

## **Letter of Intent**

### Understanding the Impact of End of Life Care on Older Patients

Seniors make up the fastest growing age group in Canada. It is expected that this trend will continue to grow over next several decades. According to the Government of Canada (2013), in 2011, approximately 5.0 million Canadians were 65 years of age or older, a number that is expected to double in the next 25 years to reach about 10.4 million seniors by 2036. It is believed that by 2051, about one in four Canadians is expected to be 65 years of age or older. This creates a demand for trained professionals to provide end of life care. This has also been increasing with the advent of the hospice movement, trends toward dying at home, and trends towards patient and family member involvement in the end of life process.

The purpose of this fellowship is to provide me with the knowledge and skills, be knowledgeable about current tools and resources, and understand the what is currently being done in community to help dying at home acceptable and comfortable for the aging population. The learning experience will be facilitated through the generosity of Baycrest Apotex Centre (Long Term Care) as they have established a highly functioning services and are dedicated to achieving excellence in providing the best possible experience and care for the physical and mental wellbeing of people during their journey of aging.

I will have the support of my mentor, (name to be provided), who has extensive clinical gerontology nursing experience in end-of-life care at Baycrest Apotex Centre. The main focus of this fellowship will be to enhance the clinical experiences of persons through the support of developing further expertise in the ability to understand the different assessments, support therapeutic relationships, and manage symptoms that persons may experience at end of life. The goal is that I will be able to promote and facilitate continuity of care for seniors across Ontario by developing an introductory gerontology course at the de Souza Institute.

The expected result of this fellowship includes promoting and providing the highest standards of care for seniors and their families; education about advanced directives to guide decisions that will lead to understanding the aging person's and/or family's wishes; understand what formalize education exists to support family and healthcare professionals when talking about end-of-life care; learn what challenges healthcare professionals face when working with dying persons and what strategies are used to improve such challenges. In order to properly support persons in dying persons, education in the end-of-life life process is strongly needed. Thus, after completing this fellowship, I hope to develop a course for personal support workers as they work with seniors more often than any other health care professional whether it is a community setting or an acute care setting.

### **Project Evaluation**

At Brampton Civic Hospital, the Oncology Unit holds a monthly Oncology Journal Club meeting. The topic chosen is based on a needs assessment and sometimes it chosen based on the nurses' interest. After completing the Summer Institute Course, I hope to evaluate the effectiveness of an oncology journal club, explore nurses' perception about the content and method of delivery, and determine if information delivered and/or discussed is learned.