

**Ministry of  
Long-Term Care**

Office of the Minister

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245-2020-2797

October 23, 2020

Ontario's Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission  
24th Floor, 700 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON  
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Dear Commissioners:

Thank you for your letter and interim recommendations sent on October 23, 2020. As we recognize the urgency of this situation, we appreciate the timely recommendations—delivered less than three months after the commission was established—to help Ontario continue to act swiftly to protect residents and staff in long-term care homes.

My ministry is carefully reviewing your recommendations as we continue to work hard to solve the long-standing and systemic challenges facing the long-term care system, and we will provide you with a more comprehensive response next week.

As we review your recommendations, we are pleased to share that there is a strong alignment with efforts currently underway. On September 29, 2020, our government announced it is investing over half a billion dollars to protect residents, caregivers, and staff in long-term care homes from future outbreaks of COVID-19. This includes:

- \$405 million to help homes with operating pressures related to COVID-19, including infection prevention and containment measures, staffing supports, and purchasing additional supplies and PPE;
- \$61.4 million for minor capital repairs and renovations in homes to improve infection prevention and control. These repairs and renovations may include minor upgrades to support physical distancing, plumbing or water supply cleaning, updating HVAC systems, or repairing or replacing furniture and equipment that cannot be fully cleaned;
- \$40 million to support homes that have been impacted by the changes in occupancy numbers due to COVID-19. As the sector has been directed to stop admissions of third and fourth residents to larger rooms, a key source of income for each operator will be impacted. This funding will help stabilize the homes through the transition to lower occupancy rooms;

- \$30 million to allow long-term care homes to hire more infection prevention and control staffing, including \$20 million for additional personnel and \$10 million to fund training for new and existing staff. This new funding will enable homes to hire over 150 new staff; and
- \$2.8 million to extend the High Wage Transition Fund to ensure that gaps in long-term care staffing can continue to be addressed during the pandemic.

Acting on essential learnings from the first wave of COVID-19, our government is also supporting the accelerated development of new, modern long-term care beds and the upgrading of existing capacity. Our government continues to look at innovative solutions to provide more care where and when people need it.

We look forward to receiving the Commission's final report and recommendations by April 30, 2021. Keeping Ontarians safe—particularly our most vulnerable—continues to be the top priority of our government. We remain committed to taking every step to protect long-term care residents, staff and visitors.

Thank you again for sharing your interim recommendations.

Sincerely,



Dr. Merrilee Fullerton  
Minister of Long-Term Care