

### **P33 - TRANSFORMING MEALS IN LONG-TERM CARE HOMES: FLEXIBLE DINING AS A STEP FORWARD (STUDENT POSTER)**

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**Brief Description of Research or Project:** Dining is a key activity that promotes the health and well-being of residents in long-term care (LTC) homes. Flexible dining espouses the concept of person-centred care, and understanding how it is implemented and its benefits are needed to support the spread of this transformation in care. A critical review of the literature was undertaken. Most of the limited work to date consists of white papers with background, findings and practice change suggestions, but no implementation details. Few peer-reviewed articles are available and do not evaluate flexible dining. Research is needed to support implementation and evaluate the benefits of flexible dining. **Why is this research important to profile at the Research Day 2014?** Long-term care (LTC) homes and provincial regulations are increasingly transitioning from a medical model of care to person-centred care, which requires a culture change from the current institutional milieu to one that enables resident choice. Dining can be the highlight of residents' day in LTC homes, but meals tend to be conducted in a rigid manner in an institutional environment with set meal times and very limited choice. Meals are important for residents' health and well-being as LTC residents tend to have poor food and fluid intake and dining may be their main opportunity for social engagement. Flexible dining is a way of changing the culture of meals in LTC homes to become more home-like and person-centred, but little is known about this strategy. This presentation will provide a critical review of the literature on flexible dining to increase its awareness, promote its use in LTC homes, and encourage future research.