



Senior Support Services

*Supporting Seniors Independence
at Home and in the Community.*

SENIOR SUPPORT SERVICES

Strategic Plan

2023–2028

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Executive Summary

Our 2023–2028 Strategic Plan steps boldly into a space in the local healthcare landscape where there is both profound need and profound benefit to be realized. This strategy is the lowest cost option to the healthcare continuum in terms of impact, human resources, and dollars. A dollar spent in support services has been shown to be the best investment, as it saves many dollars in the world of acute care, long term care, and assisted living. It also has the benefit of being the best solution for clients, offering the best health outcomes with the lowest risk of negative impact on seniors, their caregivers, and families.

Senior Support Services (SSS) will be the central hub connecting seniors, their families, and caregivers to access support services throughout Leeds-Grenville and Lanark.

We will wrap comprehensive support services around clients, delivered by a network of service partners in the region.

We will do this by:

- **Networking Collaboratively with Partners.** We will reach out comprehensively to and work collaboratively with the networks of community organizations used and trusted by seniors, as well as service providers supporting seniors, so that all parts of this network know that SSS provides this wraparound service and is available as a first point of contact to arrange support services, staying connected with seniors to ensure continuity of care.
- **Enhancing Service Offerings.** We will roadmap all of the support services required by seniors versus where and how they are offered through our service area, by ourselves and our service partners. Where it is appropriate, we will work to enhance our own service offerings to address significant gaps. We will also develop stable fundraising mechanisms that will allow us to deliver those necessary services that are not funded provincially through healthcare dollars.
- **Increasing our Capacity to Deliver.** We will assess how effectively we are delivering services through each of our three human resource streams—employees, volunteers and brokered workers—and will identify strategies that best suit the organization we are becoming.

SSS will also promote organizational excellence. We will grow the leadership capacity of our Board and senior management teams. We will also increase levels of engagement and collaboration between the two teams while respecting the framework of a policy governance board. SSS will enhance leadership growth opportunities for staff, ensuring greater resilience in the organization.

An appropriately shaped performance measurement framework and annual action plans will guide the implementation of this Strategic Plan. Given that the world economy is slowly exiting from the Covid-19 pandemic as this plan goes into place, SSS's implementation will proceed at pace to ensure continuity of services and ongoing support and stability for our employees, volunteers, and clients.



Senior Support Services



Our Vision

SSS will become the central hub connecting seniors, their families, and caregivers to support services throughout Leeds-Grenville and Lanark.

Our Mission

SSS helps seniors to remain safe, healthy, and independent, and to thrive in their homes and local communities.

Our Values

RESPECTFUL: We promote the basic human rights, respect, dignity, and safety of clients, their caregivers, and families.

INCLUSIVE: We provide services through an inclusive approach that promotes active participation of clients, their caregivers, and families.

COLLABORATIVE: We collaborate with other organizations to provide comprehensive services that are responsive to the needs of seniors.

SUPPORTIVE: We support a safe work and volunteer environment that provides opportunity for growth, creativity, and mutual respect.

ACCOUNTABLE: We provide services in ways that are fiscally prudent, accountable, and continuously evaluated.



Strategic Plan 2023–2028

Key Priority



We will become the central hub for Senior Support Services.

SSS will be the central hub connecting seniors, their families, and caregivers to support services throughout Leeds-Grenville and Lanark.

Recognizing Today's Reality

At the provincial level, the current focus on reactive primary and acute care (EMS, hospitals, LTC facilities, assisted living) is financially unsustainable. With the Baby Boomer demographic ageing into their senior years, demands on the healthcare system will only increase in the coming years. All of this has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, which has led to caregiver burnout, and profound shortages of healthcare professionals.

Enabling seniors to age gracefully in their own homes and providing support services that enable them to thrive in their communities leads to greater wellness, health, stability, and well-being. The **key gaps in the system** that must be closed to enable greater use of this lowest-cost, best-outcome solution to support Ontario's ageing population are:

- There remains a persistent lack of awareness of services available to potential clients, their families, and caregivers, along with difficulty navigating the support service continuum to source and arrange support services.
- Potential clients who are without supports (family or friends living locally or a family doctor) are slipping through the cracks, only showing up on the healthcare radar when they are in acute need.
- The process entailed in researching, connecting with, and arranging support services from the appropriate agency is overwhelming to many seniors and family members, with many opting to 'go it alone' out of frustration.

Working towards an Improved Future

We are well-positioned to step into a pathfinding role, whereby SSS could become known and trusted as the one-stop shop to connect seniors to support services. There exists a network of community organizations that are known, trusted, and used by seniors and their families to meet a variety of needs, healthcare and otherwise. There also exists a network of service provider organizations that provide support services to seniors. Currently, there is often a breakdown in communications/referrals between organizations, and therefore there is a role for SSS to become the

central connector hub, eliminating as many of these gaps and disconnects as possible. We already act as that central sortation point informally for many clients, but the need and opportunity exist for us to step more formally into this central hub role, creating awareness of our intake role in community organizations, and working collaboratively with service providers to connect clients and arrange support services. We will not seek to 'compete' with other service providers. In any area where SSS provides overlapping services, we will always convey choice transparently to potential clients.

In Five Years...

- We will be the service provider of choice, known for providing comprehensive navigation/pathfinding services to enable seniors, their families, and caregivers to arrange and access appropriate support services
- We will help families to make good and right decisions in an educated, useful, and helpful way.
- We will be known and recognized for our leadership by the Ontario Health Teams
- Senior Support Services agencies from across Ontario will look to us as a 'best path forward' to emulate in developing their own service offerings.

Key Strategies to Transition

Once this strategic plan is published, SSS will go about detailed action planning to deliver on the expectations set out in the plan. Among other activities, the Board expects SSS to develop a fulsome roadmap that includes, among other things:

1. Simplify the contact process, obtaining direct-dial phone numbers and email addresses that connect service providers and potential clients directly to our intake staff.
2. Invest in full-time intake staff and ensure that they are known to and trusted by both communities—referral partners and service providers.
3. Begin health promotion (marketing and communications) to both referral partner communities and service provider communities, looking to broker collaborative roles in providing optimal support service solutions to seniors.
4. Ensure transparency and fairness in all situations where we offer support services that are also provided by other service providers.
5. Remove confusion around our identity by undertaking a legal name change and marketing our new name into the community.
6. Leverage technology to simplify the contact process, enabling clients, referral partners and service providers to have direct dial/direct email access to our pathfinder team.
7. Invest in full time pathfinder staff, ensuring that those individuals become known and trusted to our communities.
8. Apply for funding to develop and pilot this concept.
9. Carry out a review of operations and offerings to ensure that SSS is efficient and effective in all that we do.

Supporting Priority 1

1



We will network and collaborate proactively with partners.

SSS will network and collaborate proactively with the networks of organizations, both within and outside Leeds-Grenville and Lanark, that may act as referral partners or service providers to our clients. We will ensure awareness of SSS and our role and will work to build and maintain healthy partnerships that focus on simplifying the client journey and enabling seniors to thrive at home.

Recognizing Today's Reality

There is a Venn diagram of possible referral partners that have existing, trusted relationships with seniors, their caregivers, and families, overlapping with support service provider organizations that, like SSS, work to support the independence of seniors at home and in their communities (see next page). Many seniors are unaware of the array of support services that are available to them, are not optimizing their use of support services. We see at least **three key negative impacts of this fact.**

1. Premature entry of seniors into LTC facilities and assisted living facilities.
2. Unnecessary number of high-cost, resource-intensive acute events due to a lack of low-cost, less-intensive proactive support and timely interventions.
3. Generally degraded health and quality of life among seniors, particularly those unattached to family doctors or without supporting informal care networks (family and or friends) in the local area.

Working towards an Improved Future

SSS will work with referral partners, creating trust and awareness amongst those partners of SSS's existence and of the pathfinding role we can offer to seniors, to provide access to necessary and appropriate support services over a period of several decades. We will also work with support service providers to ensure

frictionless paths to service provision, ensuring that fewer seniors, families, and caregivers are left unsupported by the resources available. SSS will work with Ontario Health and the Ontario Health Teams, looking to create a pilot program whereby we can demonstrate thought leadership and comprehensive service excellence. We will look for ways to demonstrate higher quality of life for seniors with lower overall impacts to the high-cost, high-intensity acute care system and government-run assisted living facilities.

In Five Years...

- SSS will be seen as a best practice in building collaborative networks of referral partners and support service providers.
- Ontario Health will have regularized funding for Senior Support Agencies to provide a pathfinder role as outlined in this strategic plan.
- SSS will have a vibrant and growing network of referral partners who know that SSS can be trusted to find support solutions for seniors.
- SSS will have a large and trusted network of support service providers who see benefit in collaborating in the best interests of seniors.
- Ontario Health will begin to see quantitative improvements in critical healthcare numbers, as this strategy removes impact from acute care, long term care and assisted living care by working proactively with seniors in Leeds-Grenville and Lanark.

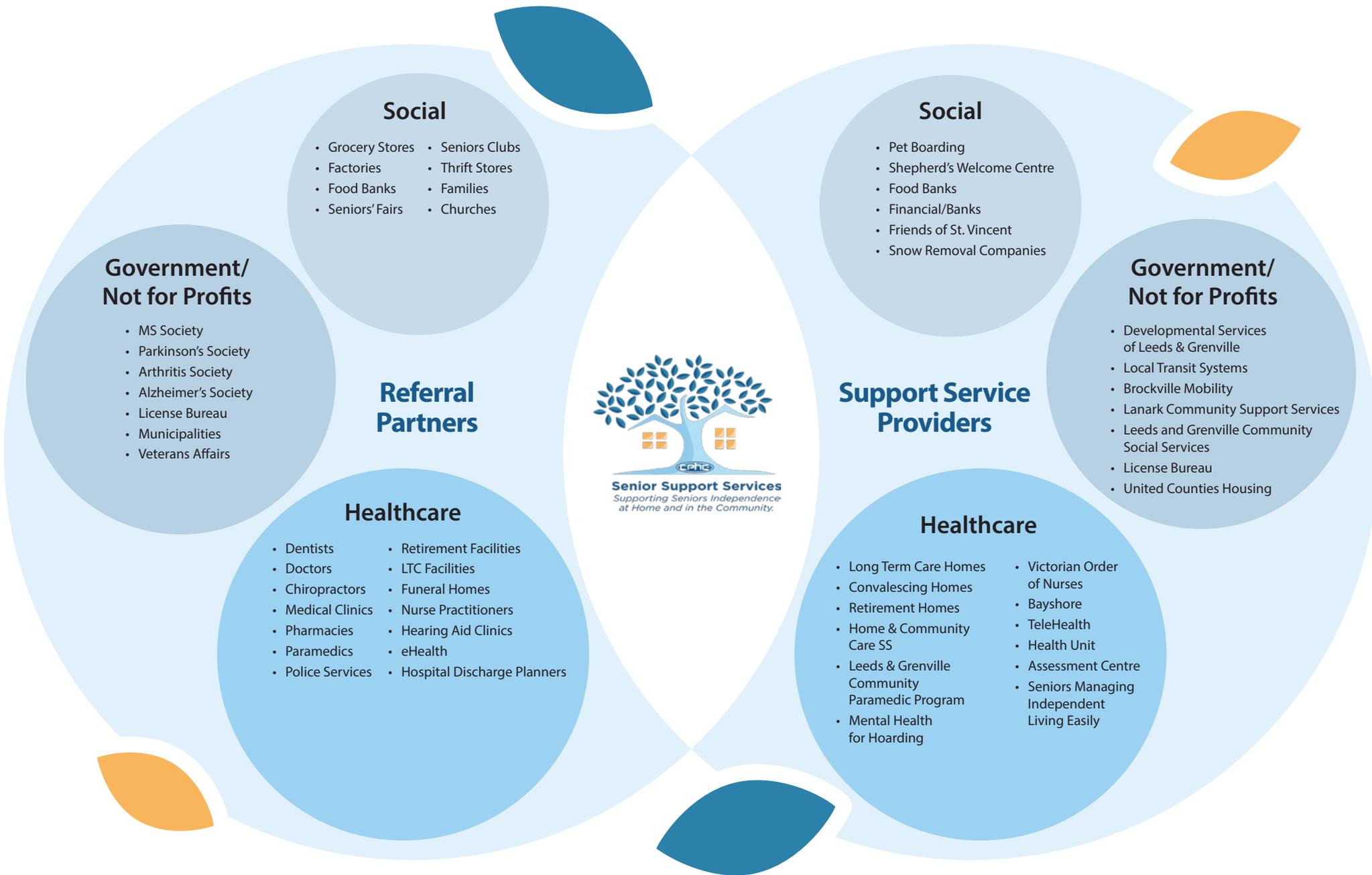
Key Strategies to Transition

1. Open conversation with Ontario Health Teams to outline our strategy and obtain support for a pilot project.
2. Open conversations with referral partners to demonstrate the value to them and their clients in trusting and working with SSS. Work with staff to prioritize order of outreach and use strategic Board connections as necessary.
3. Open conversations with support service agencies in Leeds-Grenville and Lanark, to determine what collaborative model works best to ensure we wrap services around clients as simply and comprehensively as possible.
4. Determine what process flows may need to be mapped to ensure a consistent client journey, and so that we can see and address friction points in the service continuum.



Key Messages

- **Ensure that acute care partners know that we can shoulder some of their burden.**
- **Ensure that government partners know that we are the lower-cost option, compared to LTC and acute care, and that we offer better client paths and outcomes, particularly if used proactively.**
- **Ensure that agency partners know that we are not intending to compete for or steal their funding dollars—our intent is to serve a client-base holistically, not to grow an empire.**



* Note that this Venn diagram is an initial list and is NOT to be seen as exhaustive.

The SSS team will add new members to both communities as required to work in the best interests of seniors.

Supporting Priority 2

2

We will enhance and focus our Service Offerings.

We will curate a suite of support services that offer most and best value to our clients and that align with the objectives of our funding partners. Where excellent service exists outside our organization, we will partner. Within our organization, we will review and optimize the services we offer, and look for logical places to extend services to address key gaps in the support service continuum. We will support non-Ontario Health-funded services through a vibrant fundraising platform.

Recognizing Today's Reality

Our teams work constantly to optimize service offerings to best meet the needs of our clientele. The Covid-19 pandemic forced a hard pivot onto our organization, and the organization has been rightly praised for optimizing new service offerings based on the changed working conditions.

Working Towards an Improved Future

At this point, coming out of Covid-19 and with a new Vision, driving us towards becoming the central hub for support services in LL&G, we need to review our services for opportunities to change and improve. We also need to look at those services offered by peers and other organizations within LL&G, as well as best practices nationally and globally, as we go about building a best-in-class support service offering that enables seniors to thrive, in their homes and communities.

In Five Years...

- We will have roadmapped a comprehensive list of services available to seniors at all times and in all situations, available from us and from a network of local partners.
- We will have improved our service offerings, growing those where there is growth potential and shrinking or releasing to partner organizations those functions that are best performed by others or where the need is no longer as apparent.
- We will have the ability to drive a substantial portion of our funding through fundraising, whether through a foundation or through other mechanisms.

Key Strategies to Transition

1. Investigate successful programs elsewhere in Ontario, Canada and globally, and see how we might emulate them, if appropriate.
2. Review each of our program offerings with a do more/do less/start fresh lens. A preliminary review has identified several program areas where we might be able to offer services far more simply than we currently do.
3. Consider alternate service delivery models, with an eye to creativity and optimizing client outcomes.
4. Determine the best path to stable and substantial fundraising.
5. Engage in conversations with our primary government funding partner, looking for increased investment in SSS on their part as we demonstrate the costs savings we will deliver.



Supporting Priority 3

3

We will increase our capacity to deliver.

Given the vision we have for the organization and given the demographics of the Canadian and local LL&G populations, it is obvious that we are on a path of incremental growth, so long as we can fund that growth. Given that path of growth, we need to determine the best human resourcing mix. SSS is known as an employer of choice, with very low turnover from year to year. We will reinforce the positives of rewarding work, a stable and growing clientele, and the long-term stability of our work environment, to continually grow our support service team.

Recognizing Today's Reality

SSS uses a mix of volunteers, part-time and full-time staff, as well as a network of brokered workers. There are pressures on each of these groups. Young seniors are continuing to work, and are volunteering less, but may be interested in part time support work if we can make it attractive. Volunteers were reticent during Covid, but in recent weeks, as Covid seems to be controlled, we are seeing a surge in volunteer applications. Staffing shortages in general are also prevalent across the Canadian economy at the time this plan was written, driving us to consider new strategies to appeal to part- and full-time potential employees. Brokered services are currently effective and a strong service funding source in some areas, but very time-intensive in others.

Working towards an Improved Future

We will devise short- and long-term activities to address each of our human resource streams and will ensure that we align appropriately skilled human resources for each support service. As an example, as we grow into expanded service areas, we will ask whether the appropriate skillset is a Personal Support Worker (PSW) or a Home Support Worker (HSW). If necessary to address short term resourcing crunches, we will investigate the incremental use of specialized recruitment firms and other strategies so that we are not leaving service needs unmet.

In Five Years...

- We will continue to experience very low staff turnover rates.
- We will have a larger staff contingent, to offer guaranteed stability of services to our growing clientele.
- We will have found optimal ways of delivering services in areas that are currently time-intensive to manage for relatively few clients.
- We will optimize use of all provincial funding mechanisms, returning little or no funding to the provincial coffers at the end of each fiscal due to the inability to source staff.

Key Strategies to Transition

1. SSS makes use of PSWs, a category currently experiencing extreme shortages. We will investigate the possibility of using HSWs for some service offerings, if and as applicable.
2. We will look to see where we might add full-time staff, as these are the most stable, appealing jobs to offer, and they provide clients with a consistent client experience.







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Senior Support Services (CPHC)

2235 Parkedale Ave.

Brockville, Ontario K6V 6B2

✉ info@cphcare.ca

🌐 cphcare.ca