

Speaker Biographies

Iris Consulting

In 1991 Jill O'Donnell formed Complete Geriatric Care (now Iris for Seniors), the first private sector organization in Canada to provide seniors, their families and their professional advisors with information, education, advice, advocacy and counseling regarding seniors' needs and issues.

Jill and her team founded the company because they too had aging parents and had lost loved ones. And, even though they were professionals in the field, they found the lack of compassion, time and the almost overwhelming complexity of the "seniors' system" so frustrating that they realized there was a need for a better way.

For more information, go to:
www.irisforseniors.com

Jill O'Donnell, RN, PHN, BA

Jill O'Donnell, the founder of Iris Consulting for Seniors, is well known as a pioneer in the field of gerontology and as an expert consultant on aging issues. She has worked extensively in community and institutional settings and has knowledge of both private and public sector resources. Her specific interest is in the treatment and housing of frail elders and those suffering from a cognitive impairment. She has been a presenter at regional and international conferences and has been featured in national newspapers, magazines, local radio and national TV.

Gail Houston, RN, BA, MN

Gail Houston has had a lengthy career in health care, which has included clinical nursing, education and administration in psychiatry, mental health and gerontology. Mid career she worked as a consultant in nursing and hospital administration. Since the mid 1990's her focus has been gerontological nursing. Gail's education background includes an RN, a BA in sociology, MN (masters in nursing) and a graduate diploma in Gerontology.

"As the person you care for ages, you realize that preserving the dignity and respect they deserve is just as important as the love you naturally feel. Where to turn, where to begin? That's our starting point."