

**Subject:** Seniors Services Quality Improvement Report: October-December 2024

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

**Report date:** Tuesday, February 4, 2025

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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 for Seniors Services.
- Areas of focus in this report are:
  - Review and Update of Pandemic Plan
  - 2024 Resident and Family Satisfaction Survey
  - Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada (MBNC) Presentation of Seniors Services

## Financial Considerations

The Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC) and Ontario Health West are the primary sources of funding for the Seniors Services division. Other funding sources include user fees and levy.

## Analysis

### Review and Update of Pandemic Plan

On October 9, 2024, a comprehensive review and update of the pandemic plan for Niagara Region Long-Term Care Homes was conducted with active participation from interdisciplinary staff and Public Health representatives. This critical initiative ensured that our preparedness strategies are robust, up-to-date, and aligned with the latest Public Health and Ministry of Long-Term Care guidelines. By integrating lessons from past experiences and adopting emerging best practices, the updated plans are designed to effectively mitigate risks, safeguard vulnerable residents, and support staff during future health crises.

The collaborative nature of this review process was a cornerstone of its success, fostering consistency and cohesion across all homes. Through open dialogue and shared insights, Seniors Services identified strengths to build upon and addressed gaps to enhance our readiness. Key areas such as infection prevention, outbreak response, and resource allocation protocols were standardized and refined, ensuring that each home is equally equipped to manage potential challenges. This unified approach not only strengthens the resilience of individual homes but also bolsters the entire regional home's capacity to respond swiftly and effectively.

### **2024 Resident and Family Satisfaction Survey**

Resident and family satisfaction surveys were conducted across our long-term care homes from November 18 to December 8, 2024, to gather valuable feedback on the quality of care and services provided. The survey serves as a critical tool to assess residents' experiences and family members' perceptions, offering insights into areas of excellence and opportunities for improvement. By actively seeking this feedback, the Division reaffirms its commitment to delivering person-centred care that aligns with the needs and expectations of those we serve.

The importance of these surveys cannot be overstated, as they directly inform Seniors Services efforts to enhance care quality, improve communication, and foster a supportive environment for residents and their families.

In 2024, the surveys yielded 542 complete and 52 partial responses, with 320 submitted by residents and 222 by families. Ninety-one percent of our residents rated our homes as either good or excellent, while eighty-nine percent of our families provided similar ratings. Based on the survey findings, action plans will be formulated in collaboration with residents and their families to enhance the quality of care, services, programs, and resources provided within the home environment.

The insights will guide actionable changes and drive continuous improvement across all aspects of our operations. Ultimately, this process strengthens trust, ensures accountability, and reinforces our shared goal of providing every resident with safe, respectful, and dignified care.

### **Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada (MBNC) Conference Presentation of Seniors Services**

Seniors Services was selected to present at the MBNC Conference last November 6-7, 2024, at White Oaks Conference Resort in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Henri Koning, Paolo

Varias and Viviana Mendendez presented representing Seniors Services. The presentation focused on the critical need to address rising long-term care (LTC) costs by employing municipal benchmarking as a strategy to achieve value-based care. It highlighted the pressing challenges faced by many LTC homes in the province, including staffing shortages, inflation, and increasing resident needs, which collectively strain financial and operational resources. Seniors Services showcased how analyzing performance metrics and identifying areas for improvement, municipalities managing LTC homes can optimize resource allocation to provide high-quality care at lower costs. Specific examples from the Niagara Region showcased how investments in modern technology, IT infrastructure, and capacity-building initiatives, coupled with standardization efforts to reduce variability, have led to significant cost efficiencies, ensure compliance to regulations and enhanced operational performance.

The presentation highlighted the importance of involving residents and their families in planning and delivering care services. By fostering collaboration, long-term care homes can better align their goals with the needs of the residents they serve, creating a more sustainable and resident-focused model of care. Practical tools and clear insights were shared to help municipalities implement benchmarking strategies effectively. The true value of this presentation lies in its actionable and forward-thinking approach, showing how engaging residents and families can guide operational decisions to meet their needs and expectations and investments in technology to achieve efficiency and improve care delivery.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

Quarterly quality improvement reports provide committee and council with important information, supporting accountability, transparency and a culture of best practice and continuous quality improvement. As the governing body for the Region's LTC Homes, it is important that Council receives these reports to ensure high quality of care, understand the successes, challenges and opportunities experienced in these facilities and meet legislative accountability requirements of LTC.

### **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

Council Strategic Priorities: Effective Region

Objective 1.1 – Implement continuous improvement and modernized processes to ensure value-for-money in regional services and programs

Objective 1.3 - Deliver fiscally responsible and sustainable core services

Objective 1.4 – Invest and support a skilled and aligned workforce at Niagara Region

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

#### [COM 26-2024 Seniors Services Quality Improvement Report: April-June 2024](#)

([https://niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/PHSSC\\_Sep10\\_2024/eSCRIBE%20Documents/eSCRIBE%20Attachments/COM%2026-2024%20Seniors%20Services%20Quality%20Improvement%20Report%20April-June%202024.pdf](https://niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/PHSSC_Sep10_2024/eSCRIBE%20Documents/eSCRIBE%20Attachments/COM%2026-2024%20Seniors%20Services%20Quality%20Improvement%20Report%20April-June%202024.pdf))

#### [COM 26-2024 Appendix 1 Seniors Services Quality Improvement Report April-June 2024](#)

([https://niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/PHSSC\\_Sep10\\_2024/eSCRIBE%20Documents/eSCRIBE%20Attachments/COM%2026-2024%20Appendix%201%20Seniors%20Services%20Quality%20Improvement%20Report%20%20April-June%202024.pdf](https://niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/PHSSC_Sep10_2024/eSCRIBE%20Documents/eSCRIBE%20Attachments/COM%2026-2024%20Appendix%201%20Seniors%20Services%20Quality%20Improvement%20Report%20%20April-June%202024.pdf))

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This report was prepared in consultation with Laura Matthews, Manager Clinical Practice and reviewed by Paolo Varias, Director, Seniors Services.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1            Supporting Table and Figures