



SMILE helps seniors choose and manage services that work best for them so they can remain in their own homes.

SMILE Overview

SMILE (Seniors Managing Independent Living Easily) connects seniors at risk of losing their independence with local services, helping them to remain in their own homes. Clients and their caregivers can choose who provides services and when. VON coordinates services, which are then delivered by local agencies, businesses and individuals.

Who does SMILE serve?

SMILE serves frail and elderly seniors who, because of functional or cognitive impairment, need help with essential daily activities and are at risk of being admitted to long-term care or hospital.

Referrals to SMILE are received from all sources, including self-referrals, caregivers, Home and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS), hospitals, physicians or other community agencies.

What do SMILE clients receive?

Eligible clients are assessed to identify their health concerns, level of ability with everyday tasks, care and practical needs and the needs of their caregivers. A care plan is created based on these needs.

The client and caregiver then choose which providers deliver the services and supports they require. SMILE staff initiate service delivery. For clients below a certain income threshold, the SMILE program provides an annual budget to pay for services. For clients whose annual income exceeds the threshold for service funding, VON offers service navigation to assist with maintaining independence. Clients are re-assessed annually or when their situation changes.

SMILE coordinates and funds a range of services and supports that meet the care and practical needs of clients and caregivers. Meals on Wheels, laundry, shopping, foot care, bloodwork, transportation, housekeeping, respite, snow removal and grass cutting are some examples.

What are the benefits of SMILE?

- SMILE clients choose who delivers their services and when. This could be: a traditional community support service provider; a recognized business providing community support services, such as cleaning or laundry services; or an individual or an unincorporated group.
- SMILE helps ease the stress and burden on caregivers, who typically arrange care and services for their loved one and often face their own health concerns.
- SMILE gives clients an annual budget (where eligible) to help cover the costs of services and supports.
- SMILE recognizes that use of non-traditional and individual providers of services and supports can increase access to services, particularly in rural areas.
- SMILE reduces the need for emergency department visits and hospital admissions.

What do clients think of SMILE?

According to a 2022 VON survey of 600 SMILE clients and 53 caregivers:

- 99% of clients rated their overall satisfaction with the SMILE program as “extremely satisfied” or “satisfied”
- 85% had not visited the emergency department in the past six months
- 72% of those who did visit the ED did so only once
- 65% of SMILE clients had not been admitted to the hospital in the past six months
- 69% felt their health improved because of the SMILE program
- 96% reported that SMILE helps them continue living at home
- 100% of caregivers said SMILE decreased their stress

About VON

VON is a highly trusted charity that delivers home care and community support services to more than 10,000 people in Ontario and Nova Scotia every day.

Together with our employees, our volunteers and our clients and their families, we help our clients stay healthy, live well and remain active. The innovative clinical, personal and social supports we provide keep our clients living in the safety and comfort of their own homes and communities—where they want to be.

VON is accredited with Exemplary Standing by Accreditation Canada.

Our Values

- **Respect** – we support others honestly, openly and fairly.
- **Compassion** – we listen and serve with sensitivity, empathy and concern.
- **Excellence** – we commit to everyday improvement in all that we do.



Not all services are available at all VON sites. For more information and services available in your area, please contact your local VON office. or visit www.von.ca



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