



Tenants enjoy games during a collective kitchen event at one of our new Waterloo Region programs.

Building belonging through psychosocial supports

Health. Wellness. Belonging.

At Indwell, we know that these three conditions can't exist separately from one another. The author of the ancient biblical book of Ecclesiastes was right when he said, "A cord of three strands is not easily broken" (Ecclesiastes 4:12). We are all stronger together, in supportive community.

How do you create the kind of community that fosters health, wellness and belonging? This is the very thing our psychosocial support staff specialize in. The term *psychosocial* means exactly what it sounds like: caring for tenants' psychological needs while facilitating social connections—that's precisely what Indwell's psychosocial workers do. According to Jacqui Kobow from our Waterloo Region programs, "We support individuals in all areas of their lives. Our work consists of a lot of mentoring, facilitating, and teaching—to create a connection that allows for participation in activities based on an individual's needs, and in alignment with a person's goals."

What does this look like practically? For Annemarie Antunes at Lakeshore Lofts in Mississauga, it's helping tenants connect to local health clinics, planning events such as movie nights, and providing therapeutic interventions such as motivational interviewing.



Bryan Jesney, who provides psychosocial support at Woodfield Gate in London, organized a mural to be painted by tenants. "It's super important to be able to have a position that is dedicated to simply connecting people with other people and resources, so the people we work with have positive supports they can count on," he says. "We build community capacity through arts and culture." Bryan has also started a dart league. "I thought it would be a great way to create a very diverse group of people and to allow tenants to meet each other, who normally wouldn't have met."

Jule Recchia, at Woodfield Gate in London, has noticed new confidence in tenants. She recalls:

I've been working with a tenant since January, who comes from a traumatic background and has experienced instability in her living arrangements. Fast forward to March—she tells me that she feels ready to go after her dream of going back to school for video game development. She set up an appointment with Fanshawe College to discuss next steps, asked about monetary assistance and learned she can get all of her school supplies paid for. The person I met a couple months before—filled with anxiety—has become her own advocate and has confidence in doing this independently. When I asked her what made her feel ready for this, she described having stable housing and knowing this is her home.

No matter what the location or the activity, Indwell's psychosocial support workers have all expressed gratitude for the freedom they've felt to build creative solutions, and the value placed on "coming alongside" people—as opposed to doing the work for them.

Annemarie adds, "We give tenants the resources to be independent in creating and maintaining their social relationships and connections within their community." When asked about her favorite part of the job, she acknowledges a sense of belonging. "I love seeing tenants communicate with each other—to overhear how supportive and willing they are to help one another. There is a visible camaraderie."



Mark Willcock
(Community
Engagement
Coordinator,
Waterloo Region),
Jahsene Gardiner
(Housing Support,
Hamilton), and
Lyuba Shelukhina
(Program Supervisor,
Waterloo Region)
take a happy selfie
in front of a loaded
van full of donations
from churches in the
Region of Waterloo.

Providing hope through new ventures

Indwell in Waterloo Region

One of Indwell's core values is hope. As a Christian charity, the hope that Jesus models is one of the cornerstones of our mission of providing affordable housing communities that support people seeking health, wellness, and belonging. As the author of Hebrews says, "This hope is a strong and trustworthy anchor" (Hebrews 6:19).

We've been experiencing this hope in the Region of Waterloo where our first housing community, St. Mark's Place, is currently under construction—while our second community at St. Peter's Lutheran Church is in pre-development.

Meanwhile, Indwell was recently asked to provide our supportive model of Hope and Homes in two buildings already owned and operated by Waterloo Regional Housing. We officially began this partnership on May 1, 2022 at Weber Street Apartments in Kitchener and Robert Kerr Manor in Cambridge. This is a new venture for Indwell, and an opportunity to provide hope to nearly 80 tenants that we otherwise would not have known!

We've also experienced hope through a food and clothing drive that was fulfilled by generous donations from churches in Kitchener, Waterloo, and Cambridge—designated for our tenants experiencing food insecurity. There's hope for residents whose lives have previously been disrupted by misfortune: hope knowing there will be a friendly face each day ready to help, and hope that each one of our tenants anticipates being treated with dignity and love because they are worth it.

Celebrating tenant leaders

As community develops in each Indwell program, tenants take leadership roles in supporting others, participating in the maintenance of the building, and sharing their gifts with others. Here are a few tenant leaders from London, Woodstock, and Hamilton.



Michelle of Woodfield Gate, London

Michelle leads a weekly gaming group at Woodfield Gate that's been gaining in popularity. "I try to invest in something that I know people will be interested in and that's going to bring community together," Michelle says. "A lot of people like to game." After playing together, Michelle helps people assemble their own gaming systems. "I get enjoyment seeing everyone have a good time."



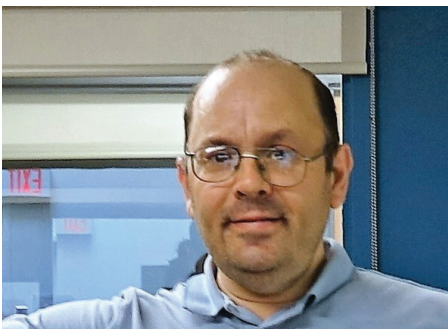
Cullen of Woodfield Gate, London

Cullen runs a bi-monthly schizophrenia support group, modelled on a peer-run group he attended with the Canadian Mental Health Association. Staff encouraged Cullen to share his insights with other tenants: "I enjoy supporting people," Cullen says. "It's rewarding to bring an opportunity for people to socialize. I ask how they've been with their condition and try to relate to their daily experiences while doing some reflection back to them."



Dianne of Harvey Woods Lofts, Woodstock

Dianne brings a smile to everyone's face! She offers transportation to other tenants for appointments and prepares meals for people when they're not well. Dianne also acts as a liaison between Harvey Woods Lofts and the Salvation Army, bringing donated grocery items for regular meals for tenants.



Tony of Perkins Centre, Hamilton

Tony is a part-time tenant employee of Indwell, cleaning at the Perkins Centre. With a history of past custodial work at a hospital and a job at Tim Hortons, he says he enjoys the work at Indwell. "I work by myself," Tony says. "The hours are good. It's nice and clean and a calm environment... It's very easy to take care of."



Ron of Perkins Centre, Hamilton

Ron is a part-time tenant employee of Indwell who keeps the exterior of the Perkins Centre looking good. Ron says, "I do cigarette butt cleanup, garbage cleanup, snow removal, all recycling, all garbage, and watering the flowers in the front in the summer."

More doors are opening!

Nearly 200 new supportive affordable apartments to open this summer



Our first Dogwood Suites tenant Austin (R) on move-in day with his mother and Abby Lawrence, Housing Support (L).

Our long-awaited Dogwood Suites program in Simcoe (Norfolk County) opened on May 24!

The building that is now Dogwood Suites was originally known as The Norfolk Inn. Once a gathering place and a cornerstone of the town, over time it became a decrepit and seedy establishment that was bringing more harm than good.

Several years ago, community and government partners worked together with us to restore this building into supportive affordable housing and a hub that would serve the community and beautify the neighbourhood. We're thrilled for what the future holds for each of the 51 tenants—and for the town of Simcoe!



Dogwood Suites. Over the summer, we'll add a few more finishing touches to the exterior of the building.



Rendering of completed Dogwood Suites, Simcoe, with quilt motif mosaic, by Invizij Architects Inc.

More programs are opening over the summer, so stay tuned for exciting events like Open Houses in your community!



For information about events, open camera app and scan QR code or visit indwell.ca/events

Programs	Construction Type	City	Expected Open Date	Units
The Oaks: Heartwood Apartments	New Construction	Hamilton	July 2022	52
The Oaks: Dairy Lofts	New Construction	Hamilton	July 2022	43
The Oaks: Ain-dah-ing	Adaptive Reuse	Hamilton	July 2022	13
Cannon Studios	Adaptive Reuse	Hamilton	August 2022	12
Embassy Commons	New Construction	London	August 2022	72
TOTAL NUMBER OF APARTMENTS				192

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