



ST. JOSEPH'S VILLA | ST. JOSEPH'S HEALTH CENTRE | ST. JOSEPH'S CONTINUING CARE CENTRE | VILLA ST. GABRIEL VILLA

## Media Release *Cycling Without Age* launched at Villa St. Gabriel Villa June 2019



What a better way to celebrate the first day of summer than to go for a leisurely bike ride! Thanks to the 2018 Chip in for Charity golf tournament sponsored by Schuster Boyd McDonald and the planning efforts of the Life Enrichment Department, eight lucky residents of St. Gabriel Villa were able to “feel the wind through their hair” as St. Joseph’s Health Centre launched the *Cycling Without Age* Program on June 21<sup>st</sup> in Chelmsford. *Cycling Without Age* is a movement that started in 2012 by Ole Kassow in Denmark. Mr. Kassow wanted to help the elderly get back on their bicycles, but first had to find a solution to their limited mobility. The answer was a trishaw bike and with his first bicycle purchase he was able to start offering free bike rides to the local nursing home residents in Copenhagen. Since that time the program has expanded into over forty countries worldwide. Villa St. Gabriel Villa and St. Joseph’s Villa are the first long-term care facilities in Sudbury to offer this unique program with the plan to extend the program to St. Joseph’s Continuing Care Centre.

*Cycling Without Age* promotes accessibility and overcoming barriers; reconnecting residents and patients with nature and their communities. The program also provides opportunity to develop new intergenerational friendships between drivers (referred to as “pilots”) and the passengers. Families will also have the opportunity to ride with their loved one as the program progresses.

Villa St. Gabriel Villa as well as St. Joseph’s Villa received a grant from Canada Summer Jobs to hire a summer student to drive the bike in its first year. Other *Cycling Without Age* chapters depend on volunteer drivers to sustain the program. Both Villas will be looking to develop this unique volunteer role in the years to come. All interested parties are encouraged to speak to any member of the Life Enrichment Department to express interest in becoming a pilot.

The community of Chelmsford warmly welcomed their new bike riders with an abundance of friendly hand waves and horn honks from passing motorists. It was truly a day to remember and reinforced that life unfolds at all ages and that it is never too late to pursue a new adventure!

Information: Ray Ingriselli, Site Administrator • Villa St. Gabriel Villa • 705-590-2580 ext. 3309