



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Coming up roses: Saint Elizabeth Health Care welcomes Caplan Report

Markham, ON – The Hon. Elinor Caplan's report on realizing the potential of home care and its role in health care transformation is getting a rosy reception from Saint Elizabeth Health Care (SEHC).

"We are delighted with the substance of the report and its recommendations," said Shirlee Sharkey, President and CEO. "Ms. Caplan and her team did a tremendous job," she said, adding that the process of engagement during the six-month review was "thorough, inclusive and genuine."

As a major provider of home care services throughout Ontario, SEHC played an active role in the review from the outset, participating in 14 public consultations as well as numerous private meetings and focus groups with front-line staff. The organization believes that clients, families and communities will ultimately be the beneficiaries of an improved bidding process for home care services in Ontario; however, it emphasizes that excellent care begins with the system's greatest asset – its talent.

"For home care to be successful, we need to be able to attract and retain qualified workers to meet the growing demand for services," said Sharkey. "Caplan's recommendations reflect a strong grasp of the HR issues facing our sector, and have served to positively reinforce the direction SEHC has been taking with our own staff in order to become a magnet for talent."

According to Michael Decter, Chair of SEHC, "it is crucial on a go-forward that the costs associated with good employment practices are properly acknowledged, recognized and rewarded within the RFP process," in order to retain existing resources within the sector, as well as attract new talent.

Indeed, SEHC employee opinion surveys show that home care workers are highly motivated and passionate about what they do: 90 per cent get a sense of accomplishment from their work, and 94 per cent believe the not-for-profit, charitable organization adds value to their community.

"The Ontario government, in its wisdom, has repeatedly affirmed its commitment to strengthening home and community health care as a key enabler of its transformation agenda," said Sharkey. "We look forward to working with the Ministry, CCACs and other community partners to implement these important recommendations."

Sharkey points out that the public will also be a key driver of change, noting that today's clients want greater independence and involvement in the management and care of their health conditions. In order to keep pace with astute savvy consumers and health care innovations,

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Sharkey believes the system must move beyond the traditional definition of home care to consider how it can provide customized health information, education and care – anytime, anywhere.

Established in 1908, Saint Elizabeth Health Care is a Canadian not-for-profit charitable organization who shares its talent and wisdom in the areas of direct service delivery, consultation and eSolutions, to support the transformation of care for health organizations and the people they serve.

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Shirlee Sharkey will be available for interviews in downtown Toronto or by phone on Monday, May 30. Sharkey is a Past President of the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario and the Canadian Home Care Association. She is also Chair of The Change Foundation of the Ontario Hospital Association.

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