

AUG 28 2007

MEMORANDUM TO: Long-Term Care (LTC) Homes

FROM: Ron Sapsford
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

RE: Review of Staffing and Care Standards for LTC Homes

As you are aware, the *Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007* received Royal Assent on June 4, 2007. The next step in the legislative process is the development of regulations and the proclamation of the Act into force. It is the government's intention, as part of that process, to develop regulations governing staffing and care standards in the homes. In the interim, the ministry expects all homes to place the highest possible priority on maintaining or increasing their direct care staffing levels.

In order to support further policy considerations, the ministry has decided as a first step to engage an impartial facilitator who will solicit stakeholder and expert views and provide advice on current research and practice concerning staffing standards.

I am pleased to inform you that the ministry has engaged Shirlee Sharkey to conduct the review. For the past 15 years, Shirlee has led Saint Elizabeth Health Care as its President and CEO. She holds an adjunct faculty appointment at the University of Toronto Faculty of Nursing and the Faculty of Medicine (Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation). She is also a Director of Ontario's Smart Systems for Health Agency. Internationally, she is Vice Chair of the World Homecare and Hospice Organization.

Shirlee is the immediate Past Chair of George Brown College in Toronto as well as a Past President of the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO). She is a past Director of the Canadian Society for Telehealth and a former President of the Canadian Home Care Association. Shirlee will bring her valuable experience, vision and leadership to this project.

Susan Paetkau, Director of Health Program Policy and Standards Branch, is the ministry lead for the development of regulations under the *Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007*. She will be working with Shirlee in the coming days to finalize the review process so that work on this important project can begin as soon as possible.

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At this time, I would like to acknowledge the improvements that have already been made in the staffing of LTC homes. In 2004, the Government set a goal to hire 2,000 front-line staff for homes, including 600 new nurses. Since 2004, the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) front-line positions (through both increased staffing and sector growth) has increased by 4,900, including 1,101 nurses, and the average paid hours of resident care per day is now 2.83, which compares favourably to the previous regulated standard that was eliminated in 1996. Based on these successes, I am confident that the LTC homes sector will meet the Government's recent commitment to add 1,200 new Registered Practical Nurse positions.

I want to commend you for the part you have played in making these improvements and to thank you and your staff for your ongoing commitment to the care and quality of life of the residents in your LTC home.

Sincerely,



Ron Sapsford

C: Adalsteinn Brown, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health System Strategy Division
Donna Rubin, Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes & Services
for Seniors
Karen Sullivan, Executive Director, Ontario Long-Term Care Association
Chief Executive Officers, Local Health Integration Networks