



<http://champlainfamilycouncils.ca>

Re: Bill 121, Improving Dementia Care in Ontario Act, 2024

We are writing to the Standing Committee on Social Policy to indicate our support for Bill 121 which would provide a provincial framework for improved dementia care.

Our particular interest is the implementation of person-centred care (PCC) in long-term care. The Champlain Region Family Council Network is a volunteer group that supports Family Councils in the 59 long-term care (LTC) homes in the Champlain region through information-sharing, education and advocacy. As the voice for concerned families, we bring issues forward to all levels of government, with the goal of improving the quality of life and the quality of care for residents in LTC. We have regularly appeared before the Pre-Budget Consultations of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs to advocate for positive change in the long-term care sector. We also provided feedback to the COVID LTC Commission and on the Fixing Long-Term Care Act. We have long advocated for more staff, better quality of care, improved working conditions and a fundamental transformational change to person-centred care.

Given that approximately 90% of all long-term care residents have some type of cognitive impairment, primarily dementia, it is critical that person-centred care for dementia be implemented in all long-term care homes in the province. Every resident's greatest wish is to still be seen as a person. Person-centred care puts the resident's needs and preferences at the centre of their care with a focus on respect, kindness and compassion. A key component of PCC is the development of supportive relationships amongst residents, their families and staff.

Person-centred care doesn't just have a positive impact on the people living in the home but also on all who work there. The people who choose to work in long-term care come to their professions and roles because they truly care and want to be of help and service. They want to build relationships and connections, to know the residents as individuals and to treat them with respect and dignity. Person-centred care takes the focus from completing and checking off tasks and puts the emphasis on building relationships, not just with residents but with families, other staff and volunteers. When an entire team works together to listen to one another, problem solve together, support one another and trust each other there is greater job satisfaction and better retention of staff. This builds continuity of care and also saves a considerable amount of money in re-training and recruiting new staff!

Many homes in our region have already begun to implement person-centred models of care and a regional group is in place to support these initiatives. But person-centered care must be adopted as the standard for all homes across Ontario and supported through investments in

training, and sharing and promotion of best practices. The new LTC Act, Fixing Long-Term Care, speaks about the creation of a Quality Centre in the Ministry which could act as the driver for implementation of person-centred care across the province.

Additional funding will be needed to achieve this transformation but we understand there will be funding available to those provinces that will work with the federal government on the implementation of the new national LTC standard. There will also be savings as a result of improved staff satisfaction and retention reducing the need for constant on-boarding and training of new staff. Most importantly though are the non-monetary benefits: improved quality of the life for the residents, better health outcomes, an improved caregiver experience and a positive work culture that attracts and retains committed long-term care staff who feel their work is valued and respected.

We feel that as a society, we should ensure the best quality of life for long-term care residents - one that has meaning, joy and dignity.

We believe that implementing Bill 121 will bring much needed transformational change to long-term care and to dementia care in the community and in other institutions. It is long-overdue.

Submitted by:

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