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**The Corporation of the City
of London**

Dearness Home Process Assessment

Audit Performed: October 2019 – November 2019
Report Issued: February 2020

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Executive summary

Background
The Dearness Home is a municipal long-term care facility that is owned and operated by the Corporation of the City of London (the "City"). It is the sole long-term care facility operated by the City. An administrative services and consulting agreement with Extendicare, which had been in place since 2012, ended in 2018.

The Dearness Home strives to enrich the lives of its residents and the community through the provision of the following programs: assisted living, senior care, dietary and nutritional services, recreation and therapy services, day programs, social work and spiritual care.

Objectives and scope
As part of the 2019 Internal Audit Plan, an assessment of Dearness Home's processes were conducted. The purpose and objective of this review was to assess the existing structure, delegation of responsibilities, and understanding of roles and responsibilities for administration/clerical roles, as well as the processes and controls in place for operational management within the Dearness Home. The assessment also reviewed admissions, policies, scheduling and staff training.

The detailed internal audit scope can be found in *Appendix 1: Internal audit detailed scope* of this report.

Strengths
In completion of this assessment, we identified the following areas of strength.

| Commitment to improvement | Understanding of roles | Admissions process | Shared purpose to provide resident care |
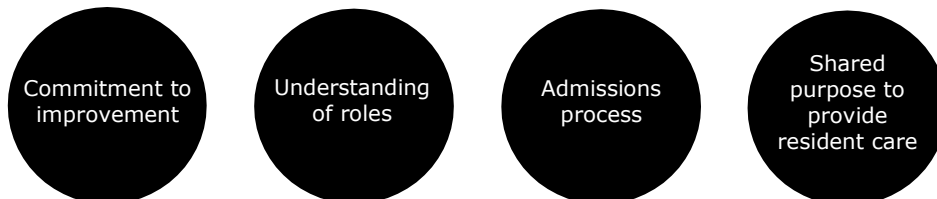
Areas for continued enhancement
Based on our assessment of Dearness Home's processes, we identified four medium priority observations that management should consider going forward. Please refer to *Appendix 2: Internal Audit rating scale* for definitions of the four-point scale below.

High priority	Medium priority	Low priority	Leading practice
0	4	0	0

Priority	Observation item	Observation description
Medium	DHPA 1.01	**Organizational design and culture**: Due to past reorganizations, a misalignment between culture and business objectives exists within the Administrative roles. Employees currently are not experiencing a connectedness to or ownership of the values and beliefs of Dearness Home.

Medium	DHPA 1.02	**Cross training:** There is an opportunity for formal cross training to be established beyond that of clerks in similar functions.
Medium	DHPA 2.01	**Standard operating procedures:** There are a limited number of documented standard operating procedures (SOPs) recorded for clerk roles in the Home.
Medium	DHPA 3.01	**Digitization of manual processes and documents:** There is reliance on manual, paper-driven processes and documentation in the Administration unit.

Priority heat map

Based on our assessment of Dearness Home's processes, the following image maps the areas of continued enhancement based on priority and anticipated ease of implementation.
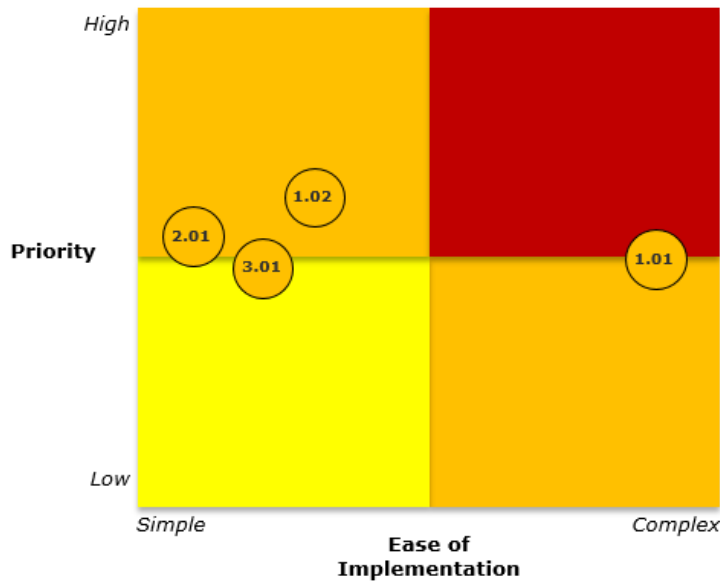
Conclusion

Based on our assessment of Dearness Home's processes, we have identified four weaknesses that should be addressed to improve process efficiency and effectiveness. The identified considerations and observations noted in this report should be addressed in a timely manner to enhance current controls and mitigate relevant risks.

Management is in agreement with and has provided action plans for all observations noted in the 'Detailed observations and recommendations' section.

Strengths

In the completion of this assessment, internal audit noted the following areas of strength:

Commitment to improvement: Management has demonstrated commitment to improving operating processes across Administrative roles. Specifically management has implemented an operations metrics tracking system, where specific operational data points are tracked and subsequent strengths and weaknesses are identified and dealt with.

Understanding of roles: Administration staff adequately understand their current roles and responsibilities, as well as reporting lines. This understanding enables Administrative staff to successfully perform their assigned duties such as admissions processing, daily census reporting and staff scheduling.

Admissions processes: Dearness Home has a well-defined admissions process. This process incorporates controls such as ensuring that only the most up to date records are reviewed when assessing resident applications, two thorough layers of review of resident applications and the use of definitive timeframes for actions to ensure compliance with timeliness in the admissions process. As well, this process has been set-up with management and the Local Health Integration Unit (LHIN) to maximize effectiveness and confirm that required standards are met.

Shared purpose to provide resident care: Management and administrative staff have a unified purpose to provide the best possible service to their residents. This goal was noted by staff interviewed during the audit and further observed in our review of the admissions process. Such a unified purpose is vital to the success and provision of quality service in a long-term care facility.

Areas for continued enhancement

In completing the procedures noted in *Appendix 4: Audit procedures performed*, internal audit identified the following areas for continued enhancement:

DHPA 1.0 – Organizational design	
Medium Priority	**DHPA 1.01 – Organizational design and culture**
Observation	Due to past reorganizations, a misalignment between culture and business objectives exists within the Administrative roles. Currently, employees are not experiencing a connectedness to or ownership of the values and beliefs of Dearness Home. As well, there is not a collective focus on collaboration, teaming and cooperation within the operations of the roles reviewed. It has been observed that there is an awareness of cultural barriers leading to business performance issues. Current management has implemented strategies to fix this with actions such as revising the employee rounding process to improve employee engagement and overall morale, and metrics tracking to identify where challenges exist. However, a prior history of changes that have been reactive rather than proactive has created impediments to achieving strategic objectives. Specific barriers identified through the audit include a perceived inequality in the delegation of activities and reporting lines between Clerks, and siloes of activities which have resulted in a lack of customer focus and alignment to the core values of Dearness Home.
Implication	Misalignment between an organization's values, employee behaviors and/or organizational systems may result in sub-optimal employee performance, employee disengagement, low employee retention, decreased focus on service delivery and difficulty achieving strategic goals.
Recommendation	From the perspective of continuous improvement and the opportunity to increase the quality service delivery to residents, management should implement the following: • Perform a job activity analysis or time study to obtain key data points on the duties of each Clerk and reorganize responsibilities to maximize efficiency. This will create a sense of pride and connectedness to tasks; • Ensure operational plans proactively address issues with engagement and employee experience, as well as, agility, digitalization, ways of working and organizational design that supports long term success; • Ensure that core values and strategic objectives are well communicated to develop a commitment and understanding of role specific values; and • Maintain a strong point of contact with City of London Human Resource Partners to ensure that the uniqueness of Dearness Home's operations is appropriately considered.

Management comments	Management agrees with the observation and recommendation. Management will meet with HR to discuss the report and to seek the necessary support to realize the action plan. The outcome for Q1 2020 is for HR to understand the action plan and be engaged in supporting and enabling improvements. In Q1 2020 management will also meet with clerical staff and their union to discuss this report and future actions. Management will communicate core values and strategic objectives to Clerical staff and work to achieve improved engagement, equitable work distribution, more efficient processes and enhanced employee experience. To seek practical, actionable improvements, management will engage external consultants with long-term care experience to conduct an activity study, identify possible process enhancements, suggest metrics to track progress, and to recommend optimization strategies and implementation plans. Following the steps above, analysis will be conducted by senior Home and City leadership, HR, and Finance to ensure that organizational systems enable clerical staff to fully support business objectives and the values and beliefs of the Dearness Home.
Responsible party and timing	*Leslie Hancock, Administrator - Long Term Care – Dearness Home* *March 2021*

DHPA 1.0 – Organizational design	
Medium Priority	**DHPA 1.02 – Cross training**
Observation	There is a lack of formal cross training established beyond that of clerks in similar functions. Employees have had informal cross training from peers to cover key aspects of their role during an absence or leave. However, this informal cross training does not ensure that all priority activities are completed in a timely manner during an absence. For example, tasks such as admissions tours, admissions metrics tracking and the filing of Long-Term Care Ministry claims may not be performed when the employees who perform these duties are absent.
Implication	A lack of sufficient employee cross training could lead to inefficiencies and/or a lack of key processes being performed in the absence or loss of staff in key roles.
Recommendation	Management should identify key prioritized tasks and roles performed, as well as appropriate back-up and second line back-up with the skills and capabilities to perform these activities, and ensure that formalized cross training occurs. This could include offering mandatory learnings on duties, the provision of relevant standard operating procedures needed to complete the role and annual check-ins to ensure that knowledge required to effectively complete the role is sufficient. Furthermore, Management could consider including a requirement for formal cross training in current job descriptions, to ensure that staff with relevant skill-sets and training are covering specific activities during staff absence or leave.
Management comments	Management agrees with the observation and recommendation. Management will work with stakeholders to identify cross training opportunities for Clerical roles to ensure business continuity, maintenance of high quality services and job satisfaction. The goal of these activities is to achieve a future state where the Clerical roles are flexible, mutually supportive, and aligned with the Home's strategic plan and vision.
Responsible party and timing	*Leslie Hancock, Administrator - Long Term Care – Dearness Home* *March 2021*

DHPA 2.0 – Policies and Procedures	
Medium Priority	**DHPA 2.01 – Standard operating procedures**
Observation	A limited number of documented standard operating procedures (SOPs) exist for Clerical roles in the Home. While an existing SOP library exists with formal SOPs for finance processes, operating procedures for key processes that Clerks perform are either informally documented or non-existent. For example, processes for staff scheduling, completion of daily census reporting and patient admissions processes do not have documented SOPs, and these are key processes that must be performed accurately, completely and timely to ensure compliance with regulations mandated by the Ministry and operational effectiveness.
Implication	A lack of documented SOPs could lead to ineffective, inefficient, or duplicated processes. As well, this may restrict new and existing staff from fully understanding relevant processes and controls when undertaking their responsibilities.
Recommendation	Management should expand upon the existing SOP library and undertake formally documenting all relevant processes in SOPs, including staff scheduling processes, daily census reporting processes and patient admissions processes. Furthermore, a cycle should be established to regularly review and revise SOP documentation. When preparing to document an SOP and creating a review cycle, Management should consider the following: • Generating an inventory of all relevant SOP documents; • Storing all relevant documentation centrally for ease of access using a Corporate approved database (e.g., SharePoint, etc.); • Utilizing version control including documenting the date of last revision with Management approval to clearly articulate completion of any review and revision; and • Adopting a schedule with assigned responsibility to regularly review and revise standard operating procedures and guidelines at minimum annually.
Management comments	Management agrees with the observation and recommendation. Management will create a complete set of current state SOPs for clerical roles by working with stakeholders to capture existing processes. As the improvements are implemented and efficiencies are realized, work will continue to define and capture those revised processes. To house this material, Dearness Home will expand upon and improve the functioning library of SOPs already established, which is centrally stored and accessed according to role. The enhanced SOP library will be an invaluable reference tool that will ensure consistent practice and also enable fast and reliable instruction (during cross training and in the orientation of new staff).
Responsible party and timing	*Leslie Hancock, Administrator - Long Term Care – Dearness Home* *March 2021*

DHPA 3.0 – Process digitization	
Medium Priority	**DHPA 3.01 – Digitization of manual processes and documents**
Observation	There is reliance on manual, paper-driven processes and documentation within the Administration unit. Specifically for administrative and clerical tasks where private and confidential resident information is not handled, such as admissions package compilation, admissions metrics tracking, nursing call-in logging and guest sign-in logging. The output from these tasks is recorded on paper and stored in binders.
Implication	A reliance on manual, paper-driven processes leads to inefficiencies in the performance of tasks, increased time and effort required to draft and locate information, an increased risk of data loss and an increased risk for a privacy breach if paper documentation is misplaced or not secure.
Recommendation	Management should identify key administrative and clerical tasks that are manual and/or paper-based and digitize these using technology that is currently available in the Dearness Home. Management should consider the following: • Compiling admissions packages electronically via PDF; • Tracking admissions metrics via excel and saving the results locally in an access controlled folder on a shared network; • Converting nursing call-in logs to electronic documents and saving them locally in an access controlled folder on a shared network; • Daily scanning of guest sign-in logs and storing these locally in an access controlled folder on a shared network; and • Utilization of extended features in PointClickCare such as, admissions process automation, performance insight tracking and analytics.
Management comments	Management agrees with the observation and will work to realize the opportunities identified in the recommendation. Building on recent success in using continuous improvement methodology to deploy text based scheduling, Dearness Home will continue to increase the use of technology. Opportunities to use technology to enhance efficiency and optimize service will be identified through stakeholder input, data collection and recommendations from the consultants. Management will ensure these process improvements are aligned with the goals of Dearness Home and the City.
Responsible party and timing	*Leslie Hancock, Administrator - Long Term Care – Dearness Home* *March 2021*

Appendix 1: Internal Audit detailed scope

Specifically, the internal audit addressed the following areas:

A review and assessment of the operational framework for administration/clerical roles at Dearness Home:
- ✓ Reviewed the existing structure of administration/clerical roles at Dearness Home and assessed the delegation of responsibilities for optimal workflow and service delivery;
- ✓ Assessed whether roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines are documented, maintained and adequately understood by administrative staff;
- ✓ Reviewed and assessed procedures to maintain adequately skilled administrative staff through training, development coaching, and cross-training;
- ✓ Evaluated administrative service delivery strategies including service delivery metrics and quality improvement initiatives; and
- ✓ Reviewed and assessed existing administrative policy management practices for effectiveness and determined whether policies are designed in an effective and standardized format.

A review and assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of Dearness Home admissions processes and internal controls:
- ✓ Assessed operational procedures and internal controls related to resident intake and discharge, services enrolment, and waitlist management to ensure procedures and internal controls are designed effectively, efficiently and are outcome driven; and
- ✓ Reviewed and assessed the Dearness Home admissions processes, such as facility tours, file management and other general client administration.

Appendix 2: Internal Audit rating scale

Individual observation prioritization

Internal Audit has prioritized each observation and recommendation within this report using a four point rating scale. The four point rating scale is as follows:

Description	Definition
High	Observation is high priority and should be given immediate attention due to the existence of either significant internal control risk or a potential significant operational improvement opportunity.
Medium	Observation is a moderate priority risk or operational improvement opportunity and should be addressed in the near term.
Low	Observation does not present a significant or medium control risk but should be addressed to improve either internal controls or process efficiency.
Leading Practice	Consideration should be given to implementing recommendations in order to improve the maturity of the process and align with leading practices.

Appendix 3: Stakeholder involvement

In conducting this assessment, the following management and staff were interviewed to gain an understanding of Dearness Home's processes and practices.

Stakeholder	Position	Division
Leslie Hancock	Administrator	Long Term Care – Dearness Home
Jason Westbrook	Manager, Business Planning Process	Long Term Care – Dearness Home
Janice Brown	Financial Business Administrator	Financial Business Support

Various – Deloitte met with various administrative/clerical staff to gather an in-depth understanding of the operational framework for administration/clerical roles at Dearness Home and performed audit procedures.

Appendix 4: Audit procedures performed

As part of the Dearness Home Process Assessment, the following procedures were performed:

- ✓ Conducted a planning meeting with the Administrator;
- ✓ Updated and issued a finalized Project Charter and request for information;
- ✓ Conducted meetings and interviews with City management and staff to obtain an understanding of Administrative and Admissions staff duties, processes and controls within Dearness Home;
- ✓ Obtained documentation regarding relevant procedures and controls to perform an inspection of:
  - – Existing structure and delegation of duties within administration/clerical roles;
  - – Administrative, orientation, training, admissions and corporate policies and procedures;
  - – Current business plan; and
  - – Management materials and communications.
- ✓ Conducted sample testing activities related to admissions activities;
- ✓ Drafted preliminary observations and verified observations with management;
- ✓ Conducted a closing meeting with key management stakeholders to validate and communicate our findings; and
- ✓ Issued this internal audit report with our detailed observations.

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