info

HR Systems Strategies Inc.
and info:HR software
Client Newsletter
Winter 2013

Happy Holidays!

From the team at HR Systems Strategies Inc.: Hemu, Andy, Michelle, Barbara, Bill, Frank, Mostafa and Jerry

HR SYSTEMS STRATEGIES
HUMAN RESOURCES S

Long-time info:HR Customer Town of LaSalle chalks up speedy Vadim integration!

by Barbara Chicago, Customer Service Representative

The offices of the Town of LaSalle, located on the outskirts of Windsor, Ontario, have gone through some significant changes to update and prepare for the expansion and grwoth expected in the region. The administrative office has been relocated temporarily while their old Town Hall is being reconstructed, with a new Town Hall scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2014.

In the midst of their movement and growth, the Town also reassessed their current software requirements, specifically the finance system, with a clear focus on functionality and automation of processes. "We felt that we needed to move our finance system forward and after investigating a number of other software products, Vadim was our chosen vendor," explained Diane Hansen, Supervisor of Accounting.

Was there was consideration given during the search for the financial system that the payroll component be able to integrate with info:HR, or was the selection based solely on accounting needs analysis? Diane responded, "Because we have info:HR, that was our starting point. We know that info:HR is such a robust product, it was a conscious decision to keep info:HR and ensure that any payroll system would be able to be fully integrated with info:HR."

Once the decision was made to go with Vadim, the Town contacted Jerry Rowland, HRSS Chief Technology Officer. Jerry began working with Diane and Donna Philp, Payroll/Benefit Officer, and with Vadim personnel, through conference calls, meetings and data mapping discussions, to determine the data that would be transferred between the two systems. Integration requires unique configuration

for each client; this configuration details the data flow of information. Both Vadim and HRSS provide consistent support to maintain the data flow over time.

The Town is in a unique situation, running a weekly payroll, which requires everyone involved to meet their deadlines. All members of this implementation team stayed on task, making the integration a complete success. Diane acknowledged, "The assistance from Jerry and Hemu in helping us through this was greatly appreciated. The time that Hemu, Jerry and Donna spent working with the systems in advance was invaluable." Jerry continued, "With a weekly payroll there is pressure to ensure that the configuration is done quickly and that it is 100% accurate."

In some cases integration programming can take months to perfect; the integration for the Town is remarkable in that the time it took to complete was approximately one month. "From the time Hemu became involved from start to finish we went live in three weeks. There was a lot of programming work involved, doing configuration and testing, writing and running SQL scripts to manipulate data to ease some of the data entry. There was also a lot of work on Donna's part, in order to get data into the system so that it would be available to transfer to Vadim," Jerry said.

In the case of the Town, most of the employee data was already present in info:HR, which enabled the HRSS team to do an Initial Data Load (IDL) into Vadim. An IDL takes as much data as possible from an existing system and, through various programming efforts, transfers the data to another system.

At the Town of LaSalle, info:HR is where the employee data resides and data from info:HR was transferred to the payroll system. Having the ability to do an IDL greatly reduces the manual data input effort required by clients.

This is both Donna and Diane's second interface/integration between info:HR and a payroll module. When asked to reflect on their previous experience Donna said, "This process was much smoother and faster, info:HR transferred all the data, this way we only had to put the earnings in to the new payroll system. With the old system it was more of a manual process where we had to set up each employee."

"We acknowledge that we haven't used info:HR to its fullest potential. Now that we have this integration up and running, we will be able to move forward with some of the reporting that info:HR can provide to us. As well, we can look at some of the other add-on modules available to us," remarked Diane.

Prior to the Vadim integration, the Town was using info:HR primarily for basic information on employees and salary tracking. Now, with the Vadim integration, they are tracking Benefits and Beneficiaries, deductions that were previously being tracked manually. "Now the deductions go right on to someone's pay and automatically go the bank, whereas before

Town of Lasalle`s Donna Philp, Payroll/Benefits Officer (sitting) and Diane Hansen, Supervisor of Accounting

we used to have to process AP and send it out separately," Donna said. Donna and Diane are planning on using the Attendance functions in info:HR to better track Entitlements.

"We are pleased to work with the respective staffs on this project for the Town of Lasalle which implemented the Vadim financial software system. To paraphrase Jerry Rowland, "this project is proof-positive great things can be accomplished in a short time period if stakeholders work efficiently toward common goals and deadlines; to communicate well and understand their respective tasks and deliverables. We have performed a significant number of Vadim integrations increasing our ability to anticipate issues which may arise. Our practical know-how and expertise will benefit future clients."

Tips and Techniques

by Hemu Mistry, Application Development and Support Manager

Hello everyone! I hope you all had a great spring and summer, and are looking forward to the upcoming holiday season.

New release In this issue I will be talking about our new Release 8.0 of info:HR. I'll outline a few of the many new features we have added in this new release. Hopefully, it will entice you to download info:HR 8.0 as soon as we announce its availability!

Demographics To start with, in info:HR 8.0 we have changed the layout of the Demographics screen into a tabbed format, so that all fields are no longer on one screen. They have been grouped onto Personal, Organizational and Miscellaneous tabs. This makes the screen look a lot clearer. You can now easily access the relevant demographics fields by clicking on the appropriate tabs. This is just a change to the layout, and there is no change to the business logic on this Demographics screen, so it won't require any special training for you.

Photos We have introduced a new option of storing Employee Photos in an external file folder instead of continuing to store them in the info:HR database. You have the option to export the photos out of the info:HR database and into a file folder at the time of upgrading to Release 8.0, or it can be done at a later stage. This option will help reduce the size of the info:HR database, something that IT will appreciate. Also, the maintenance of the employee's photos will be easier. If you need to change an employee's photo, all you have to do is copy/paste a new photo into the photo folder, replacing the existing photo. You still have to make sure that the name of the photo file matches the employee number in info:HR, and that the file is in JPG format. This new photo will then be visible when you access the respective employee's Demographics screen again.

The external folder holding the photos is specified on the new Setup menu \ Company Preference \ File Locations screen. If you export the photos as part of upgrading to Release 8.0, the folder location will be set automatically. If you do it at a later stage, you'll have to go to that new screen to enter the folder location.

If at any point you decide to change the location of the photo folder, simply change the location on the Setup menu \ Company Preference \ File Locations screen and then copy the photos physically from the existing photo folder location to the new location.

Security Another new function that we have added is on the Security Master screen under the Setup menu \ Security. These are the "View Own" options on several of the employee's data entry screens. It's designed to be used on a supervisor's security profile, where the supervisor sees screens for himself/herself, and those of his/her subordinates.

When "View Own" is checked, the user will be able see his/her own respective employee information, as well as that of the subordinates. When "View Own" is not checked, the user will not be able to see his/her own information, but will still see the information of the subordinates. An example of where this might be used is the Succession Planning screen, where the supervisor could see the succession plans of his/her people, but not his/her own succession plan.

In addition to the above on the Security Master screen, New Hires can now be added by selected users only. This can be achieved by checking/un-checking the "New Hire" checkbox beside the "Employee Demographics / Dates" security option under Basic 1.

These are just a few of the new features added to info:HR 8.0. There are many more other new features added, which you can find out about by referring to our Release 8.0 documentation. We have also updated our User Manual and the Year End Procedure documentation on our website, so once Release 8.0 is out please download them at your convenience and take a look.

Year-end As we know, for many of you the vacation, sick and hourly entitlements period ends in December thereby requiring you to do the year end procedure in info:HR. So, I recommend you to download the latest Year End Procedure documentation from our website.

New this year, as Barbara and Michelle describe elsewhere, is the series of Year End webinars we will be conducting. These sessions will go through the steps you need to perform in order to complete your year end. These, along with the documentation, should make you feel comfortable tackling this once-a-year task.

info:HR Support Web Site The info:HR support web site, www.infohr.com, contains patches, release instructions and User Manuals for all info:HR modules. You can access the Support page at any time using our Client Login hyperlink. You will need to have your Serial # and Password to log into this page. Please email our support line if you do not have this information (sorry, we can't give this information out over the phone).

Obtaining Patches We update our website with the latest patches at least twice a month. These patches contain fixes and/or new useful functionality. We recommend a regular download of the latest patches from our website. It's easy; each download comes with installation instructions and you can also download the Current Release Documentation which provides you with the latest features added to the system and how to use them. The info:HR patches are cumulative, so if you download the patch after two months, you will still get all the fixes and new useful functionality provided in those two months—you will not miss out on anything. The links to download the latest info:HR release and latest info:HR patch are the same. An info:HR patch mainly contains fixes and is uploaded on our website at least twice a month, whereas an info:HR Release contains complete new functionality and/or database structure changes and is released once every 12-18 months. The release comes with an info:HR version # change, e.g. from 7.9 to 8.0 ,and then for any patches released after that the release # is suffixed with a patch #, e.g. 8.0.1, 8.0.2, etc.

If you have any questions or comments, or need any assistance with any of the functionality highlighted here or mentioned in our Release 8.0 documentation, please do not hesitate to call our support line. I hope this section has been as informative as previous ones. Once again, see you all in our next issue!
Happy Holidays everyone!!

Letter from the President

by Andy Staniewski, President

As 2013 winds down, a number of thoughts come to mind as I review the year. First of all, welcome to the new clients who joined the info:HR user community in 2013. And then, the support from existing clients was tremendous. Together it added up to HR Systems Strategies Inc.'s most successful year ever. Thank you!

This year we managed to visit more clients face-to-face than ever before. These get-togethers are valuable; we hear your thoughts and ideas on new product enhancements, we find out how we can better support you, and we gain an understanding of your Human Resources Systems requirements moving forward. We are also able to identify areas where you could benefit from using more product functions and features.

Jerry and his product development team were very busy getting out new releases of info:HR and ESS (see details elsewhere in this newsletter). With all the new client implementations, existing client projects, and training requirements, the volume of work kept us on our toes. We love to be busy, so we hope the trend continues in 2014.

Best of all is the character and quality of clients we are fortunate enough to work with. We have a large not-for-profit client base with clients serving children with mental health disabilities and autism, as well as organizations providing shelter to those in need and healthcare services in their communities. We are happy to help a little by making a positive impact on your Human Resources needs and requirements.

On behalf of the team at HR Systems Strategies Inc., we thank you for your continued support and wish you a Happy and Safe Holiday Season. See you in 2014!

Get to know...

... your support team: Barbara Chicago, Customer Service Representative

In this issue, you get to know more about our 'newbie'. Barbara has been with HR Systems Strategies for just over a year now. We definitely threw her in the deep end, and she has come up swimmingly well.

info: When did you start at HR Systems Strategies Inc. and what has been your role/career progression?

Barbara: I am the newest member of the HR Systems Strategies team, beginning my position in November of 2012. The last year has been a whirlwind of learning and meeting our clients.

My career began in manufacturing 20 years ago; during my career I have held various positions at varying levels mainly in an administrative capacity. During those years I was fortunate to have worked with incredible managers who provided me challenges and opportunities to explore and grow in my career. I began my career analyzing processes policies and procedures in place, making recommendations for improvement. I was responsible for developing new processes, policies and procedures that were more efficient, while remaining compliant with a number of regulatory bodies with in the industry.

Later, I was able to grow into other areas including Client Relations, Training and Development and finally Human Resources.

info: What do you like about working at HRSS?

Barbara: There are so many things I enjoy about working with HRSS. The team of people I am privileged to work with would be the one thing I like most. Everyone on the team,

without exception, has been so welcoming and helpful to me while I get myself settled and up to speed. The variety of work that I am able to do comes a very close second to the people. I get to meet with our existing and prospective clients, assist in providing information on more efficient ways of using our systems, conduct training, and support clients over the phone with answers to questions. It is never the same day twice and I really love that.

info: What is your favourite memory and what has been your best experience at HRSS?

Barbara: My favourite memory would the Holiday Dinner - it was so nice to meet everyone and put faces to the voices I speak with every day. Working remotely, it is not often we get together. My best experience is the OMHRA conference this past September, again being able to meet so many of our clients in one place was a really great experience.

info: What are you most looking forward to in regards to your future projects/work at HRSS?

Barbara: There are so many different aspects of my position; there are so many things to look forward to. If I had to pick one, it would be becoming more familiar with our clients and their varying requirements - helping them out through meetings, calls and training to enhance their use of our systems and streamline their processes. I never get tired of hearing, "That is so easy and makes it so much faster."

info: What do you like to do outside of work?

Barbara: Outside work my family takes most of my time with the five of us running in five directions most of the time. I get a lot of joy watching my children in their various sports and activities. When my family responsibilities are looked after I enjoy spending time with good friends and extended family.

info: What is your favourite movie / TV show / restaurant / sports team?

Barbara: There are so many… I really enjoy a good mystery/suspense movie; this summer's favourite was "Now You See Me". Survivor is our family TV time; Walking Dead is the adult TV time. The Stone House Restaurant in Burlington hits the top of my favourite list this fall. They have the most amazing escargot dish I have ever tasted. I enjoy CFL football although I don't root for any one team. I have heard that Andy is a die-hard Tiger-Cat fan, so perhaps it would be wise for me to start cheering for them. Oskee-wee-wee!

Rooms with a view: Pacific Sands Beach Resort Integrates Accpac Payroll to info:HR

by Michelle Beasley, Business Development Manager - West

Located beachfront on spectacular Cox Bay on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Pacific Sands Beach Resort sits on the edge of Pacific Rim National Park, a short scenic drive from Long Beach as well as the charming, seaside village of Tofino – famous for local culture and artisans.

HR Systems Strategies has been proud to work with Pacific Sands Beach Resort since summer 2012 when info:HR, which houses and organizes all employee information, along with an interface with the Accpac payroll module, were implemented. There was a strong emphasis on getting the payroll interface implemented as this was the main focus.

Prior to bringing in info:HR and an interface with Accpac, Pacific Sands ran into the common problems that we see on a regular basis: difficulty in keeping employee data in a centralized location; redundant data entry; manual reports; and, Microsoft Excel being the main program to store HR and payroll data. Pacific Sands' main objective was to streamline HR and payroll processes so that data entry and validation time could be spent on other important tasks.

The decision to choose info:HR was simple – they wanted a system that could work well with Accpac. With the interface between payroll and a HRIS being mandatory, Pacific Sands did their research to scout out other programs in their investigation process.

Their decision to go with info:HR was based upon several factors:

- HRSS is a Canadian company with local support.
- info:HR is able to interface with Accpac, with a strong track record at other clients.
- info:HR itself is a strong and robust HRIS that allows all employee data to be stored in a centralized location.
- The ability to have any number of documents imported into the system for each employee saves searching for and sorting through paper files.

Since the interface has been up and running, Pacific Sands is reaping the benefits of having the system installed on any number of managers' computers without any additional restrictions. This allows the managers to view their employees' data and run numerous reports at their discretion.   "Once we got info:HR working together with Accpac, we noticed time savings and efficiencies in avoiding duplicate data entry. Plus, being able to manage and access employee information in one place with info:HR made life easier for the staff working with the system," says Amanda Moore, Chief Accountant.

Jerry Rowland, HRSS Chief Technology Officer, adds, "We are really pleased with how this interface went – it's our fastest Accpac implementation to date."

With the successful completion of this project, Amanda is happy to say good-bye to her Excel spreadsheets and manual reports, allowing her to focus on more key administrative tasks. We look forward to continuing to work with her and her colleagues in assisting with their HR and payroll processes by using even more of the functions available with info:HR.

New service: Database Review

by Barbara Chicago, Customer Service Rep

Are you getting the most out of info:HR? We are now providing a Database Review service. This service is a new offering for HR Systems Strategies and we believe it will be very valuable to you.

During a database review we will look at how you are storing information, coding structures, and the processes you use within info:HR. Some of the areas we will focus on are:

Position Master	Leave of Absence
New Hire Process	Entitlements
Company Preferences	Continuing Education Coding
Security Master	Reports
Employee Flags and Follow ups	

Once we have a firm understanding of your system and how you are using it, we will then provide you with a formal report that will document recommendations on implementing new or modified procedures, enabling you to use info:HR to its fullest capacity.

Over the past year we have provided this service to a number of our clients and the response has been very positive. Clients may not always take advantage of info:HR's many advancements over the years. On client visits we hear time and time again, "I didn't know it could do that." If you find that you still use spreadsheets to manage information, you are a good candidate for a Database Review.

If you would like to find out more about this service, please contact me at barbarac@infohr.com. Start 2014 on the right foot with a fresh look at how you can further streamline your HR processes and contribute more to your organization!

Product Update Corner

by Jerry Rowland, Chief Technology Officer

Wow! It has been a very busy year on the product development front culminating in new releases of our two major products. I've highlighted some details below together with timeframes when you will be able to download these releases:

Client-Server Release 8.0

Effective November a pre-released version of info:HR 8.0 was made available to a select group of clients. The general publication of info:HR 8.0 will be available in late January 2014. The details of the release will be sent via email to all clients. Release 8.0 user-highlights include:
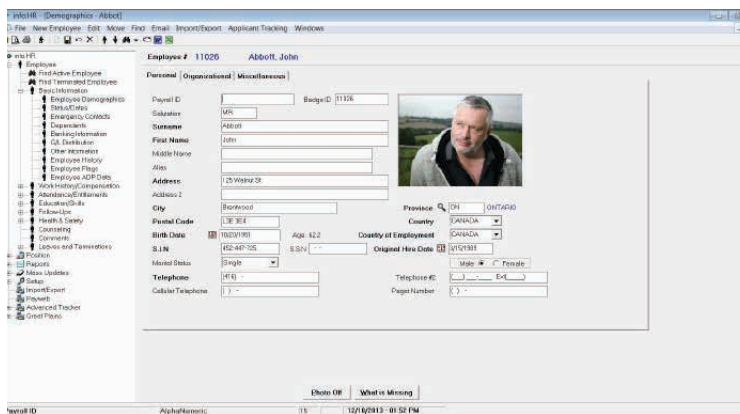
• Redesign of the Demographics page - Demographics page is broken into three tabs: Personal, Organizational and Miscellaneous.

• Automatic emails when Follow Ups are coming due.

• Increase in the number of grid steps in the Position Master.

• Modifications to a number of existing reports and several new reports.

• Security master changes to control new features, as well as expanding the existing security master's current options.

• Splitting of Company Preferences into three categories: General, File Locations and Email Notifications.

ESS/Timesheets Release 5.0

Beginning in late January 2014, the new release of ESS and Timesheets will be made available. Release 5.0 user highlights include:

• Application upgraded to use .NET version 4.0.

• Fully compatible with IE versions 8,9, and 10.

• Updating of the employee's Outlook calendar whenever a Vacation or Time Request is approved.

• Flags added to the Benefit and Dependent pages to show/hide lines with past-dated End Dates.

• Limited colour coding on the Calendar display.

• An additional Timesheet data entry page that does not use pre-defined templates. This page is called "Simple Timesheets."

When the releases are available, an email will be sent with instructions for downloading and installing this update. Should you want this email sent to a specific individual(s), please send the person's name, telephone and email address to me at jerryr@infohr.com.

Client-Server Release 8.0 includes a redesign of the Demographics page

Woodbridge and HR Systems Strategies work together to integrate info:HR to SaaS Applicant Tracking Solution

by Jerry Rowland, Chief Technology Officer

On behalf of The Woodbridge Group, an auto-parts manufacturer with operations world-wide, HR Systems Strategies embarked on a new solution. The Woodbridge Group selected a SaaS Applicant Tracking solution called HRsoft. HRsoft provides Woodbridge the ability to manage external hires, internal promotions, lateral moves and transfers between facilities. As part of the implementation group, a module within info:HR was developed. Components of this module include:

1. Preparing master file, positions and organizational structure, data to be extracted from info:HR and feed into the setup of HRsoft.

2. Automatic pulling of candidate information from HRsoft into info:HR.

3. Integration within info:HR to quickly complete the needed processes for each transaction including the data transfer to outside systems such as payroll, benefits and time management solutions.

4. Reporting capabilities as identified.

During 2014, we fore see continued development with HRsoft. This exciting new development has possibilities to expand to the general info:HR clientele. More about this development will be announced in future newsletters or product announcements.

Calling for new report$!

Have you created some of your own reports using Crystal Report Writer? Are you still using Excel to manipulate our reports or create your own reports? Do you have new ideas or suggestions on how to improve info:HR reports? We would love to hear from you! Your reports or ideas may be useful to other info:HR clients. Our product development team is always on the lookout for new reports and ideas to improve and add to info:HR's reporting catalogue. If you have sample reports or ideas, email them to me at jerryr@infohr.com. We evaluate new features and functions for ideas on a regular basis. Throughout the year, we release patches that may include reports and ideas sent in by our user-base.

As an added incentive, we will give three lucky winners **$100 in gift cards** for the best submissions received by **February 28, 2014.** With your help we can make info:HR better for everyone!

# Have you Seen the Latest info:HR Manuals?

by Bill Kennedy, Business Development Manager

Our User Manuals for info:HR, Employee/Manager Self Serve, and Online Timesheets were recently rewritten and getting very positive reviews from clients who are using them. They are available for download from the client portion of our website.

To get them, click on the Client Login on our home page at www.infohr.com:
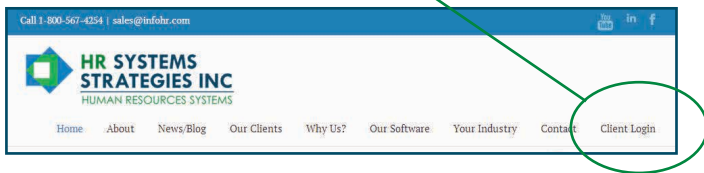
You'll be prompted for your serial number and password.

If you don't know your serial number or password, please email support@infohr.com to request them. Sorry, in order to protect security of access, we can't give them out over the phone.

When you enter your serial number and password, you'll be transferred to the main support page, where all our documentation is kept.

Once there, you'll see the links to all the manuals:

Client-Server Manuals

1. User Manual - Employee Menu Release 7.9
2. User Manual - Position Menu Release 7.9
3. User Manual - Reports Menu Release 7.9
4. User Manual - Mass Updates Menu Release 7.9
5. User Manual - Setup Menu Release 7.9
6. User Manual - Year End Procedures Release 7.9

Web Module Manuals

1. User Manual - ESS/MSS Release 4.2
2. User Manual - Timesheets Release 4.2

Simply click on the section you're interested in. The associated PDF file will open, and you can then save it to your computer.

Year-end Webinars!

by Michelle Beasley, info:HR Training Manager, and Barbara Chicago, Customer Service Rep

Earlier this year we reached out to you to determine the level of interest in a pilot project, Webinars. Due to an overwhelming response to our inquiry we will be beginning our Webinar series this January. Thank you for the enthusiasm!

The webinar series is free of charge to clients. A GoToMeeting session will be scheduled and attendees will be notified by email with instructions on how to log in to the webinar. There will be approximately 30 – 45 minutes of instruction provided by Michelle Beasley or Barbara Chicago on the topic, followed by a question and answer period at the end of the instruction, for a total time of approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Attendance is limited to 24 people at each session. More than one person from each organization can attend the webinar, however, we ask that you use one registration per organization and view the webinar as a group to ensure we can reach as many of you as possible. You are not obligated to stay for the entire webinar or question period.

We are beginning our series with a session on Year End Procedures. All webinars will begin at 1:00 pm Eastern to accommodate various time zones. Dates are as follows: Wednesday January 15th and 22nd (for clients who have a December 31st year end), and Wednesday April 16th and 23rd (for those clients who have a March 31st year end).

To secure a spot, please send an email to Barbara at barbarac@ infohr.com. Subject line must be as follows: "Webinar <and your preferred session date>". If you have further questions please submit a separate email. See you there!

First info:HR User Group

by Barbara Chicago, Customer Service Rep

We are pleased to announce that, thanks to the initiative of one of our clients, an info:HR user group has been created and met recently for the first time. Currently, the group consists mostly of municipal clients in south-western Ontario, however, the group is open to all clients who are interested, regardless of industry or geography.

This is an informal, co-operative group where users can discuss their use of info:HR openly to enhance their knowledge. HRSS fully supports this learning opportunity, and a representative will be present at group meetings whenever possible. At this time, meetings are held quarterly, with the next meeting scheduled in March 2014. If you are interested in becoming a member of the user group, please contact me at barbarac@ infohr.com for more details.

Where We`ve Been

Andy (L) and Bill (R) with Sally Ginter, President & CEO, Kerry's Place Autism Services at the Evening for Autism fundraiser, November 2013

Barbara at the OMHRA fall meeting, Orillia, ON, September 2013

Bill with prize-winner Francesca Figliuzzi at the OMHRA fall meeting, Orillia, ON, September 2013

Hitting the greens at OMHRA

Welcome New Customers!

Children First in Essex County

Erb and Erb Insurance
Brokers Ltd.

Town of Gander

Occupational Health Clinics for
Ontario Workers

Showa Canada Inc.

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