

HOME CARE



Respecting our elders should be fundamental to our society. While we are all very concerned about the conditions of long-term care in Ontario, most of us hope to not use one of the homes until absolutely necessary. Logically, as we age we require additional care, and our [first choice is to receive that care at home.](#)

What are the issues?

- Prior to the pandemic, the Ontario government had started a reorganization of the health care system under the name [Ontario Health](#). [Ontario Health Teams](#) are the renamed LHINs, and [Home and Community Care Support Services](#) is responsible for home care, long-term care home placement and access to community services. Ontario was moving towards [a more progressive reform](#) with home care seen as the first step in care and hospitals and long-term care homes the last resort. As a result of the pandemic this reform may no longer be a priority.
- For Home Care there are 3 groups: post-surgical, persons with disabilities, and the elderly. The majority of the latter two groups want to live independently and participate in the community, hence their [demand for services will also include community support services](#). The focus of the 2021 Fall Financial Statement was on the first group: [post-surgical](#). In the latest legislation, Bill 175, *Connecting People to Home and Community Care Act*, [persons with disabilities were left out](#).
- Home care for all three levels currently serves [760,000](#) people with multiple programs and services. Due to underfunding [2,860,000 volunteer hours are recorded](#) for these sectors.
- Staff compensation within home and community is [the lowest paid in the entire health system](#). This lack of parity with both long-term care homes and hospitals has resulted in an inability to recruit and retain staff. They move to higher paying positions or leave the profession entirely. Home care has [lost an estimated 4,000 nurses](#) since the beginning of the pandemic with providers now only able to [fulfil 56% of requests](#).
- Fundamental to home care is the support of families. Over [150,000 Ontario families give more than 20 million hours](#) every year to care for their loved ones.

Why now?

- The first baby boomers turned 75 last year. The future that we were afraid of is here. [96% of seniors](#) want to stay in their homes as long as possible.
- Severe strain on staffing, from the lack of wage parity with hospitals to the loss of staff due to poor compensation to the lack of training and resources for the staff has been amplified by Covid.
- The underfunding of home care is limiting it as a health resource for the whole system. Ontario's [funding has also fallen behind other provinces](#).
- Policy direction – the government talked about “[an integrated, connected health care system centred around the needs of patients](#)”. This could be lost.

HOME CARE Key Message

Seniors want to stay in their homes, as do those with disabilities. Resources and care are needed to do that. Long-term care homes should be the last resort.

Questions:

1. Will you and your party support the position of home care as a fundamental base of extended care?
2. Will you and your party support fully fund home and community care to support this?
3. Will you and your party support wage parity of all health care providers according to their qualifications?