

Experiencing the SeeMe™ culture



Wendy Nicklin alongside her mother Norma McKnight and brother Don McKnight at a family birthday celebration in April 2022.

In November 2019, Wendy Nicklin helped Norma McKnight, her then 100 year-old mother, move into Perley Health.

"Until you experience it for yourself, you never really understand what it's like to move and settle a parent into long-term care," says Wendy.

For the previous nine years, Norma had lived in a

retirement home. As the dementia Norma lives with worsened, the home could no longer provide the care she needed.

"Everyone in my family is so grateful that Mom is at Perley Health," says Wendy. "She receives much better and more appropriate care now, and her care needs have only increased."

Wendy's considerable experience in healthcare — most of it focused on improving the quality of care — lends her endorsement additional weight. After completing a degree in nursing, Wendy embarked on a stellar 35-year career, largely in leadership roles. Most recently, she served as President of the International Society for Quality in Health Care. Prior to that, she was President and CEO of Accreditation Canada.

"Although I knew about Perley Health, I didn't recognize just how much they shared my healthcare values and my passion for improving care quality," says Wendy. "I found out soon enough, though."

The Perley Health care team met with Wendy in advance of moving day to discuss ways to smooth the transition for Norma. They suggested that Wendy help them make Norma's new room look as much like her old room as possible.

"They had me put post-it notes up on the walls of her new room indicating exactly which paintings and photos go where," says Wendy. "That helped make the transition all but seamless. I don't know if Mom even recognized that she's moved."

To develop Norma's care plan, Wendy and the care team used SeeMe™: Understanding *frailty* together. Developed at Perley Health, SeeMe™ customizes each resident's care plan based on their values, preferences and desired lifestyle.

"My experience at Perley Health is that SeeMe™ is more of a culture than a program," says Wendy. "All of the staff and volunteers understand resident-centred care. Everyone recognizes and respects that we are guests in the residents' home."

Given her professional background, it is perhaps not surprising that Wendy now volunteers with the Family and Friends Council executive. She



■ **Wendy, Norma and Granddaughter, Rebecca - Christmas 2019.**

also recently took advantage of an opportunity to complete Gentle Persuasive Approach, a full-day course focused on caring for people living with dementia. The course is required training for all caregiving staff at Perley Health and is offered to volunteers when space permits. Wendy supports the organization's efforts to advance the quality of long-term care delivered at all homes.

"Research is fundamental to quality improvement and the Perley Health Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™ is a phenomenal vehicle for improving care through practical research and knowledge translation," Wendy says. "By sharing what it learns through research in publications and webinars, the Centre of Excellence makes it possible for all long-term homes to improve care."

While she no longer works full time, Wendy continues to serve on the boards of directors of several organizations, including Hospice Care Ottawa and Queensway Carleton Hospital. Every other day, though, she visits Norma and plays music that her mother enjoyed listening to decades ago.

"It's reassuring to know that Mom receives exceptional care from professionals who warmly respect each resident as an individual," says Wendy. 