

2020 Community Report



2020 has been a remarkable year at GEF Seniors Housing. As we navigated the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic and the necessary public health restrictions, our **extraordinary staff** rose to every challenge. We are grateful for their resilience and innovation in finding new and creative ways to make our seniors feel safe, connected and special.

In 2020, we introduced our **Quality of Life Philosophy**, to not only provide seniors with affordable, accessible and safe housing, but to ensure our communities are also comfortable and supportive environments that promote opportunities for them to successfully age in place. Our Philosophy guides every aspect of our work and how we live out our Vision to positively influence seniors' quality of life.

We also launched the **new [gef.org](https://www.gef.org) website**, including a housing section with photo galleries of our 46 communities across Edmonton. This resource has helped seniors decide which GEF community is right for them, especially during the pandemic when in-person visits were not possible.

We continue to look for opportunities to grow. In May, **we welcomed nearly 200 seniors** to the GEF community as Westlawn Courts transitioned to GEF management. We are also excited about the **redevelopment of Lauderdale Terrace**, which will triple the number of units (from 12 to 37) available for seniors once it's completed in 2022.

There is much to be optimistic about in 2021, and we are so privileged to serve on the GEF Seniors Housing Board of Directors.

Jacque Eales, GEF Board Chair

Quality of Life

Our Mission is to provide friendly, affordable and secure housing and services for low-to-moderate income seniors. **80% of our seniors live on \$27,000 or less per year**, and it is important they have an affordable and comfortable place they are proud to call home, while still living full and enjoyable lives.

A house can become a home with the love of a pet. We were excited to introduce our new Pet Policy in 2020 which brought **40 animals**, including dogs and cats, into our communities!

At GEF, we provide our seniors living in a lodge with balanced and nutritious meals and snacks. In 2020, our Red Seal Chefs prepared nearly **1.1 million meals** for our seniors.

The holidays were different in 2020, due to the pandemic. The community saw the need and generously donated thousands of gifts to **1,265** of our seniors through the **London Drugs Stocking Stuffers for Seniors program**. These gifts lifted many spirits during the holiday season.

GEF Seniors

Our seniors celebrate some big milestones while living with us. One of the most exciting milestones for us in 2020 was celebrating a senior's **104th birthday!**

Close to 4,000 seniors call a GEF community home and an amazing **14 seniors are over the age of 100.** They have a wealth of stories and knowledge to share and we love engaging with them.

Our seniors range in age from 60 to 104. **The average age of our seniors is 79.**

In 2020, the need for affordable housing continued, as we received **1,037 housing applications.** That is almost three applications every single day!

Employees

At GEF Seniors Housing, our staff are vital in fulfilling our Vision of positively influencing seniors' quality of life. We would not be able to do what we do without the **361 full time staff, 48 part time staff** and **132 casual staff** who are part of the GEF team.

We received **13,858 employment applications** throughout 2020 and hired **180 new staff.** From Housekeeping to Kitchen Aides, to Administrative Support to Maintenance Technicians, they are all valuable additions to our team!

What sets GEF apart from other organizations is our commitment to our values of respect, integrity, well-being and accountability. Our staff show our values every single day when they step through our doors. **Nearly one in four employees** have worked with GEF for **over 10 years,** continuing to make it a great place to work.

We constantly strive to provide a healthy, safe and injury-free environment in each of our communities. We are committed to remain a housing industry leader for best practices for health, safety and wellness, which is why we have been part of the **Certificate of Recognition program for occupational health and safety for 21 years!**

Volunteers

In 2020, **601 volunteers** - 482 volunteers who live in a GEF community and 119 community volunteers - contributed to and enriched the quality of life of our seniors. Many of the recreational programs and activities are supported by these volunteers. Programs range from exercises and crafts, bingo-calling and sharing artistic talents. In 2020, our volunteers donated a total of **35,201 hours** of their time to support GEF Seniors Housing.

The Great Knitting Giveaway is one of our most meaningful events of the year. Despite the pandemic, our seniors knitted more than **5,000 items** that were donated to **four local charities!**

We welcome volunteer applications from anyone who wants to share their smiles, ideas, encouragement, enthusiasm and energy.

Donations

In 2020, due to the pandemic, we were not able to hold our Building for Life Fundraiser in person, so we shifted gears and went virtual. Our partners and community members generously donated **\$34,026** to the quality of life of our seniors and contributed to capital projects!

We accept donations year round and you can head to our website to donate today.



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