



Family Council Network 4 Advocacy
Committed to improving the lives of Ontario Residents in Long Term Care
www.network4longtermcareadvocacy.com

February 1, 2022

Dear Minister Calandra,

As a volunteer group representing the families and residents of 86 long term care homes in the Niagara, Burlington and the greater Hamilton area, we are writing to you to express our great dismay and concern with the ongoing situation in Ontario's Long Term Care homes. Despite many promises of improving staffing levels, once again we find the homes in our area and throughout the province in a growing state of crisis because of this.

For example, at this moment one of the homes we represent has more than 50% of the residents with COVID 19. The Home is so short staffed that only half the usual staff is working at any given time. Administrative personnel have found it necessary to assist with the delivery of meals and the feeding of residents three times a day. Residents have not bathed or been bathed in weeks and are once again being left in their rooms for many hours without stimulation and for many, without any human contact. When the Administrator appealed to both the local Health Unit and the Provincial government for assistance, neither level could provide even one person to help! This is deplorable and totally unacceptable!

Families have told us that they have observed that the level of care in their LTC homes is below that of a provincial prison. Our elderly, vulnerable citizens are being denied the most basic care to meet their human rights. Residents are left unattended, unfed and locked in their rooms. Garbage is piling up throughout the homes.

Both the Provincial and Federal governments need to step in immediately to rectify these situations. Both levels of government need to act in deploying Medical Military and/or Red Cross personnel to assist in the Long Term Care homes that are in extreme crisis. In addition, the Provincial government needs to set up Rapid Response Teams from all available sources (hospitals, care agencies, retired personnel) to assist in LTC facilities when the staffing drops below a determined acceptable level.

Bill 124 has capped the increase in salaries at 1 %. This forces Not-For-Profit homes to compete for potential employees from an unfair position. This Bill divides the various disciplines working in health care and Long Term Care and must be repealed immediately. Also, the backlog of approvals for internationally educated nurses and other health care providers needs to be cleared rapidly by the Provincial government. Retired health professionals who wish to assist during this time of crisis need to be re-certified. These actions would greatly help to improve the staffing levels in Long-Term Care homes and in other health care settings too.

A Progress Report Update on the LTC staffing strategy would be reassuring to hear. The last update was in the summer of 2021. Our team is most willing to work with the Ministry of Long Term Care to explore immediate solutions and long term requirements to prevent this cycle from continuing.

We understand the problems in our LTC homes and would be happy to work directly with a member of your staff who is in a position to get immediate assistance to the homes in our network – particularly those which are in the most dire circumstances. Families are very frightened at the present conditions in some of the homes and feel helpless.

Our team and the Champlain Family Council Network (Ottawa) previously met with Minister Phillips who did listen intently to family concerns. The staffing issues have since deteriorated and our team would be pleased to share ideas with you and your LTC team. Your immediate action to protect the most vulnerable in our province is required and appreciated. Thank you for listening. We look forward to hearing from you.

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Chair of Advocacy
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cc

Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier, Minister of Health
Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors & Accessibility
Andrea Horwath, Leader of the Opposition
Stephen Del Luca, Leader of Liberal Party
Mike Schreiner, Leader Green Party
Erin Hannah Associate Deputy Minister LTC
Toby Barrett, MPP
Will Bourra, MPP
Jeff Burch, MPP
Wayne Gates, MPP
Frances Gelinias, MPP
Parm Gill, MPP
Andrea Horwath, MPP
Jane McKenna, MPP
Paul Miller, MPP
Sam Oosterhoff, MPP
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Donna Skelly, MPP
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