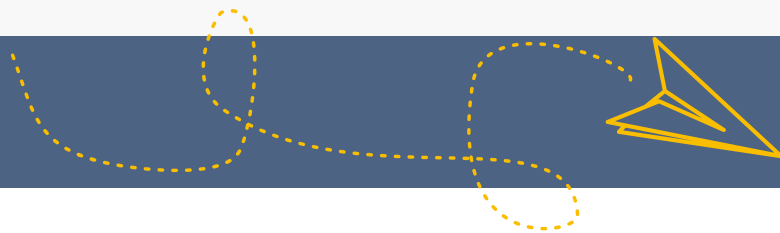
A MESSAGE TO STAFF

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for the continued support and trust you've placed in our home. While this report only includes a few snapshots of our staff, each member brings compassion, dedication and professionalism to work every day making a real difference in the lives of our residents.

Whether it's a warm smile, a comforting hand or simply being there when it matters most, your quiet acts of kindness make The Birches feel like home.

We are proud of what we've accomplished together over the past year from small, every day moments of care to bigger improvements in services and facilities.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Your involvement and encouragement make all the difference.



SERVICE AWARDS

Our long service awards recognize those staff who have dedicated a milestone amount of years to offering resident centred care.

Sherry Hutt	10 years
Rebecca Murphy	20 years
Angela Bayers	25 years
Kerry Hartlin	25 years
Paula Veinotte	35 years

Congrats to all!
You're an inspiration!

SEASONS OF FUN

This year, we were thrilled to bring back our Valentine's Sweethearts Event. Resident couples enjoyed a romantic afternoon with live music, private tables for two, champagne, charcuterie, and locally made cheesecake from Splurge in Porters Lake. Roses and chocolates added a special touch to a much-needed date day.

We also welcomed back the beloved Butterfly Project, a joyful experience for residents and staff alike. Over several weeks, we cared for caterpillars and watched them transform into butterflies — feeding them oranges, maintaining their habitats, and celebrating their release in our gardens. A magical and uplifting tradition enjoyed by all.



JESSIE DIANNE

At The Birches, community spirit comes alive through residents like Jessie Dianne—known affectionately to all as Dianne. With her warm heart, boundless energy, and generous nature, Dianne has truly made The Birches her home in every sense.



An avid walker and nature enthusiast, Dianne is often found strolling through the gardens alongside staff, friends, and family. Her love for the outdoors extends to her hands-on care of our grounds—whether it's daily weeding, tending blooms, or adding a personal touch through her donations to our garden club, including haskap berry bushes from her family home.

But Dianne's talents don't stop there. A gifted musician, she regularly joins our Thursday live music sessions with her fiddle in hand, adding joyful harmony to the mix. Her singing voice also fills the halls during sing-alongs and church services, lifting spirits and bringing comfort to many.

Kindness seems to follow Dianne wherever she goes. Whether offering a listening ear, a helping hand, or a shared chocolate bar from the Tuck Shop, she is a constant source of light and connection for fellow residents and staff alike.

We are proud to celebrate Dianne as a shining example of the compassion, creativity, and community that defines life at The Birches.

VOLUNTEERS



Since 2022, Rosemary has been a dedicated volunteer at The Birches, bringing warmth and joy to residents every Friday at Bingo.

From setting up and helping residents follow along, to donating prizes and offering a friendly smile, she's become a highlight of the week.

Rosemary also lends her time to special events like the Summer Carnival, live music, and holiday parties. When asked why she volunteers, she simply said, "I just want to help make someone's life a little bit brighter."

She does exactly that—every visit.



Our team has grown, with the new Front Desk Volunteer position, providing a warm and welcoming environment for residents, visitors, and staff.

Volunteers help smooth communication and by answering phones, the front door, and directing visitors.

Most importantly our new team of volunteers are a friend to our residents. Many days our residents look forward to popping over to the front desk chat or burst out into a sing-along that then more residents gravitate to.

The value these volunteers bring to our home is undeniable.

If you would like to join our volunteer team please contact Erica at erica.hawco@thebirchesns.ca

GARDEN PROJECT

This year The Twin Oaks/Birches Charitable Foundation funded a new initiative to update our gardens with new furniture and equipment to engage residents.

Two beautiful sturdy polywood tables and twelve polywood chairs were added to our gardens along with a garden peddle drum from Percussion Play and new garden lighting including solar power luminated flowers to enjoy in the summer and bulk Christmas light display to enjoy in the winter.

These new additions to our gardens have contributed to a more engaging and welcoming garden for all and we plan to continue to keep adding improvements to our gardens for years to come.



OUR COMMUNITY



The Birches partnered with the Musquodoboit Public Library to put on a monthly library program called "Library Time".

Each month Karen Marshall from the library delivers monthly resources. These drop ins evolved to facilitating a themed activity each visit.

Over the last year our residents have learned about jazz music, made holiday cards, played bingo, learned about country music, and created stained glass window art.

Karen brings in books, cd, and DVDs that go with the theme so residents continue exploring the throughout the month.

Kids & Elders is back, partnered with The Eastern Shore Family Resource Center! Every second Tuesday morning children from our local community visit.

Residents join the children in our large community room to play on the mats, do crafts together, and show their creative sides.

To finish the program residents and children gather for circle time where they listen to a story and sing songs every generation knows.

Children give the residents a hug or high five as they leave. Spending time with the children brings our residents pure joy.



We are beyond fortunate for the support our community shows our residents.



The Birches

Get Involved!

Together we make the greatest Impact

Did you love reading about The Birches?

Become a part of our story, and our future!

Visit our website to learn how to join us as a **staff, volunteer, donor or supporter!**



Phone: (902) 889-3474



www.thebirchesns.ca