



Summary of
Speaker Series: CFUW A/N
Annual General Meeting, September 28, 2021

“Serving Older Adults in a Time of Health System Transformation: Community & Home Assistance to Seniors (CHATS)”

Speaker: Christina Bisanz
Chief Executive Officer of CHATS

Our guest speaker for the September general meeting/AGM was Christina Bisanz, Chief Executive Officer of Community and Home Assistance to Senior (CHATS) which supports seniors and family caregivers in York Region and South Simcoe. Christina has extensive experience at the executive levels in many parts of the health sector, including with the Ontario Long Term Care Association and is also very connected to the community, having served as Ward 7 Councillor for Newmarket since 2014.

Most seniors, over 90% in a recent survey, choose to age in place in order to maintain health and dignity. This is also much more cost effective than long term care. CHATS is able to offer the right supports at the right time. As the proportion of seniors increases, expected to reach 21% in York Region by 2031, community-based support will become even more crucial. With the formation of Ontario Health Teams (OHT), the emphasis is on a continuum of care with the senior or patient at the centre, with a more seamless transition through levels of care. CHATS is the local partner for the OHT’s in York Region (Southlake, Western YR, Eastern YR/Durham).

CHATS serves 8,500 clients in York Region and South Simcoe with 70% being female and about 500 receiving subsidized services. CHATS is mainly funded by the Government of Ontario with additional support from donors. Some services are provided free to clients, others on a moderate cost recovery basis.

CHATS offers a great range of services including Community Programs (Adult Day programs, Senior Wellness/Lunch out, Diversity Outreach), In-Home Services (PSW support, Meals on Wheels, Assisted Living for High-Risk Seniors), Home Safety Services (Home Adaptation, Decluttering, Medical Alert, Settling-in and Transition from Hospital to Home, Wellness checks) Support for Caregivers, Transportation, and Interpretation Services.

“We often hear people say, I wished I’d known about CHATS when my [Mom, Dad, Husband, Wife, etc.] was still at home. One of our goals is to increase awareness so that

people are aware and accessing services.” Christina has encouraged us to share her power point with our CFUW Aurora/Newmarket members.

Summary written by Kathy Wosnick for the CFUW A/N Program Committee