

Hello, my name is Ryan MacDonald and on July 27th, 2020 I became the new Director of Nursing at the Westford Nursing Home. I'd like to thank Patricia Harrington and Westford's board for bestowing on me this opportunity, which could not have come at a better time as my wife, Paige, and I welcomed our first child, Emmitt, to the world on March 9, 2020 in Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta. Everything changed with his arrival and we had a strong desire to move back to our home province so he could know and would grow up around his family.

I am originally from Miramichi, New Brunswick and lived there for most of my life. I graduated from James M Hill Memorial High School in 2003. After graduation I took two years of an undergraduate Political Science degree and worked at various jobs but I had not yet discovered my passion. Unfortunately, in 2006, my father was diagnosed with kidney cancer and ultimately succumbed to it in the summer of 2007. Just before he passed, I moved to Prince Edward Island to look after him and though I did not know it at the time, reflecting back on that experience instilled in me a desire to help others who needed help, those who were vulnerable. By 2011 I had been working a year for a company called M.O.R.E. Services in Miramichi. They had residences in the community for kids and adults who had physical and mental illness and caregivers would come in to provide 24 hour care. That year I was accepted in to the Bachelor of Nursing program at the University of New Brunswick Bathurst campus. I worked full time at M.O.R.E. for the first three years of my undergraduate degree and I graduated from the program in 2015.

Shortly thereafter, in October of 2015, I accepted a job as an RN in a small town in Alberta called Smoky Lake. They had two long term care residences, one a 27 bed residence and another 23 bed residence and I worked at both of them. It was a great experience for me, working with skilled experienced RN's and HCA's who strived to provide quality care to the seniors of their community. Working in seniors' health is unique because one really gets to know the residents and their families well and you become part of a larger family, especially in small, remote communities much like Port Elgin.

In January of 2018, the Care Manager position at these two facilities became available and the Area Director at that time persuaded me to apply. I was ultimately successful and started in that role in February of that year. It came at an interesting time as AHS was restructuring their approach to seniors' care and beginning to open up Supportive Living facilities, for those people whose care could be met by 24 hour LPN care. In that vein, a decision was made to close the 27 bed Long Term Care residence and in its place open up a 41 bed Supportive Living residence, including 20 beds specifically for dementia care. The facility opened in August of 2018, the week after I returned from my honeymoon with my now wife Paige who had made the journey to Alberta with me in 2015.

I remained in that role until late January of 2020, when an opportunity to become Care Manager at a 60 bed Long Term Care residence in Vegreville, Alberta came about. I thought at the time that this would be my career position but I'm sure as most of you know, children have a way of changing your perspectives and priorities. That this opportunity came about right when we had made a decision to look for work closer to home feels like fate and with any luck the beginning of a long-lasting partnership.



I have had the good fortune to meet some of you already and look forward to getting to know more of you and to work collaboratively with you through the various workshops and conferences that NBANH organizes.

Ryan MacDonald
Director of Nursing
Westford Nursing Home