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## **Champlain Region Family Council Network Priorities for Government Action 2023-24**

After decades of neglect, we are now seeing unprecedented investment in long-term care in Ontario. While the construction of new homes is welcome, as is the promise of 4 hours of care per resident, we need to think about what long-term care should look like in the future. Do we want to continue to house our frail elders in large institutional warehouses where staff are demoralized and burnt-out or do we want them to live in a true home-like environment where caring, supportive relationships between the residents, their families and staff are encouraged and nurtured? The fundamental principle of the new Fixing LTC Act is “that a long-term care home is primarily the home of its residents and is to be operated so that it is a place where they may live with dignity and in security, safety and comfort and have their physical, psychological, social, spiritual and cultural needs adequately met.” There is considerable work to be done to achieve this goal.

We strongly believe that it is time that long-term care in Ontario be fundamentally transformed from an institutional, task-oriented model to one that puts the human dignity and needs of residents at the focus of care. To quote from the July 2020 Ministry LTC Staffing study “we need to make long-term care a better place to live, and a better place to work”. To achieve this transformation, the government must:

### ***Improve care***

- Ensure all long-term care is based on a person-centred model of care.
- Create a LTC Care Quality Centre within the Ministry to promote the sharing of best practices related to person-centred care; this Centre could also be used to coach poorly performing homes for quality improvement and compliance.
- Work with the federal government on the implementation of the newly released national standard for LTC which promotes person-centred care.
- Create and fund a LTC human resource plan to attract and retain an adequate workforce of well-trained staff with the personal attributes for work in LTC for today’s needs and the future.
- Improve wages and conditions of work (more full-time positions, wage parity across the health care sector, improved benefits, developing a culture of respect in the workplace) to aid recruitment and retention.
- Address the unique staffing challenges of rural and northern communities by create a staffing strategy that addresses housing, transportation and training.
- Reduce the reliance on agency staff and address predatory practices by agencies that poach staff from LTC homes.
- Fast-track the implementation of the recommendations of the 2020 Staffing Study (July 2020) and LTC Commission, especially the recommendation to increase care from allied health professionals from 36 minutes per resident/day to 60 minutes per day.
- Create a provincial campaign to change the image of long-term care for the public and for potential employees.

- Implement the minimum care standard of four hours of direct care as quickly as possible and review whether four hours is adequate to address the complex care needs of today's residents.
- Require that all homes publicly report staffing levels and report non-adherence to MOLTC.
- Develop consistent standards for PSW education and on-the-job training, especially dementia and end-of-life training to ensure quality resident care.
- Provide funding to back-fill positions to allow staff to attend training sessions.

### ***Improve the physical environment***

- Revise the current building standards to create smaller home-like environments that are based on evidence-informed research to proactively meet dementia needs and that are conducive to the delivery of person-centred care.
- Require private rooms with ensuite bathrooms for residents in newly constructed and renovated homes.
- Identify and fund a project to create a LTC home based on small self-contained home units such as Providence Living Place in BC to assess the feasibility and cost/benefits of these smaller environments that promote person-centred care.
- Build long-term care homes within the context of a provincial plan based on needs and community profiles (cultural diversity, location) and underserved populations such as the LGBTQ2+ and indigenous communities
- Encourage the development of campuses of care which incorporate independent living apartments and assisted living residences alongside LTC homes; remove barriers that prevent residents from moving between different types of residences (e.g. from assisted living to long-term care).
- Reduce or eliminate the proportion of for-profit homes by favouring non-profit ownership when awarding licenses and assisting with capital funding for non-profit projects.
- Revise the standards for new and redeveloped homes to recognize the need to isolate residents when outbreaks occur.

### ***Improve accountability and transparency***

- Review and revise current performance measurements with stakeholders (including families) to ensure a focus on quality of care and quality of life. Performance metrics must be publicly available.
- Review financial audit processes to ensure that government funds are spent appropriately.
- Identify poorly performing homes and ensure that the Ministry work with the homes to achieve compliance. Continued non-compliance should result in penalties and immediate follow-up action.
- Re-assess the current inspection process to ensure that it is achieving quality improvement in LTC and modelling best practices.
- Implement data collection and monitoring systems to promote sharing of accurate, meaningful data that can be used to assess the needs of an aging population and allow governments at both the federal and provincial levels to develop appropriate plans to meet the demand for home care and long-term care.

None of these recommendations are new; they have been laid out in study after study. Long-term care can be so much better. The Government of Ontario must promise its constituents that frail

seniors spend their final days have both quality of life and quality care, and that staff are properly compensated and valued.

The Champlain Region Family Council Network supports the Family Councils in the 60 LTC homes in the Champlain Region through education, information-sharing and advocacy.

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Champlain Region Family Council Network

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