

Media Release



**For Immediate Release
November 4, 2011**

Attention: Assignment Editors, Health Reporters, Lifestyle Reporters and Community News Reporters

Association establishes journalism award for long-term care coverage

Markham, Ont. – The Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA) is pleased to announce the establishment of the Gilbert Heffern Award, which recognizes journalism excellence in the coverage of long-term care.

The first award will be presented at the OLTCA Convention and Tradeshow in the spring of 2013 in Toronto. Submissions for the first award will be based on material completed in 2012. Journalists are encouraged to collect their coverage of long-term care during the coming year for submission in January of 2013.

The award was created in recognition of the contributions of the Association's former Director of Communications & Public Relations Gilbert Heffern, who recently died. Mr. Heffern worked for OLTCA from 2000 to 2011.

“Gilbert helped direct OLTCA through some of the sector's most tumultuous times,” said Gail Paech, CEO of OLTCA. “His innovative public affairs strategies helped educate stakeholders and the public about the challenges facing long-term care.

“He believed in our values as an Association and understood that if he could explain the complexities of long-term care to elected officials, policy makers, media and the public, it could ultimately improve the quality of life for residents in Ontario,” says Ms. Paech.

The award will recognize one journalist who has published an exceptional news story, feature or radio/television broadcast, or online piece, that comprehensively addresses long-term care in Ontario. The submissions will be evaluated by an independent panel of distinguished individuals in the communications, public relations and health care sector.

For more information about the Gilbert Heffern Award, visit oltca.com.

About the Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA)

OLTCA represents the operators of more than 430 charitable, not-for-profit, private and municipal long-term care homes. OLTCA homes provide care, accommodation and services to almost 50,000 seniors annually and employ about 50,000 Ontarians.

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To arrange an interview with an OLTCA representative, please contact: Michelle Gradini at (905) 470-8995, ext.39 or mgradini@oltca.com.