

PRESS RELEASE – October 26, 2021

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# Gamifying Training to Support Retention of Frontline Workers: Learning Inter-Professionally Healthcare Accelerator (LIPHA) Platform Helps Rapidly Close the Skills Gap in Long Term Care

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*Funding from the Ontario government will accelerate the development, testing and adoption of an innovative training approach for nurses and personal support workers*

**Toronto, ON – October 26, 2021** – An investment of \$1.2 million by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) in the LIPHA program will enable long-term care homes and postsecondary education institutions in Ontario to provide personalized, on-demand training for existing health care professionals and students considering a career in the field.

The Centre for Aging + Brain Health Innovation (CABHI), powered by Baycrest, in collaboration with the Ontario Centres for Learning, Research, and Innovation (CLRI) in Long-Term Care at Baycrest and the Kunen-Lunenfeld Centre for Applied Research and Evaluation within Baycrest's Rotman Research Institute, has rapidly mobilized LIPHA, an innovative and effective virtual simulation-based learning platform to enhance the onboarding and training of a skilled workforce in the seniors' care sector. LIPHA was initially developed by Ontario CLRI at Baycrest, George Brown College, and Launch 57.

LIPHA's game-based design and immersive learning approaches, including the use of virtual simulations, help learners to not only develop foundational knowledge on long-term care (LTC)

best practices, safety, and teamwork but also to apply their learning by practicing providing care to realistic, simulated LTC residents. Learners also receive instant feedback to help foster skills, attitudes and behaviours that support person-centered and relational care.



*The Learning Inter-Professionally Healthcare Accelerator is a simulation, coaching and community platform that provides a virtual space with simulated cases and a serious educational game for PSWs and nurses in the long-term care sector and students enrolled in healthcare programs to practice caring for virtual residents.*

CABHI's **Leap** platform, which connects diverse communities of older adults, innovators, and system partners, was instrumental in ensuring that LIPHA meets the needs and preferences of its ultimate beneficiaries – LTC clients and those who care for them. LIPHA learning scenarios have been refined based on the direct input of Leap members and ongoing engagement with Leap helps ensure that LIPHA is designed, delivered, and scaled up in a way that is informed by the lived experiences of diverse communities of older adults. Future iterations will expand the use of the Leap platform to host simulation activities to further optimize the learning experiences of nurses and PSWs.

“As a result of COVID-19, long term care is facing staff shortages unlike any we’ve seen before. We urgently need more frontline staff working to directly care for these most vulnerable members of society,” said Dr. Allison Sekuler, Managing Director, CABHI and the Rotman Research Institute (RRI), and Sandra A. Rotman Chair in Cognitive Neuroscience and Vice-President of Research, Baycrest. “Moving forward in and beyond this pandemic requires new approaches to skill building, re-skilling, and up-skilling within the profession, including novel ways of attracting more students to consider frontline health care work. We are thrilled that CABHI and the RRI are helping play such a critical role in the development, validation, and mobilization of LIPHA – supporting training for LTC staff to help all older Ontarians live their best possible lives.”

“The Ontario Centres for Learning, Research and Innovation at Baycrest and our partners are excited to offer long-term care team members and students an easy to access, high quality virtual training solution to ensure residents receive excellence in care,” said Dr. David Conn, MB,

FRCPC Vice President, Education, Baycrest Health Sciences. "Closing the skills gap in long-term care requires an innovative approach to make progress quickly. LIPHA's applicability with existing and prospective frontline healthcare workers, and its gamified and self-directed approach allows learners to become more engaged with their training yielding benefits like better retention, which leads to better care."

"I'd like to congratulate CABHI and its partners on developing the LIPHA program," said Jill Dunlop, Minister of Colleges and Universities. "This innovative app is a flexible and valuable training tool to increase the skills of both current and future health care professionals. As Ontario takes action to increase training, recruitment and retention of health care workers in the long-term care sector, I encourage all long-term care homes and postsecondary education institutions in Ontario to consider adopting LIPHA and making it a part of their existing training and orientation processes."



*Minister Jill Dunlop, Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities, visiting CABHI's Innovation Showcase and members of the LIPHA team. (L - R): Stacey Guy, Faith Boutcher, Jenna Pirmohamed, Matthew Goulbourne, Minister Jill Dunlop, David Conn, Shusmita Rashid, Daniel Galessiere.*

The MCU's funding has enabled CABHI to support Ontario-based LTC homes and education institutions with adopting LIPHA and integrating the platform with their existing orientation processes to accelerate training for PSWs and nurses. LIPHA has the potential to reach up to 80,000 long-term care staff members and up to 70,000 students enrolled in health care programs in Ontario universities and colleges.

CABHI gratefully acknowledges the support of its funders, the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, the Government of Canada through the Public Health Agency of Canada, and the Baycrest Foundation.

Learn more about LIPHA [here](#).

### **About the Centre for Aging + Brain Health Innovation (CABHI)**

A solution accelerator for the aging and brain health sector, CABHI provides funding and support to innovators for the development, testing, and dissemination of new ideas and technologies that address unmet brain health and seniors' care needs. Established in 2015, it is the result of the largest investment in brain health and aging in Canadian history. CABHI is a unique collaboration of health care, science, industry, not-for-profit and government partners whose aim is to help improve quality of life for the world's aging population, allowing older adults to age safely in the setting of their choice while maintaining their cognitive, emotional, and physical well-being.

### **About Baycrest**

Baycrest is a global leader in research, innovation, education and care for older adults, with a special focus on brain health and aging. Baycrest is home to a robust research and innovation network, including one of the world's top research institutes in cognitive neuroscience, the Rotman Research Institute; the scientific headquarters of the Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging, Canada's largest national dementia research initiative; and the Baycrest-powered Centre for Aging + Brain Health Innovation, a solution accelerator focused on driving innovation in the aging and brain health sector. Baycrest helps aging adults assess, monitor, maintain and enhance cognition through an innovative portfolio of evidence-based products and services offered through its brain health company, Cogniciti. Fully affiliated with the University of Toronto, Baycrest provides excellent care for older adults combined with an extensive clinical training program for the next generation of healthcare professionals. Through these initiatives, Baycrest has remained at the forefront of the fight to defeat dementia as the organization works to help individuals fear no age and create a world where every older adult enjoys a life of purpose, inspiration and fulfilment. Founded in 1918 as the Toronto Jewish Old Folks Home, Baycrest continues to embrace the long-standing tradition of all great Jewish healthcare institutions to improve the well-being of people in their local communities and around the globe. For more information about Baycrest, visit [baycrest.org](http://baycrest.org) or visit [FearNoAge.com](http://FearNoAge.com) for more information about our brand.

### **About Ontario CLRI**

The Ontario Centres for Learning, Research and Innovation in Long-Term Care (CLRI) strengthen quality of life and care for residents across the province. The Ontario CLRI is mandated by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Long-Term Care to be a resource for the sector by providing education and sharing research and innovations to enhance the health and well-being of people who live and work in long-term care. Find out more at [clri-ltc.ca](http://clri-ltc.ca).

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