



# in the news



## Ideas and support shared by PSWs at conference just for them

*Sixth annual event fun, informative and inspiring*

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By Lisa Bailey

A day-long event dedicated just to them is a source of joy and inspiration for personal support workers (PSWs).

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— Meagan Whitehorn, event planner, Preferred Health Care Services

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“It’s the only event I get hugs at,” says Meagan Whitehorn, event planner with Preferred Health Care Services. “It’s so inspiring. (The PSWs) feel so appreciative of a day that is designed for them.”

That sentiment held again this year. Preferred Health Care Services’ sixth Annual

PSW Conference took place May 5 at the Holiday Inn in Markham. It attracted about 160 PSWs.

An opportunity for personal and professional growth, the conference featured a range of educational sessions, including two highly popular ones on palliative care.

Bev Zangari of Preferred Health Care Services discussed the significance of the PSW’s role in palliative care, and Barb Heward of Leisureworld Brampton Woods also gave a presentation.

Chelsea Houghton, a PSW at Leisureworld Mississauga, was most interested in these sessions, as well as bioethicist Frank Wagner’s opening

address on an ethical decision-making toolkit.

She says she enjoyed the sessions and “learned so much.” For example, she says she discovered ways to memorialize residents and that contact with families can continue after a passing.

“We are family, it just doesn’t end like that,” Houghton says of the difficulty experienced by families and team members following a loss.

Houghton found further educational value at a workshop on preventing pressure ulcers and skin tears. She learned about a different treatment and even “simple things” such as how to better cradle a heel with a pillow.

Houghton, who’s attended the event before, says this one was the most informative. She says she

enjoyed sharing ideas most.

Whitehorn notes the fun factor ties to the fact that the conference is a celebration of PSWs and their work.

The chance to upgrade skills, as well as network with colleagues from across

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Ontario and “grow from one another” by sharing experiences are other reasons for the event’s continued popularity.

“They’re inspired to do their work so we’re inspired to continue doing ours (as organizers),” Whitehorn says.

Evaluations will be reviewed but Whitehorn says anecdotal feedback points to another successful year for the conference.