



# Family Councils Ontario Needs Assessment Report



## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction and Background .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Methodology.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Participation .....	4
Strengths and Limitations.....	4
Key Terms:.....	4
<b>Respondent Profile .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Demographics.....	5
Map.....	6
Council Members .....	6
Respondent FC Positions .....	7
Years Established .....	7
Years of Individual Involvement .....	7
<b>Survey Findings .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Location & Resources Available .....	8
Language Needs.....	8
Resource Usage .....	9
FCO Resources Meeting FC Needs.....	9
Utilization & Perceived Usefulness of FCO Resources .....	10
Resource Support.....	12
Beneficial FCO Resources .....	12
Accessibility & Ease of Use .....	13
What We Do Well .....	13
Opportunities for Improvement .....	13
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Discussion .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Recommendations .....</b>	<b>16</b>

# Introduction and Background

Family Councils Ontario (FCO) is a charitable not-for-profit organization funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC). FCO's mission is to lead and support families in improving quality of life in Long-Term Care. To carry out this mission, FCO has three primary goals:

- Cultivate Effective Family Councils
  - Build the capacity of Family Council members to develop and nurture strong and effective Councils.
  - Promote a collaborative and effective relationship amongst Family Councils, Long-Term Care Homes and Community Partners.
- Advance Public Policy & System Planning
  - Seek opportunities to inform policy to improve the quality of life in Long-Term Care.
  - Foster partnerships and relationships to increase impact.
- Mobilize Knowledge Exchange
  - Enable sharing of information, experience, ideas and expertise.
  - Engage in research and knowledge exchange.
  - Create tools and resources which empower families.

As part of an ongoing process to achieve these goals, FCO developed and conducted a Needs Assessment to help focus its efforts and plan its activities.

The following information was gathered in an online, community-based needs assessment survey conducted by Family Councils Ontario. This needs assessment was made available to all Family Council members and associated Long Term Care Home staff throughout Ontario.

The purpose of the Needs Assessment was to collect data from Family Councils and Long Term Care Home staff across Ontario to identify and understand any current gaps or opportunities for improvement in the services provided by Family Councils Ontario. The information collected in the Needs Assessment, both quantitative and qualitative, will be used by FCO to inform its work.

# Methodology

The methods used to collect data included an online survey made available to Family Councils members and staff persons between January 9, 2017 and March 6, 2017.

## Participation

Surveys were made available through an online survey portal (Survey Monkey). Family Council Members and staff persons were made aware of surveys through the January 2017 issue of the FCO eBulletin, the FCO website, and social media sites (Facebook and Twitter).

We received 42 completed surveys. Respondents included Family Council members and Long Term Care Home staff from across the GTHA.

## Strengths and Limitations

A strength of this needs assessment includes the varied and diverse response from participants across Ontario. With respondents from all across the GTHA this survey captures the needs of both urban and rural Family Council members. This helps determine the varied nature of Family Council needs.

Another strength of this survey is its design. It allowed respondents to answer questions with written responses. This allowed FCO to more accurately capture respondent beliefs and views. Additionally, it is important to note that in the making of this report respondent answers were kept as accurate to their original responses as possible to maintain the integrity of respondent answers.

A limitation of this needs assessment includes the low survey response rate. The needs assessment survey was distributed via the FCO eBulletin to 507 Family Council members and 881 Long Term Care Home staff. The needs assessment survey retrieved 42 respondents. With such a small sample group, it is difficult to achieve representativeness and thus external validity.

A second limitation was that respondents were able to skip questions they did not wish to answer. This resulted in a relatively poor response rate to written questions. Of an already limited respondent pool some questions received little to no attention, limiting FCO's ability to infer meaning in the collection of survey data.

## Key Terms:

FCO: Family Councils Ontario

LTCH/LTC: Long-Term Care Home

FC: Family Council

# Respondent Profile

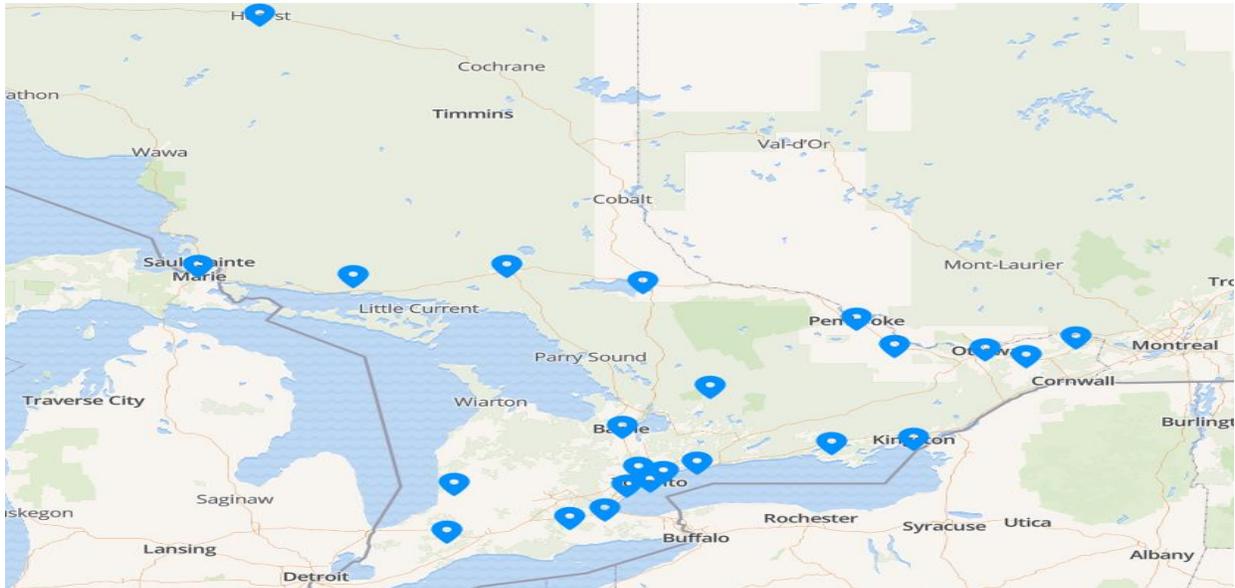
## Demographics

Respondents were located from a variety of cities and regions in Ontario. The following table lists the locations of respondents, as well as the number of respondents associated with each city in Ontario.

<i>Number of Respondents</i>	<i>Locations in Ontario</i>
1	Barrie, ON
1	Bellville, ON
1	Brantford, ON
1	Champlain, ON
1	Clinton, ON
1	Elliot Lake, ON
4	Hamilton, ON
1	Hearst, ON
1	Kenora, ON
4	Kingston, ON
1	Limoges, ON
1	Minden, ON
1	Mississauga, ON
1	North Bay, ON
2	Oshawa, ON
3	Ottawa, ON
1	Pembroke, ON
1	Renfrew, ON
1	Sault Ste. Marie, ON
2	Scarborough, ON
1	Strathroy, ON
2	Sudbury, ON
2	Thunder Bay, ON
2	Toronto, ON
1	Vaughn, ON
1	Windsor, ON

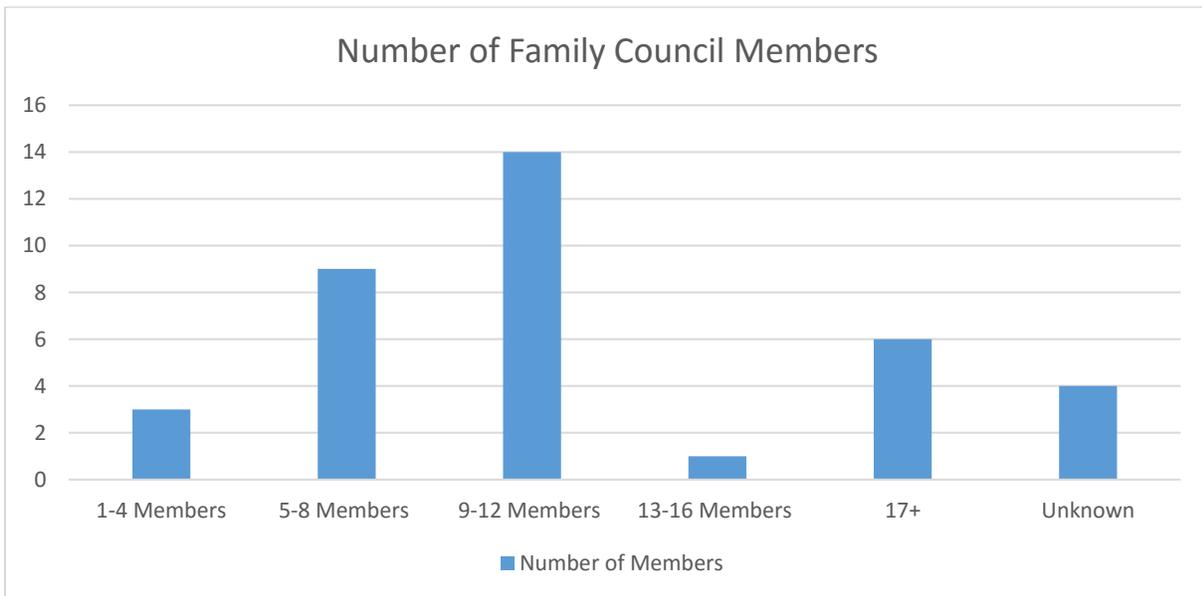
## Map

The following map acts as a visual representation of respondent locations.



## Council Members

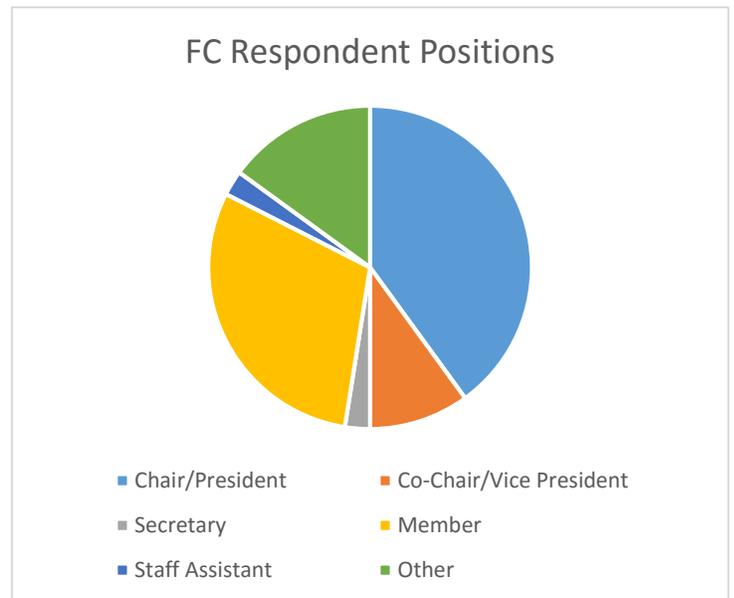
Respondents were asked to disclose the number of members in their respective Family Council. Respondent data suggests that the average Family Council has between 8-12 members.



### Respondent FC Positions

Respondents varied and held a variety of positions within their respective Family Councils. Of note however, over 70% of respondents were members of a Family Council. Other respondents identified themselves as staff assistants or other.

- 40% of respondents held the position of chair/president
- 10% Co-Chair/ Vice President
- 2.5% Secretary
- 30% Member
- 2.5% Staff Assistant
- 15% Other



### Years Established

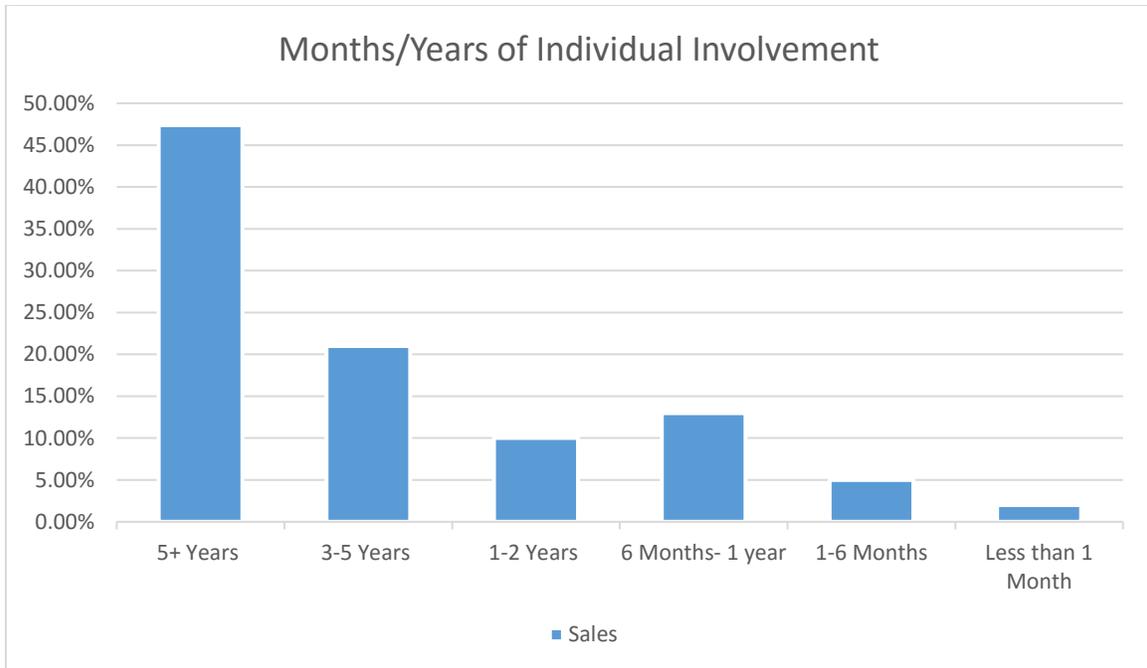
The vast majority of Family Councils represented in this survey have been established for over 5 years.

- 82.5% of family Councils have been established for over 5 years
- 5% were established less than 1 year
- 13% Established between 1 and 5 years

### Years of Individual Involvement

The graph below depicts the number of years' individual family Council members or staff assistants have been involved with their Family Council. Over half of the respondents have been with their Family Council for three years or more.

- 47% were involved for more than 5 years
- 21% were involved 3-5 years



## Survey Findings

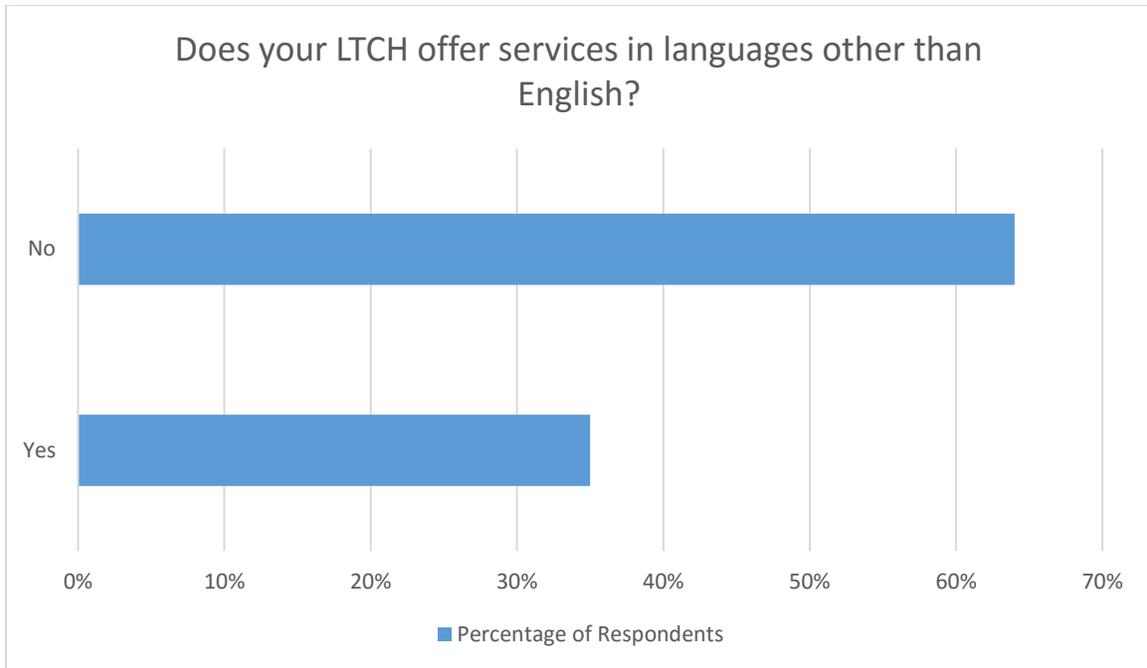
### Location & Resources Available

42% of respondents believed that the location of their Long-Term Care Home impacted the FCO resources available to them. In contrast 57% of respondents believed that the location of their Long-Term Care Home had no impact on FCO resources available to them.

Respondents that believed that the location of their Long Term Care Home impacted FCO resources available to them also noted that FCO resources were largely delivered within the Toronto/GTA area. Further to this, they believed that isolated and rural communities suffered from a lack of exposure and access to valuable resources.

### Language Needs

Over 60% of respondents identified that their LTCH did not offer services in languages other than English. Of those that identified that their Long Term Care Home did offer services in languages other than English (35%), French, Chinese, Polish and ASL were listed as other languages used. While few respondents commented regarding language needs, one respondent in particular noted that the lack of French/multi lingual resources hampered access to FCO resources.



### Resource Usage

Respondents were asked to identify to the best of their knowledge the approximate number of times their Family Council accessed FCO resources. According to respondents 60% only occasionally used FCO resources with 18% having never accessed FCO resources.

Space was made for respondents to type in individual comments. Six respondents commented. Of these six no consistent trend appeared. One individual believed that there was inconsistent advertising for events and events were booked before they had a chance to attend. Another individual was completely unfamiliar with FCO resources and was not aware that FCO had resources available for Family Councils.

### FCO Resources Meeting FC Needs

Respondents were asked if they believed current FCO resources met the needs of their Family Councils. 64% believed that “Yes,” FCO resources do meet the needs of their Family Council. 35% did not believe FCO resources met the needs of their Family Councils.

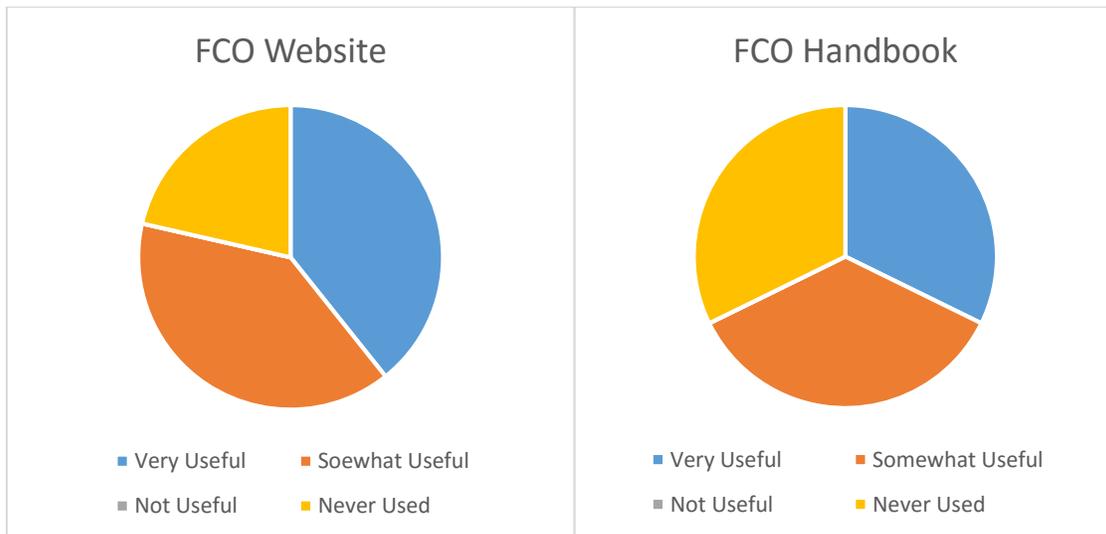
Space was made for respondents to type in individual comments. One individual expressed their wish to have access to ways to connect and get in contact with other Family Councils. Another individual wrote that FCO resources lacked reach outside of the GTA. Two respondents identified that they experienced navigational issues when accessing the FCO website. One individual wrote that they greatly appreciated FCO webinars.

### Utilization & Perceived Usefulness of FCO Resources

Respondents were asked to rate the usefulness of FCO resources. Available ratings ranged from very useful, somewhat useful, not useful and never used. The following graphs depict respondent evaluations of perceived usefulness of FCO resources.

The most underutilized resources according to respondents who rated the resources as “never used” are the FCO in person presentations (80.65%), FCO education days (75.86%), the FCO blog (75%), FCO YouTube Videos (58.06%), FCO workshops (56.67%), and FCO factsheets (51.61%)

The FCO resources that collectively over half respondents rated as either “very useful” or “somewhat useful” included the FCO website, the FCO handbook, FCO e-bulletin and FCO social media.

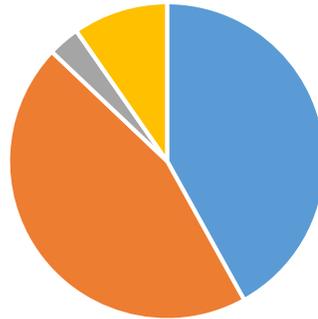


FCO Webinars



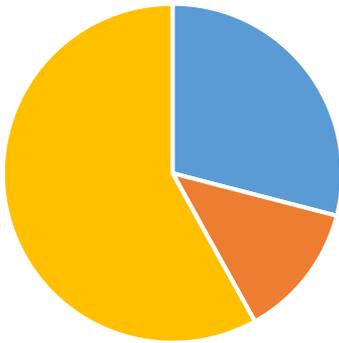
■ Very Useful      ■ Somewhat Useful  
 ■ Not Useful      ■ Never Used

FCO e-Bulletin



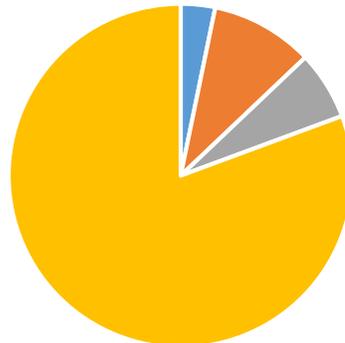
■ Very Useful      ■ Somewhat Useful  
 ■ Not Useful      ■ Never Used

FCO Youtube Videos



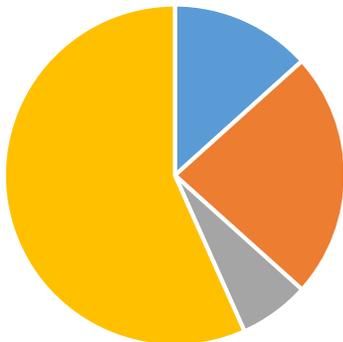
■ Very Useful      ■ Somewhat Useful  
 ■ Note Useful      ■ Never used

FCO In Person Presentations



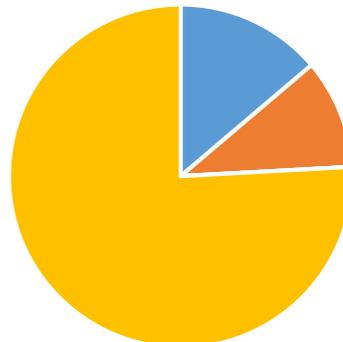
■ Very Useful      ■ Somewhat Useful  
 ■ Not Useful      ■ Never used

FCO Workshops

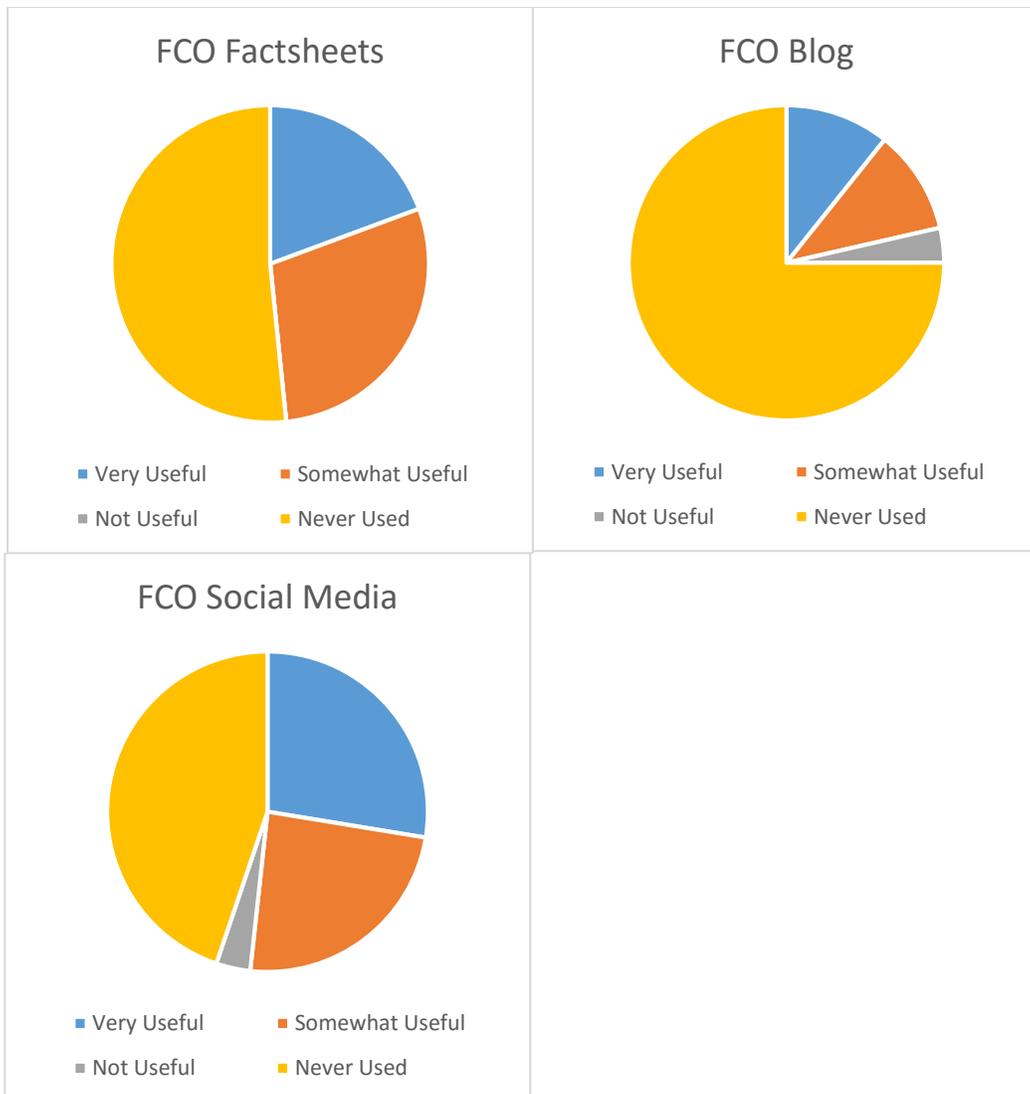


■ Very Useful      ■ Somewhat Useful  
 ■ Not Useful      ■ Never Used

FCO Education Days



■ Very Useful      ■ somewhat Useful  
 ■ Not Useful      ■ Never used



### Resource Support

Respondents were asked to rate how well they believed FCO resources supported their Family Councils. Respondents were able to pick a number between 1 and 5. Among the 30 respondents 15 (53.34) responded between a 3 and 4 on the rating scale. The weighted average of all 30 respondents was a 3.10 or 62%.

### Beneficial FCO Resources

Survey respondents were asked what FCO resources they found to be particularly beneficial to their Family Councils. 17 respondents chose to answer and 25 skipped the question. Responses varied however, the most cited resources included the FCO education days, FCO webinars and the FCO newsletter.

## Accessibility & Ease of Use

73.3% of respondents knew both where and how to access FCO resources. 73% of respondents believed FCO materials and resources were easily accessible to their Family Council. 76% of respondents believed FCO resources were both easy to find and understand. 80% found the delivery methods of FCO resources to be useful.

When asked which delivery methods they preferred 83% preferred downloadable fact sheets. 60% preferred hard copy resources. 50% preferred in person presentations and workshops and another 50% preferred videos/webinars.

Respondents were asked how FCO could make resources more easily accessible/ more user friendly. 10 respondents chose to answer. 32 skipped this question. Respondents listed the following ways FCO could improve resource accessibility and ease of use:

- Increase reach outside of Toronto by way of Conferences and in person visitations
- Include French resources
- Conduct meetings and increase paper copy resources for those that lack computer proficiency
- Increase communication with LTC Homes and administration

## What We Do Well

Respondents were asked to explain what they believed FCO does well in its delivery of resources. 14 individuals responded and 28 chose to skip the question. Respondents listed the following ways in which they believe FCO performs well in the delivery of resources:

- Emails provide accurate and up to date information
- Resources provide good direction and are easy to understand
- Webinars reach rural communities
- Resources are accurate, practical and helpful
- Attention is paid to the family voice
- Newsletters provide updates
- Advocacy
- Resources are well organized

## Opportunities for Improvement

Respondents were asked to explain where they believed FCO needs improvement in the delivery of resources. 10 individuals responded. 32 chose to skip the question. Respondents listed the following ways in which FCO could improve the delivery of its resources:

- Bilingual services
- More fact sheets for easy distribution on topics including complaint processes within LTC homes and pharmacy costs associated with non-funded medication.
- More hardcopy resources & hardcopies of webinars

- Increasing general awareness of the organization
- Reaching out to members outside of Toronto
- And increased resources to other regions in Ontario

Respondents were asked to list resources (that are not already in existence) they would like to see provided in order to enhance the functioning of their Family Council. 10 individuals responded. 32 chose to skip the question. Respondents listed the following resources they would like FCO to provide to enhance the functioning of Family Councils:

- Mediation services where FCs can go for advice and support when challenged by the difficult relationship with administration
- Resources on how to deal with members who only complain and how to educate family members on how to maintain realistic expectations
- Make more statistics available
- More examples on what other Councils are doing
- Literature on how to increase membership
- Increased support to isolated communities
- Increased awareness (bulletin) of breaking news

Respondents were asked what changes they would like to see within the next year to the resources delivered by FCO. 10 individuals responded and 32 chose to skip the question. Respondents listed the following changes they would like to see within the next year to the resources delivered by FCO:

- Bilingualism and knowing what other French speaking LTC homes exist in proximity
- An annual conference outside the GTA
- In person workshops outside of Toronto
- Increased personal support
- More resources on Alzheimer's and other common health problems of residents
- More personal contact with individual homes
- More outreach regarding news that impacts homes

Respondents were asked to list a few things they would like to learn about/build knowledge on in relation to Family Councils and/ or LTC Homes. Respondents were given a maximum of four responses. 19 individuals responded. 23 chose to skip the question. Respondents listed the following things they would like to learn about/ build knowledge on in relation to Family Councils/LTC homes:

- Behavioral support
- LTC Homes Act
- How a FC can make a difference in LTC
- Creating and shaping Council goals
- Dealing with problematic administration

- Ways to impact ministry change
- Family engagement
- Alzheimer's and Dementia education
- Health and safety
- Training on how to interact with residents
- Recruitment
- Succession planning
- Meeting facilitation
- Building interest in FC's
- Caregiver stress
- The inspection process
- Sharing resources developed by existing Family Councils and more networking/resource sharing opportunities
- How management can be more effective in its liaison efforts

## Conclusion

The Needs Assessment was conducted to help FCO focus its efforts and plan its activities based on feedback from people served: Family Council members and Long-Term Care Home staff. Overall, respondents were aware of FCO resources available, responded that FCO resources met their Council's needs, and found resources easy to access and understand.

Specific resources that respondents found useful were:

- FCO website
- FCO Guide to Starting and Maintaining a Family Council
- FCO eBulletin
- FCO social media
- FCO YouTube videos

In terms of delivery method, responses were mixed on the question of which method is preferred. 83% of respondents preferred downloadable fact sheets, 60% preferred hard copy resources, 50% preferred in-person presentations/workshops, and 50% preferred videos/webinars.

In terms of opportunities for improvement, two trends emerged: the need for French language resources/support and the need for increased delivery of services outside of the GTA. FCO staff and board are aware of these needs and are committed to exploring ways to deliver services to better address these needs.

# Discussion

While the response rate for the survey was low (see: Methodology), the results did indicate consistency in what respondents think FCO does well and what we can improve on. No trends emerged that indicated correlations between respondent location, number of members on Council, respondent position, years Council established, or years of respondent involvement on Council (see: Demographics).

It is notable that the resources found most useful (FCO website, Guide to Starting and Maintaining a Family Council, eBulletin, YouTube videos, and Social media) are those that have online access, indicating that these services have wide reach and use an accessible delivery mechanism (i.e. the Internet).

Among respondents who answered the question on which resources they found particularly useful, responses included in-person (education days) and online (webinars and newsletter) resources. In-person services delivered (i.e. presentations, workshops, and conference/education days) were among the least utilized FCO services but found to be useful. This indicates that there is great value in the in-person services, but respondents may not be aware of or have access to these services. Further information is needed to determine why or how we can address the issue.

# Recommendations

Based on the results and findings from the Needs Assessment survey, this report recommends that FCO should:

- Continue to explore ways to increase capacity in services and resources in French and in regions outside of the GTA, particularly with regards to timely, in-person services and support.
- Continue to engage regularly and openly with Family Council members, Long-Term Care Home staff, and other LTC sector stakeholders to identify training, education, and resource needs, and collaborate on ways to meet those needs.
- Expand its list of resource and support organizations that can help Family Councils build knowledge and capacity on issues related to Family Council functioning and the Long-Term Care Homes sector.

- Prioritize resource and educational curriculum development on topics identified by respondents and listed above (see: Opportunities for Improvement).
- Increase promotion of the Family Council database on the FCO website, which would enable greater sharing of resources developed by existing Family Councils and more networking/resource sharing opportunities.
- Utilize a variety of delivery methods for resources and support (online, in-person, print).

*An important limitation of the recommendations is that they must be achievable within FCO's current mission, vision, goals, and human and financial resources.*