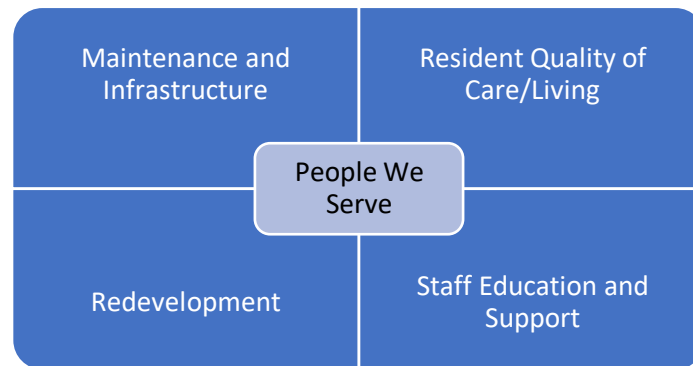




## Board Chair 2023/2024 Report to the AGM

I begin this report with an announcement that I will be stepping down from my role as Board Chair. I have completed my 3-year term but will continue in a supervisory role to ensure a smooth transition and to provide support to my successor. It has been an honour to be given this opportunity to represent Kristus Darzs Latvian Home Board and support the Home and the people they serve. The ability to take on another term, as several of my predecessors have done, was not possible. Early in my term, we moved outside of Ottawa, which limited opportunities to come on site and become more acquainted with the staff and the residents. I also continue to work full-time in a job which requires me to travel. Kristus Darzs, the staff, caregivers and especially the residents deserve a Board Chair who can allocate more time and attention. That being said, I am proud of the work that the Home's leadership team, caregivers, maintenance, housekeeping and food services staff led by Executive Direct Inese Pogule, along with the KDLH Board members delivered and supported for the past three years. Despite continued funding limitations and unknown future legislation to support redevelopment, we continued to collaboratively deliver tasks and support aligned with our mission's purpose, philosophy, and principles.

To enable the home meet the mission's purpose, we continued, as we did the previous year to focus on the following strategic goal categories.



While the executive director's report summary for 2023 provides details I wanted however to highlight a few of these and the impact they have on the home and residents.

- Cybersecurity – With the move to automating and making healthcare information more accessible to caregivers for continuity of care, healthcare organizations and their electronic medical records, including financial and personnel information are at a high risk of threat of these systems being breached. This real threat increases the importance of cybersecurity. Having a plan in place to respond to such an incident will prepare KDLH for a more secure stance



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and preparedness, but even more critical is the ability to mitigate this risk by ensuring the appropriate policies and procedures are put in place and staff trained.

- The Board supported the home's investment in securing resources to complete an in-depth assessment of cyber risk and define recommendations for the framework of a cyber incident response plan as well as associated policies and procedures.
- Electrical - the comfort and safety of our residents is a critical priority. As highlighted in the Executive Director's report, the home experienced issues with outages impacting heating and lighting. The cost to replace the faulty cables is substantial, but due to the home's management of finances and additional funding received, the home can go forward to ensure reliance on a temporary solution will not be required in the long term.
- Upgrades to our call bell system – Improved resources and tools to support communication between residents and staff are critical to quality care. A pilot of the new system was completed on floor 2 and will be implemented in the whole building.
- Finances – To keep quality staff and to recruit experienced staff, salaries must be competitive and at a minimum align with comparable homes. The board reviewed the results of the “Human Resources Comparative Assessment” developed by AdvantAge Ontario. The assessment focused on municipal, charitable, and not-for-profit long-term care homes in Ontario. The outcome of this review and the Executive Director's recommendations resulted in increases in non-union staff salaries. These increases were assessed also in context of the budget and future financing the home will receive.
- Quality of Care – A nursing care plan is a formal process that correctly identifies existing needs and recognizes a resident's potential needs or risks. Care plans provide a way of communication among nurses, the residents, and other healthcare providers to achieve quality healthcare outcomes. Without this nursing care planning process, the quality and consistency of care would be compromised. One of the quality-of-care initiatives “All About Me” was to ensure that the care plans were not only focused on the medical care requirements, but also focused on learning about each resident to drive meaningful engagement, nursing care and activities. This included descriptor on residents' doors to help staff (regular and non-regular) better know the individual resident. An unexpected outcome was residents learning more about each other.
  - The Committee are actively assessing results from the quality indicators reports but have already determined that future quality indicators will focus on enhancing resident privacy, staff listening skills, meaningful engagement with residents and optimizing response time to resident calls.
- Redevelopment – The redevelopment committee and both boards (Home and Foundation) continued to pursue clarity and ministry direction regarding the home's future beyond



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December 31, 2025 when the license for the home expires. As noted in the Executive Director's report we have just received a license extension application (April 12, 2024). The application will provide eligible homes a new license extension with a term of up to five years. (Subject to conditions and applicable approvals.). The application's due date was May 10<sup>th</sup> and was completed by the deadline. Although an extension appears to be highly possible, the need to finalize the future of the home is still required and will continue to be a priority.

The above highlights only a few of the several initiatives and investments made this year by the home to improve the quality and care delivered to the residents. It also reflects the home's leadership and board's commitment to the home's mission and strategic goal categories.

I would like to conclude this summary by first being thankful. I am thankful for all the board members, their support and commitment of time. My role would have been even more challenging had it not been for each of the member's support and assistance. I am especially thankful to the home's executive director Inese Pogule, her management team and all the staff and caregivers providing support and care to our residents. Not many of us have the skills and strength of character and empathy to provide care to others while also navigating their own lives and challenges. They all deserve our appreciation and acknowledgement. I am also thankful to the Foundation and their support, as well as the community who made key investments into the home possible with the generosity of donations. Finally, I thank each resident and their family members for entrusting the support and care to KDLH. Our commitment to the residents, the people we serve is not taken lightly.

It has been a humbling experience and one that brings to light decisions most of us will be faced with as we age. I vividly remember the trepidation I felt when my family made the decision to place my mother in Kristus Darzs. For us, like many others, the realities of the kind of care a person with dementia requires facing the reality that it takes more than love and desire, but also the skills and facilities that only a home like Kristus Darzs can offer. Knowing that Kristus Darzs and all the caregivers were there to provide the required added support and care for my mother was comforting despite the weight of the decision. I will forever be thankful, but also honoured to take on the role of board chair.

Respectfully,

*Karina Kirss*

KDLH Board Chair