

GETTING TO KNOW US

A welcome caregiving option in Muskoka



Carole Fallon operates Carolyn's Comfort Homes in Bracebridge. The home is equipped to care for loved ones with special care needs.

According to Carole Fallon, owner/operator of Carolyn's Comfort Homes, it's clear the government is focusing on keeping the aging population in their own home as long as possible or, if in hospital, discharging them as quickly as possible to free up beds.

"This is understandable given the cost of hospital care. However, in many cases the family simply cannot provide the support," she says.

Fallon wants to raise awareness of what a family should expect if a loved one falls ill or requires special care.

"That reality check has been helped by the recent investigative series of articles on the topic by the *Toronto Star*," Fallon says of the articles that covered the stress families go through. "In fairness, it also mentioned where the local health care systems have helped despite limited resources," she adds.

Making the decision that a loved one has to move to a nursing home is very emotional for a family. Emotions run even higher when the family feels the pressure to move their loved one from the hospital. Families simply don't have the properly equipped home accommodation nor can they provide the care without major shifts in work and family life. The support traditionally provided by the Community Care Access Centres (CCACs) has also changed.

According to a recent *Toronto Star*

article: "The province is forcing cash-strapped CCACs to devote more of their resources to patients with 'high' needs who are being discharged from hospital 'quicker and sicker.'"

Fallon experienced this and saw it with others. This inspired her to open Carolyn's Comfort Homes in Bracebridge. It is not a shared accommodation, but rather is exclusive and private. It is equipped to care for loved ones with special health needs.

The home is designed for a live-in caregiver, if needed, and can accommodate visiting family members. Whether one is waiting for a nursing home bed, recovering from surgery, or in one's final days, "We provide the privacy and facility to meet the need," says Fallon.

The added value of Carolyn's Comfort Homes is tapping into Fallon's expertise. She will guide families through the maze of securing funded care support available from Community Care Access Centres and will arrange private care workers funded by either the loved one's insurance or the family. "Basically I provide a guiding hand as to what is available to care for the loved one on the most economical basis," says Fallon.

For information on Carolyn's Comfort Homes or to book a tour of the facility, log onto their website at www.carolynscomforthomes.ca Fallon can also be reached by phone at 705 706 HOME (4663).

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Arnie & Bev
Hwy 11 & South Mary Lake Road
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