



# in the news



## Staff members' work honoured at Preferred Health Care Services' AGM

*Cultural theme adopts Eastern European flair*

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By Lisa Bailey

Eastern European culture — as well as a variety of staff achievements — were celebrated at Preferred Health Care Services' annual general meeting (AGM), held June 9 at the company's head office in Richmond Hill.

The AGM brings team members together, particularly front-line staff who serve in the community and do not normally have a chance to network and recognize one another's work.

"It's an opportunity for staff to meet with their peers, enjoy a social evening and learn about a culture and other general information," says nurse manager Nora Conrad, who chairs the social committee which organizes the AGM.

Among the speakers was Preferred Health

Care Services president Tracy Jones, who welcomed front-line and management staff and saluted their hard work and commitment.

Preferred Health Care Services educators presented on the falls prevention and Hush – No Rush programs, both of which were piloted in the past year, Conrad says.

Manager of client services Christine Ponce-Arena says the two programs have been a focus because staff members are caring for more clients who are susceptible to falls in their homes, as well as more clients with early signs of dementia or in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease.

Also in the spotlight were the workplace wellness and foot-care teams. The latter group received special foot-

shaped pins "to recognize them and the good work they've done this year," Conrad says, adding they hold a number of clinics and are in many locations.

Director of marketing and workplace wellness team chair Debra Sayewich outlined the success of the team's first pedometer walk, with staff from Preferred Health Care Services and Leisureworld's Project Thomas far exceeding the challenge to record enough steps to walk from Canada's east to west coast.

Preferred Health Care Services team members Sarah Law-Gresko, who recorded more than one million steps, as well as Imelda Cheng and Linda Madigan were the top three overall achievers. The total number of steps taken from early March to the end of May was 10,150,000.

"It was an absolutely

phenomenal success because the enthusiasm was so contagious,"

Sayewich says.

Awards were also handed out at the AGM to team members for one, three, five, 10 and 15 years of work with the company. Recipients numbered more than 100, with about 75 attending the AGM.

Former Preferred Health Care Services personal support workers (PSWs) Margelyn Foster, Ula Grant, Barb Kulczycki and Pat Garringer were saluted for their years of service with the company.

Each AGM follows a cultural theme to showcase the diversity of staff members. Helping to create this year's Eastern European flair were flags displayed from the region's countries and a menu with such dishes as perogies, goulash, cabbage rolls and pickled herring.