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**Subject:** Seniors Services Quality Improvement Report – October-December 2020

**Report to:** Public Health and Social Services Committee

**Report date:** Tuesday, March 9, 2021

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## **Recommendations**

1. That this report **BE RECEIVED** for information.

## **Key Facts**

- The purpose of this report is to provide Committee and Council with highlights of quality initiatives and outcomes for the final quarter of 2020 for Seniors Services.
- The area of focus in this quality report is an overview of, A Better Place to Live, a Better Place to Work: Ontario's Long-Term Care Staffing Plan (2021-2025), issued by the province December 17, 2020. The report will have significant implications for Seniors Services and will be a driver of future quality initiatives and outcomes.

## **Financial Considerations**

The Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC) and Ontario Health West are the primary sources of funding for the Seniors Services division. The costs associated with the plan outlined in this report, particularly associated with increases to front line staffing, are significant. The province has committed an investment of up to \$1.9 billion dollars annually to create 27,000 new positions for PSWs, RNs, and RPNs across Ontario. The current provincial long-term care budget is \$4.5 billion. The province has not yet issued the details of funding allocations to each long-term care (LTC) home.

## **Analysis**

As the pandemic continues to unfold, there has been significant focus on long-term care. A number of reports have examined underlying issues affecting the sector, and have offered recommendations to improve care for residents and working conditions for staff. The province released a report December 17, 2020 that addresses many of the recommendations. The following provides an overview of the report, which will have a significant impact on Seniors Services.

## **A Better Place to Live, a Better Place to Work: Ontario's Long-Term Care Staffing Plan (2021-2025)**

In recent years, a number of reports have been issued outlining systemic challenges in the long-term care sector. Two key reports that heavily influenced the recent, "A Better Place to Live, A Better Place to Work" report include the final report and recommendations of the Long-Term Care Homes Public Inquiry (July 31, 2019) and the more recent interim recommendations issued by the Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission (October 23, 2020; December 4, 2020).

"A Better Place to Live, A Better Place to Work: Ontario's Long-Term Care Staffing Plan" (2021-2025) is an ambitious plan structured around four key pillars:

1. Integrating long-term care within the broader care continuum.
2. Improving quality of care.
3. Addressing concerns with performance, oversight and accountability
4. Developing new physical infrastructure.

The province outlined a series of guiding principles that were instrumental in determining the scope of the LTC Staffing Plan. The guiding principles as detailed in the report are as follows:

- Focus on residents and improving resident outcomes.
- Encourage and support continuous quality improvement and innovation to drive progress.
- Drive systematic and long-term change across the sector.
- Consider the impact on the broader health care system to avoid unintended consequences.
- Be flexible to respond to the diverse needs of residents, including Indigenous and Francophone residents.
- Share responsibility for solving long-standing challenges with sector leaders.

- The commitment to a daily average of four hours of care per resident will include substantially increasing the amount of time that registered nurses, registered practical nurses and personal support workers have available for resident care. In particular, increasing nursing hours is needed due to the rising acuity of residents and will help to limit unnecessary, and potentially harmful, hospital transfers.
- The government also plans to increase the hours of care provided by a broader range of staff who play a key role in supporting residents to achieve a higher quality of life and promoting good mental health. This includes supports provided by physiotherapists, occupational therapists, recreation therapists, social workers and others who can address physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of residents.

The report outlines how the province will enact the commitment to improvements across the long-term care sector. The six areas of action detailed in the report are as follows:

1. Increasing the hours of direct hands-on care provided by nurses and personal support workers, to an average of four hours per day per resident - including a significant increase in nursing care to reflect the acuity of long-term care residents; and expanding resident access to allied health staff such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists and social workers.
2. Accelerating and expanding educational pathways to help recruit the tens of thousands of new staff that will be needed.
3. Supporting continued development and professional growth for long-term care staff, which will also improve retention.
4. Improving working conditions for staff.
5. Building effective and accountable leadership in homes across the province to improve oversight within homes, guidance and medical outcomes in long-term care homes.
6. Measuring progress against key performance indicators.

Specifically the report details implementation targets to achieve the four hours of care per resident per day. The chart below details the year over year staffing increase targets in both the RN / RPN / PSW category as well as the allied health positions category.

### Implementation Targets

Year	RN / RPN / PSW (minutes of care per resident per day) <sup>1</sup>	Allied Health Positions <sup>2</sup> (minutes of care per resident per day)
2018 (baseline year)	165	30
2021/2022	180 (3 hours)	33
2022/2023	195 (3 hours 15 minutes)	36
2023/2024	220 (3 hours 42 minutes)	36
2024/2025	240 (4 hours)	36

### Implications and Next Steps

Seniors Services is in a good position to move forward in alignment with the report. Significant work has already been completed both at a divisional and a corporate level related to quality improvement, use of metrics, staff training and development, succession planning, leadership development and work life quality. The provincial commitment to increased staffing is welcome and Seniors Services is working closely with the Region's Human Resources team to develop a multi-year recruitment and retention strategy to support achieving year over year staffing targets. The enhanced staffing in turn will have a positive impact on quality improvement efforts and most importantly the overall quality of life for residents living in our long-term care homes.

### Alternatives Reviewed

Not applicable.

### Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

Healthy and Vibrant Community – supporting the delivery of quality care to Niagara's senior population.

### Other Pertinent Reports

- COM 13-2020 Seniors Services Quality Improvement Report – July to September 2020

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## **Appendices**

Appendix 1                      Seniors Services Report Card 2020

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<sup>1</sup> The minutes of care per resident per day in the Niagara Region LTC Homes based on RN / RPN / PSW staffing is currently 2.95 hours (177 minutes). Seniors Services had previously calculated front-line staffing at 3.1 hours based on inclusion of recreation and rehabilitation hours into this calculation. The report separates out allied health positions in the updated staffing level calculation and as such the Niagara Region calculation has been updated accordingly.

<sup>2</sup> This includes supports provided by physiotherapists, occupational therapists, recreation therapists, social workers and others who can address physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of residents.