



*Committed to improving the lives of Ontario Residents in Long Term Care*

## **2023! A New Year's Recommitment To Long Term Care**

By Carol Dueck

Welcome 2023! Since our last newsletter, the Advocacy Team has been unusually quiet, taking time to rest and recharge. We found that other family councils and networks did the same thing. Casting an eye over the activities of 2022, we accomplished the following:

- Published two newsletters reaching hundreds to expand and share knowledge on key issues.
- Held three remote regional meetings with attendance between 35 and 65 with great input from participants, with keynote speaker Jane Meadus who guided us to view the new regulation - Fixing LTC Act – with a legal eye.
- Responded to the ever-changing directions to families on how to test, protect and visit residents in Long Term Care (LTC).
- Made linkage with Ontario Health Coalition meetings and rallies.
- Acted as a resource to the formation of the new Southwest Cluster of Family Councils.

### **What's Next?**

What do we do now? How do we effectively use our energies and time? The focus remains the same for FCN4 - improving the life of residents in LTC by being the voice for those whose voice is muted.

Key Questions on our mind:

- Can we accept the fact that the Ford Government, here for another three years, has a set agenda and no appetite for making further additions to funding in LTCs.
- With distractions on other files, will MPPs listen or respond to calls and e-mails about LTC?
- Will the healthcare crisis in staffing and lack of hospital beds facing overshadow the issues of LTC?
- Uncertainty of the government's response to Bill 7, "More Beds, Better Care" where a patient in hospital, labelled "Alternative Level of Care" or ALC could be moved to a LTC home not on their preferred list as far as 75-150 kilometers away. And, the added fear that patients and families could face a bill of \$400 a day if they refuse to accept the move.
- Disappointment that the government is pushing back on a court decision to repeal Bill 124, the wage suppression bill for many healthcare workers. The push to recreate a "living wage" for front line care givers appears out of reach until the bell rings on yet another court battle.
- The need to bring real life stories about LTC to the public through the media to re-awaken the issue of living in LTC and the need for reform.
- Outbreaks of COVID, RSV and the Flu continue in many LTC homes across the province as public health attempts to assist homes and residences to modify care standards to protect against the spread of infections while at the same time, maintaining mental health by reducing loneliness that restrictions create.
- Time needed to be dedicated to personal needs and local Family Council issues.

## Now is the Time to Focus on Activities that are Proactive and Positive!

Our team needs to maintain a positive approach to by continuing to research and share ideas that homes can try to implement to improve the life of residents.

1. Bolster and educate Family Councils both those newly created and those that have been around for many years; all of which flourish with a diverse group of voices.
2. Share educational offerings from organizations such as Ontario CLRI (Centres for Learning, Research & Innovation in Long Term Care - <https://clri-ltc.ca/>) and RNAO (Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario - <https://rnao.ca/>) that promote new or upgraded learning for staff at all levels and for family members and essential care partners.
3. Offer communication strategies that promote administration and family councils to coordinate changes and new ideas.
4. Put residents front and centre in all new policies and practices. One dynamic example: The Province of B.C. sponsors a unique network: The Patients as Partners. The Initiative was founded on the principle of, "nothing about me, without me" and ensures the patient, family and caregiver voice is incorporated at all levels of the health-care system. (<https://patientvoicesbc.ca/patient-partners/>)
5. Continue to offer Regional Meetings that focus on sharing promising practices.
6. Continue to use research and data to understand an issue and find solutions.

Queen's University recently published a report offering five steps for tackling the LTC crisis. This paper has solid ideas that could guide discussions between family councils and administration in the quest to improve the home and life of residents. The authors advocate for support for self-care and protection from moral distress – things that often fall to the bottom of the "to do" list. While dealing with staffing recruitment and retention, the article urges to consider five recommendations:

1. Address long-standing structural issues.
2. Continue education and training of psychological issues for all staff registered and non-registered to assist staff to alleviate conflicts and tensions.
3. Invest in leadership development.
4. Ensure safe working conditions.
5. Support human resource policies.



<https://www.queensu.ca/artsci/news/5-steps-for-tackling-canadas-long-term-care-crisis-it-starts-with-valuing-the-well-being-of-workers>

### Next Family Council Network 4 Regional Meeting!!!

Wednesday, February 22, 2023 (about 1-3 pm) via Zoom.

**Guest Speakers** will be:

**Sam Peck**, Executive Director, Family Councils Ontario and

**Tiffany Fearon**, Policy and Research Manager, Family Councils Ontario

**Topic:** "Public Policy and Long-Term Care".

**Visit our website for upcoming details and how to attend the session.**

<https://www.network4longtermcareadvocacy.com/>

## Do We Continue the Political Push?

By Carol Dueck

It is important for us to keep the needs of LTC residents and families in the minds of politicians as they juggle to meet the many demands from their constituents. The goal of political parties is to win votes and be re-elected. They need to listen to voters. Maintaining open communication and having the ear of an MPP when major issues arise is vital to keep information flowing. One way to keep an MPP engaged is by offering positive ideas using an educational approach to share practical actions that will benefit residents.

I would like to suggest that each of us reach out to our local MPP to keep the name of our LTC home on their radar. Also, the media love to publish real life stories about challenges that residents and families are facing.

From time to time we receive requests to support current issues. The latest round of questions raised has been the request for LTC homes to keep “isolation” beds available to meet standards of care during an outbreak. Using isolation beds to admit hospital patients to LTC beds assists the acute care facilities to clear beds on that side of the health sector, but forces LTC homes to stretch infection control standards to care for these new residents.

One positive step forward for 2023 - in early January, Long-Term Care Minister Paul Calandra agreed to meet with the executives of our FCN4 Network and the Champlain Family Council Network (Ottawa). Previously we had the opportunity to meet with Ministers Fullerton and Phillips, so it is encouraging that the current minister is willing to listen. This opportunity will ensure that the Minister responsible for residents in LTC hears the issues directly from families. We also will probe to determine his vision and plans to manage the current staffing crisis. In Sweden, the attitude toward their senior citizens is best captured by the phrase: **“Only the best will do!”** In Ontario, we trust that the attitude toward our senior citizens will not become: **“Please, just make do!”**

We would love to hear of innovative ideas or practices that your home has achieved to improve communication to families. Don't be shy, share them with us at <https://www.network4longtermcareadvocacy>.

---

## Creating a Better Model of Long Term Care

By Peter Gnish

Many groups and organizations around the world are working to create a better model of LTC, one that is based on the premise that “everyone has the right to age with dignity.” There is no one fix for every situation but some of these ideas can be modified almost in all circumstances to make the environment better for loved ones. Below is a listing of those models that are presently in vogue. To learn more go on the listed website and follow the discussion there. Find one that you like and might work in your LTC home; begin the discussion with your administration; keep your foot on the pedal and you move forward with possible improvements; don't give up or in. As Grace Cirocco says in her book, “Take the step, the bridge will be there.”

1. Green House - <https://thegreenhouseproject.org/our-story/who-we-are/>
2. Eden Alternative - <https://www.aplaceformom.com/caregiver-resources/articles/green-house-project-long-term-care>
3. Butterfly - <https://www.primacareliving.com/butterfly-model-of-care>
4. Collaborative Care Model - <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/professional-interests/integrated-care/learn> and <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18803739/>
5. Small House - <https://www.cadth.ca/small-house-model-long-term-care-0> and <https://canjhealth-technol.ca/index.php/cjht/article/view/es0359/482>

This chart summarizes many models around the world

|                    |             |          |   |
|--------------------|-------------|----------|---|
| Butterfly          | UK, Canada  | 8 to 12  | Provides care for small groups of dementia residents                              |
| Clustered Domestic | Australia   | ≤ 16     | Residents grouped in home-like settings   |
| Dementia Village   | Netherlands | 6 to 8   | Creates an entire society for dementia residents                                  |
| Green Care Farm    | Netherlands | 6 to 8   | Offers access to agricultural activities  |
| Green House        | US          | 10 to 12 | Residents housed in small groups, often associated with a traditional legacy home |
| Shared housing     | Germany     | 6 to 10  | Residents live in apartments, instead of LTC facilities                           |
| Small housebased   | various     | 5 to 20  |   |

An Ottawa CARP working group is another partner who champions the models of care that promote creating LTC places into a home-like atmosphere. Their articles, blogs and “Lunch N Learn” webinars offer education on the new models that are being slowly adopted in Canada. Check out <https://changeltcnow.ca/>.

## Coping Infection Control Without Isolation Rooms

By Carol Dueck

The media in Niagara recently ran a story about the challenges LTC homes were finding to provide appropriate care. With Bill 7 promoting moving Alternate Level of Care (ALC) patients from hospitals to LTCs to clear beds for urgent cases, the LTC are expected to admit to beds that they use as isolation rooms. These rooms are an integral part of Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) practices and policies. Together with appropriate protective equipment, staff have a better chance of controlling the spread of a virus if they are able to isolate new cases from the rest of the population. Without a bed to use when needed for isolation, it creates more work for the staff and less opportunity to shut down the spread of an infection.

Is this an issue in your home? How have the staff coping with new outbreaks and new admissions? Has this been an issue for visitors and essential care partners in your experience. Please share a successful practices in infection control that you have noticed at [AdvocacyFCN4@ProtonMail.com](mailto:AdvocacyFCN4@ProtonMail.com).

**Books For Sale:** We have access to several books written by local writers dealing with issues related to long term care, aging and seniors issues; caregiver topics; and healthy living. Check our website for details on the following:

***A Slice of Life*** (\$15); ***Voices of the City*** (\$12); ***Older Caregivers*** (\$12); ***Staying Healthy*** (\$10); ***City Voices Connecting Through Creative Expression*** (\$15). Proceeds from the sale of these books are used to support the work of the FCN-4 Advocacy Committee. To purchase any of these books, e-mail: Tom Carrothers at [carphaltonchapter@gmail.com](mailto:carphaltonchapter@gmail.com).

### FCN-4 Advocacy Committee Website

<https://www.network4longtermcareadvocacy.com/>

Have you seen the new postings?. On the **Home** page read about the new information Curriculum Cafe series and how to join to learn more about making LTC work better. And, click on the **New Articles** tab to keep up-to-date with the latest news items and issues related to LTC.

Also, keep up with the latest by following us on our Facebook Page: [Family Council Network 4](#)

**Newsletter Committee :** **Editor:** Carly Volkes **Design:** Peter Gnish **Proofing:** Members of FCN-4 Committee  
**Contact:** Carol Dueck **Chair FCN-4 Advocacy Committee at** [AdvocacyFCN4@ProtonMail.com](mailto:AdvocacyFCN4@ProtonMail.com)