

Long Term Care Covid-19 Commission Mtg.

Group Meeting
on Wednesday, January 27, 2021



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2 LONG TERM CARE

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4 COVID-19 COMMISSION

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10 RESIDENTS' FEEDBACK GROUP MEETING

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16 --- This is the transcript of a meeting taken
17 by Neesons, a Veritext Company, via GoToTraining
18 virtual platform, on the 27th day of January,
19 2021, commencing at 2:00 p.m.

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22
23 [All participants appearing virtually or
24 telephonically.]

25 REPORTED BY: Helen Martineau, CSR

1 C O M M I S S I O N E R S:

2 Dr. Jack Kitts Lead Commissioner

3 Angela Coke Commissioner

4

5 P A R T I C I P A N T S:

6 Ida Bianchi Senior Legal Counsel,
7 Long-Term Care Commission
8 Secretariat

9 Angeline Hawthorn Senior Policy Analyst,
10 Long-Term Care Commission
11 Secretariat

12 Melissa McVie Ontario Association of
13 Residents' Councils

14 Jennifer Langston Ontario Association of
15 Residents' Councils

16

17 R E S I D E N T S:

18 Maria C. Resident

19 Mary J. Resident

20 Marc M. Resident

21 Sage F. Resident

22 Margaret F. Resident

23 Mary T. Resident

24 Warren P. Resident

25 Myrna R Resident

1 --- Upon commencing at 2:06 p.m.

2

3 MELLISSA McVIE: Good afternoon
4 officially, everyone. My name is Melissa McVie
5 and I'm the Education and Home Support
6 Facilitator with the Ontario Association of
7 Residents' Councils.

8 Thank you for taking the time to
9 participate in today's discussion with the
10 Commissioners from the Ontario Long-Term Care
11 Covid 19 Commission.

12 Before we get started we will ask that
13 you individually mute your phone or computer
14 audio in an effort to eliminate background
15 noise, echoes and other distractions when you
16 are not speaking.

17 I also wanted to mention this session
18 is being recorded for transcription purposes and
19 our transcriptionist's today, her name is Helen,
20 and she will be off camera but she might pop on
21 so you can see what is behind the scenes taking
22 notes. Thank you, Helen, for being with us
23 today.

24 And I just wanted to also let you know
25 that the information that we provide today will

1 be publically available and, therefore, we
2 cannot guarantee anonymity or confidentiality.
3 So if you do have an opportunity to change your
4 screen name, I know I was supporting a few
5 people to change that, to be your residents
6 first name and last initial, that is the only
7 information we need to capture in our record
8 today.

9 For those of you who have areas that
10 you would like to discuss privately and in
11 confidence, I'm happy to circulate that contact
12 information with you following today's session.

13 Today we will be posing two questions
14 to you and we ask that you unmute yourself,
15 announce your name when you're called upon, or
16 you can communicate with me using the chat box
17 feature. So whatever your preference is we just
18 want to make sure we identify who's speaking.

19 And our facilitator today is Ida
20 Bianchi and she is senior counsel with the
21 Commission Secretariat Team.

22 And over to you, Ida. I'll let you
23 share a few housekeeping announcement and we can
24 jump into today's session.

25 Thank you again.

1 MS. BIANCHI: Good afternoon,
2 everyone. It's really nice to be here and to
3 spend some with you this afternoon. I know that
4 the Commissioners are interested in having your
5 input.

6 I have a couple of colleagues here
7 with me who are listening in, and I just want to
8 acknowledge the work that they've done, in
9 addition to Melissa and the rest of the OARC
10 team, Angeline Hawthorn and Dawn Palin Rokosh.

11 I understand from Melissa that you
12 were provided the questions that we want to ask
13 you today in advance, but if you didn't have a
14 chance look at them or didn't get them don't
15 worry about that. I will ask them again and I
16 will repeat them if you need me to. So don't
17 worry about that.

18 I'm going to call upon you by the name
19 of the resident so I see, for example, some of
20 you have your caregiver's name up on the screen,
21 but I'll call you by your name and that's how
22 we'll proceed in the meeting.

23 MARIA C.: We're just having trouble
24 on the computer so we're phoning in.

25 MS. BIANCHI: Okay. I'll take a note

1 of that. Thank you.

2 In order to give everyone time to
3 speak we're hoping that you can limit your
4 comments to about -- response to each question
5 to about 4 minutes. I know that that's not
6 really a lot of time and I'm sure that there are
7 many things you want to tell the Commissioners.

8 But we'd like to give everybody the
9 chance to speak. So I'll be keeping track of
10 the time a little bit and giving you as much time
11 as we can afford, but also asking you gently to
12 move on if we need to.

13 And if there's something you really
14 want to say but didn't get to say it in the
15 first round of questions, by all means fill us
16 in when we go around the second time; or you can
17 write to me. You can reach out to Melissa and
18 I'd be happy to talk to you after the meeting.
19 So feel free to reach out to me.

20 The information on how to contact us
21 is on the website so Melissa can send you that
22 as well.

23 As Melissa said, this meeting is --
24 the results of this meeting are going to be
25 published on the Commission's website. We have

1 a transcriptionist, someone who is taking -- who
2 is recording the session and will be preparing
3 the notes of the session. Those are going to go
4 up on our website.

5 So if there's something that you want
6 to say that you don't feel comfortable sharing
7 with the public I would suggest, again, that you
8 reach out to me after the meeting and we'd be
9 happy to take that information and keep it
10 confidential so that it doesn't end up in -- on
11 the website.

12 And with that I'm going turn it over
13 to one of our Commissioners, Dr. Jack Kitts to
14 formally open the session.

15 COMMISSIONER KITTTS: Thank you very
16 much, Ida. Can you hear me? Okay.

17 So good afternoon everyone and thank
18 you for agreeing to participate with us today.
19 My name is Jack Kitts, as Ida said, and I'm
20 joined by my colleague, Commissioner Angela
21 Coke, and the third Commissioner is Commissioner
22 Frank Marroco, who couldn't be with us today.

23 As you are no doubt aware this
24 Commission was set up to investigate the spread
25 of Covid-19 in long-term care homes and impact

1 it's had on residents, families and staff of
2 those homes.

3 So before we begin I want to provide
4 just a bit of context about Commissions in
5 general and our Commission specifically.

6 Governments appoint Commissions of
7 Inquiry after a tragic event has occurred. The
8 purpose of a Commission is to investigate why
9 the tragedy occurred and to make recommendations
10 on how to prevent it from happening again. Most
11 Commissions begin their investigation after the
12 tragedy is over. In our case we're conducting
13 our investigation as the crisis continues to
14 unfold, as you are no doubt aware.

15 Our report and recommendations will be
16 submitted to government at the end of April this
17 year. In addition, we have submitted two
18 interim letters of recommendations to government
19 because we believe they will help manage the
20 pandemic as it continues to unfold.

21 This Commission is independent of
22 government. Our role is to report our findings
23 and make recommendations to the government.
24 However, the decision to accept and implement
25 our recommendations is that of the government.

1 As I stated earlier, an important part
2 of our investigation is to learn how residents,
3 staff and family members were impacted by the
4 spread of Covid-19 in long-term care homes.

5 So today we're asking you to help us
6 understand the impact Covid-19 has had on you
7 personally and what you would recommend to us to
8 prevent a tragedy, in the future.

9 We understand that many of you are
10 probably a little bit nervous about
11 participating in this meeting and we want you do
12 know that we truly appreciate your courage in
13 taking the time to help us with this very
14 important task.

15 Our hope is that the work of our
16 Commission will help ensure that such a tragedy
17 is never repeated. But we believe that by
18 sharing your stories you will help the public
19 and government understand why it is important
20 that this never, ever happens again. So thank
21 you again for participating today.

22 I believe we're ready to begin, but
23 before we begin I will ask you to join me in
24 observing a moment of silence in memory of those
25 residents and staff of long-term care homes who

1 have lost their lives to Covid-19.

2

3 -- [MOMENT OF SILENCE OBSERVED] --

4

5 Thank you and I will now turn it back
6 to Ida to facilitate the session. Thank you.

7 MS. BIANCHI: Thanks everyone. Thanks
8 Commissioner Kitts and Commissioner Coke.

9 Mary J., I will start with you and
10 I'll state the question.

11 The question is: What impact has
12 Covid had on your life? Is there anything that
13 could have been done to have made the situation
14 better for you and the other residents in your
15 home?

16 MARY J.: No, I don't think.

17 MS. BIANCHI: Tell me why?

18 MARY J.: Everything seemed to be done
19 that could be done.

20 MS. BIANCHI: Okay, so you're feeling
21 supported by your staff? And are you able to
22 see the other residents?

23 MARY J.: The staff and the family,
24 everybody's come together and I don't think you
25 can change that.

1 MS. BIANCHI: Okay.

2 MARY J.: My family has come. They
3 haven't been able to come in but they sit on the
4 snowbank outside and we talk to each other from
5 the phones, which isn't very comfortable for
6 them; a lot of cold butts.

7 MS. BIANCHI: You must be very special
8 if your family wants to sit on a snow bank to
9 see you so that's wonderful, Mary.

10 MARY J.: Thank you.

11 MS. BIANCHI: Thank you.

12 I'll turn next to Marc M. I don't see
13 you on the screen Marc. Are you there?

14 Is Marc in the meeting?

15 MARC. M.: Yes.

16 MS. BIANCHI: Marc, do you want me to
17 repeat the question?

18 MARC. M.: Yes.

19 MS. BIANCHI: So Mark, what impact has
20 Covid had on your life. Is there anything that
21 could have been done that would have made things
22 better for you and the other residents?

23 PARTICIPANT 5:

24 MARC. M.: The masks.

25 MS. BIANCHI: So the masks made you

1 uncomfortable, Marc?

2 MARC. M.: Yes. And my wife.

3 MS. BIANCHI: So apart from the masks,
4 it seems from the chatbox that you didn't have
5 an outbreak in your home and that you are very
6 grateful for that.

7 MARC. M.: Oh yes.

8 MS. BIANCHI: That's wonderful. Yeah,
9 Thanks you sharing that, Marc.

10 MARC. M.: No problem.

11 MS. BIANCHI: Now on to Sage. Hi
12 Sage. Oh, Mary and Mark spent less time so go
13 ahead and read your statement there.

14 SAGE F.: My name is Sage. I'm 28
15 years old. I came into LTC at age 23 as a short
16 stay resident. Then four months later after
17 they had discharged me from short stay and I
18 became a long-stay resident.

19 Since fall of 2017 I have been trying
20 to move from this home to another which is
21 better suited for me; and I've been denied
22 admissions for everything ranging from my age to
23 the type of wheelchair I use, to my diagnoses.

24 None of these refusals meet the
25 legislation. And the Ministry won't even

1 enforce their own legislation to make them admit
2 me.

3 I have been in what I call a pandemic
4 prison and solitary since April of 2020. The
5 solitary happens when anyone tests positive in
6 the entire home, and every single one of us must
7 stay in our rooms without being allowed a
8 shower; and even same goes for when we return
9 from a hospital stay. Fourteen days isolation,
10 no showers.

11 I have not had much of any human
12 contact or connections besides my care. No one
13 to talk to about how I'm feeling or how much the
14 pandemic prison situation is affecting my mental
15 and physical health. Instead, when I say
16 anything it's trivialized and infantilized.

17 I was even suicidal in the summer
18 trying to cope with the grief and the amount of
19 death in my home just from Covid-19. I had an
20 incident in my home in July 2020 where I wanted
21 to go to the store and just get some fresh air
22 after the horrible outbreak, which I somehow
23 survived Covid-19 myself with a stay in the ICU,
24 May 17th to June 10th, 2020.

25 The agency staff for screening

1 followed me and I had the least pleasurable
2 experience of being assaulted and restrained in
3 the middle of the road.

4 I said "restrained" because the agency
5 staff prevented me from moving my electric
6 wheelchair to the sidewalk because the City was
7 redoing the sidewalk edges. The home had also
8 contacted the police but so did I. I have it on
9 recording and sent it to ACE and the media.
10 I've had it enough. Part of me was angry for
11 surviving only to live in these conditions.

12 February 2020 I lost my best friend
13 and I have yet to deal with that in the best way
14 I know how in my culture.

15 Prior to the pandemic I was able to do
16 almost everything on my own, but now I need help
17 for almost everything, except for eating and my
18 hair because I cut it short.

19 My depression and anxiety are almost
20 unbearable. I sleep most of the time because
21 there is literally nothing else to do and being
22 awake is depressing and causes anxiety. I'm
23 essentially locked up with nothing to do except
24 watch television or social media, which has so
25 much Covid-19 coverage it's becoming

1 overwhelming, so I leave it on "Treehouse".

2 Social media is a double-edged sword
3 because it provides the much needed contact with
4 others, but then you have all the propaganda,
5 the fake news and the users with the
6 poop-coloured lenses regarding Covid-19, the
7 long-term care, the government and anything that
8 really doesn't involve them. So it can be a
9 very negative space too.

10 And then I have a bunch of
11 recommendations, which I can go to after.

12 MS. BIANCHI: Okay, thank you, Sage.
13 Thanks very much. I'm very sorry for what
14 you're going through. And I'm glad you still
15 had a smile on your face at the end because it
16 sounds like it was very hard.

17 SAGE F.: Yeah, we lost 42 residents.

18 MS. BIANCHI: I'm sorry. That's very
19 tough.

20 All right. I'll turn it next to
21 Margaret. Hi Margaret.

22 MARGARET F.: Hello.

23 MS. BIANCHI: How are you?

24 MARGARET F.: I'm fine, Thank you. I
25 was not prepared for this.

1 MS. BIANCHI: Do you want me to repeat
2 the question?

3 MARGARET F.: Yes, please, could you
4 repeat the question?

5 MS. BIANCHI: I can, yes.

6 The question is: What impact has
7 Covid had on your life. Is there anything that
8 could have made things better for you and the
9 residents in your home?

10 MARGARET F.: No. I can truthfully
11 say that being here was the best thing that
12 could have happened to me. When we did have
13 Covid we didn't know we had it. I mean, we got
14 it after we'd been here a bit, but we didn't --
15 we just thought we had a cold so we were very
16 lucky. My husband and I, we're here together.

17 And with the care -- we need help in
18 our daily lives and being here has been a
19 blessing for us. And every day I keep saying,
20 thank goodness we are here because otherwise
21 what would life be like?

22 And Covid is a major problem for the
23 whole world. We don't know how this is -- no
24 one knows how this is all going to get over. So
25 I have no complaints about being here.

1 And the impact for me, I do miss my
2 family but I still have a daughter and
3 granddaughters that are coming to visit; and I'm
4 in constant touch with other family and I really
5 have no complaints. I'm very grateful to be
6 here. That's all I can say.

7 MS. BIANCHI: Thank you.

8 MELLISSA McVIE: I think Ida froze on
9 the screen so we'll wait for her to get logged
10 back in.

11 Thank you very much for that,
12 Margaret. Was there anything else you wanted to
13 add?

14 MARGARET F.: No, I don't think so. I
15 just keep repeating, I keep telling my friends,
16 we are grateful that we are here where we are.
17 This a very wonderful place to be.

18 MELLISSA McVIE: Very happy to hear
19 that.

20 [TECHNICAL ISSUES WITH CONNECTIONS]

21 MS. BIANCHI: Looks like I'm back.

22 I've been instructed by the program to
23 turn off my webcam. I have a bit of a slow
24 Internet this morning so I apologize for that.

25 I dropped off when Margaret was

1 speaking. Have you moved on from Margaret?

2 MELLISSA McVIE: I think we're ready
3 to hear from another resident, thank you.

4 MS. BIANCHI: Okay, thanks.

5 I'll turn it over next to Mary and
6 Warren. You can each take a turn. You're on
7 the screen together and so I thought we would do
8 you one at the time.

9 I'll repeat the question.

10 What impact has Covid had on your life
11 and is there anything that could have made
12 things better for you and the other residents in
13 your home?

14 MARY T.: Can I answer?

15 MS. BIANCHI: Sure, yeah. Please.

16 MARY T.: Well, as far as I'm
17 concerned it wasn't bad at all. We've been here
18 and happy to be here. And nothing I can talk
19 about now would bother anybody because it's all
20 good. It's all very good. Thank you very much.

21 Do you want me to say more? But if I
22 say more I might just stumble over it because
23 I've said as much as I'm going to say.

24 It's all been good for me. It's quite
25 an experience to know how it could be. It could

1 be much worse. But I am not complaining at all.
2 Thank you very much.

3 MS. BIANCHI: Warren, can we hear from
4 you now?

5 WARREN P.: Yes.

6 MELLISSA McVIE: Thank you.

7 WARREN P.: Thank you. I appreciate
8 the home for keeping us safe here. And with me
9 being here my family is safe.

10 I predict that Covid-19 will be pretty
11 well over by '22, in the month of February and
12 the 22nd of February.

13 And I appreciate all what you're
14 doing. I appreciate the vaccine that we were
15 given today and I hope to make it back to my
16 family soon. And I hope them well, thank you.

17 MELLISSA McVIE: Thank you, Warren.
18 Thank you, Mary.

19 I was wondering, did you experience
20 any Covid-19 virus in your home?

21 WARREN P.: No, I haven't at all.

22 MELLISSA McVIE: Thank you both for
23 your feedback there.

24 Perhaps we can hear from Myra on the
25 phone.

1 MS. BIANCHI: Thank you as well.

2 [TECHNICAL ISSUES STILL ONGOING]

3 MELLISSA McVIE: I think I'm going to
4 recommend that Ida phones in on a phone
5 connection. I believe it's in the chat box, the
6 phone contact from a bit earlier, otherwise I'll
7 have Jennifer send that to you, Ida, so you can
8 get phoned in.

9 Can we call on Myra? Myra is on the
10 telephone line. Are you there? Myra?

11 No? I think I'm going to give Ida
12 another moment.

13 Is there anyone that we've heard from
14 already that would like to add anything about
15 how Covid-19 has impacted your life and the life
16 of your peers, and is there anything that you
17 feel would have made a difference?

18 MYRA R.: This is Myra in Thunder Bay.

19 MELLISSA McVIE: Oh wonderful, Myra.
20 Can I trouble you to speak up as loud as you can
21 into the receiver there?

22 MYRA R.: Can you hear me now?

23 MELLISSA McVIE: Yes.

24 MYRA R.: I'm at a nursing home in
25 Thunder Bay and we have been fortunate not to

1 have any Covid here.

2 And it has been hard on many of the
3 residents, and a lot of it is because of no
4 activities. We've just recently got to play a
5 little bit of Bingo on each floor separately,
6 and there's only about 10 or is 12 people that
7 come where before we used to have a lot more
8 from each floor.

9 Myself personally I am in a wheelchair
10 and I miss being able to get out and about in
11 the community, like ride the streets that are
12 nearby. And when they say we have to stay on
13 the property and just -- I can't even go to the
14 church next door, and they have a huge property
15 and their parking lot. And I don't see why I
16 can't because there's nobody there. Or even go
17 on the sidewalk in the area.

18 [AUDIO DISTURBANCE ON THE LINE.]

19 People having to stay in their rooms.
20 I have had a neighbour and myself where we have
21 to stay in our room, and the one lady in room
22 does not understand being isolated. She's in
23 and out, and up and town like a yoyo; and she
24 doesn't talk so I'm by myself.

25 And what I do to take up time I have

1 plants galore in my room, in the sun room and in
2 both dining rooms, and I also do a lot of
3 colouring.

4 I don't watch TV until after super and
5 I don't like to listen to all of these -- the
6 media and everything they have to say.

7 And it would be nice if people could
8 get together more than just a few to do
9 activities. Because a lot of them it affects
10 them. I've seen it myself.

11 I have two sons, one is five hours
12 away. I tried Facetime with him but it's too
13 hard because he works and in the evening people
14 are busy. And my other son lives locally but
15 his job takes him out of town because he's a
16 truck driver for one of the propane companies
17 north and west of us. So he calls me when he's
18 in town but I haven't seen him for a while, and
19 the same with my granddaughter. My son that
20 lives five hours away it's been a year and a
21 half since I've seen him. And it's hard on
22 families here.

23 And the one that I can basically talk
24 with is staff. And I don't like taking them
25 away from their work but sometimes you have to

1 so you maintain your sensibility.

2 And like I said, they've been very
3 good. The staff, some of them are getting the
4 second shot and it is wiping them out. The
5 other day we were short and we borrowed one from
6 the other floor. We have two floors here.

7 We're down to 92 people from 110, 112.
8 And just being down to two in a room is hard on
9 some people. Because like myself, my roommate,
10 as I say, she stalks gibberish. She does not
11 make sense. And some people their tempers are
12 short and they come by and it can be just one
13 resident upon the other resident. They get
14 short when they're trying to talk to them.

15 And the other day one of the clients,
16 I'm assuming the cup of coffee was cold and she
17 threw it at somebody; and you can't have that.
18 It's all because of the pandemic and having to
19 be so close.

20 And I'm active. I'm a rep -- I was
21 but I am only now Vice-President of Resident
22 Council, and the reason I didn't take the
23 President again is all the paperwork. I don't
24 need that now. I have enough paperwork on my
25 own trying to keep up with my mail and phone

1 calls.

2 And this is from them not having
3 anything to do. I go downstairs I go out the
4 door and come back in the other door, that's how
5 I get my fresh air.

6 I'm now in a room that has a window
7 but it's for my own purpose to use it. I put a
8 bottle of lemon juice in the door and it's
9 frozen. So I had to go get my other bottle that
10 hasn't been opened yet, because I like to drink
11 lemon water.

12 And there's a store downstairs but he
13 doesn't carry a lot of stuff. It's just a
14 one-man store. And it's -- there's milk, I
15 think a little bit of ice cream, bread for
16 people in -- there's a big apartment building
17 we're tied in with. There's 180 apartments.

18 And I have a friend over there but I
19 can only phone her because to go over there I
20 doubt if they're being tested for the Covid.
21 And I don't know about all the workers.

22 But I'm dreading the second shot of
23 the Covid, or of the needle because I'm seeing
24 what's happening with the staff. They get --
25 they get the shot in the morning and some of

1 them have gone home by lunch time or the end
2 of -- long before the end of their shift because
3 it's reacting. They're very -- they ache, the
4 muscles the joints. I'm supposed to get mine
5 around the 10th of February and I don't know.
6 Am I going to spend the day in bed? It's bad
7 enough spending 12, 13 hours in my chair.

8 MELLISSA McVIE: Thank you very much.
9 Sorry to interrupt.

10 MS. BIANCHI: Thank you, Myra.

11 Hi, Melissa. I've managed to get back
12 in on the phone. I'm sorry everyone, it's Ida
13 again. I don't know what happened with my
14 Internet connection.

15 Myra, I got in just as you started
16 speaking. Thank you very much for all of that
17 information.

18 MYRA R.: You're welcome.

19 MS. BIANCHI: Sounds like you've had a
20 tough time. And I hope even if the second shot
21 makes you a bit drowsy for a day that overall
22 the fact that the staff and the residents are
23 all vaccinated will make things better in terms
24 of your ability to live your life and get out
25 there and do things.

1 So I'd like to now turn it over to
2 Maria C., if she's on the line or in the
3 meeting.

4 Maria, are you there?

5 MARIA C.: Yes, I'm here.

6 MS. BIANCHI: Can you hear us?

7 MARIA C.: Can you hear me?

8 MS. BIANCHI: Yes, we can hear you.

9 It's Ida. Can you hear me?

10 MARIA C.: Yes.

11 MS. BIANCHI: Maria, would you like me
12 to repeat the question.

13 MARIA C.: Yes.

14 MS. BIANCHI: The question is: What
15 impact has Covid had on your life? Is there
16 anything that could have made life better for
17 you and the other resident?

18 MARIA C.: Well, we can only do so
19 much, but something can be done.

20 We had, November I think, it's too
21 long in the room. We can't allowed to go in
22 hallway so stay every day in the room and night
23 by ourselves. No talk with nobody. You know,
24 it's very isolate life we do it.

25 We need more support. Somebody, even

1 for a few minutes a day to come and talk with us
2 and talk about anything, because we can't come
3 family. We don't have nothing, nothing. So we
4 are very alone and I see people change. And I'm
5 going there too.

6 I'm feeling -- I started to feeling
7 really down. Really -- what do you call it? I
8 feel sad sometimes. And yeah, I feel my life it
9 change a little bit because all the time by
10 myself.

11 And they need, we need -- now I saw
12 last week I think one lady say to me -- I'm
13 sorry for my English.

14 MS. BIANCHI: No, that's okay. I
15 understand you.

16 MARIA C.: Because I don't go to
17 school for English.

18 MS. BIANCHI: Well you speak it really
19 well.

20 MARIA C.: Thank you. Thank you.

21 And what I say? Oh my God.

22 The lady comes from the government and
23 she says to me, Oh Ms. C, I see you ever day not
24 too long because I go here and there. But
25 because the staff is not enough they take her to

1 them and we have without.

2 If she comes she comes the last moment
3 when she has to go home, not even ten minutes,
4 seven, eight minutes. What? Seven, eight
5 minutes you come in and go out. She don't have
6 too much time to do something with me. With me
7 and with others, not just with me, with the
8 other residents too.

9 She learned people. They talk nice.
10 They work normal. And now they start to talk
11 funny cry or -- no nothing regular any more.

12 So you know, this is weird to help
13 each other but we can't. We have to stay in the
14 room. Soon we said one and they said, Go in the
15 room. Go in the room.

16 MS. BIANCHI: I'm sorry, Maria. Sorry
17 to hear that.

18 MARIA C.: You know, even one month
19 okay, but now it's too much. You can do
20 something about. I don't know.

21 MS. BIANCHI: Well, part of why we're
22 speaking to this group is so that we can tell
23 the story of what happened to you in the report
24 that we're going to prepare for the government.

25 So that's why it's important that we

1 hear from you. And I'm really grateful that
2 you, and I'm sure I say that for the
3 Commissioners too, that we're very grateful to
4 hear from you, Maria, so thank you for that.

5 MARIA C.: Because, you know, no
6 family, no nobody, and that's why we have to --
7 you have try to do something for us.

8 MS. BIANCHI: Okay. We'll prepare the
9 report and we'll include this information.
10 Thank you.

11 MARIA C.: Thank you.

12 MS. BIANCHI: Is Laura in the meeting?

13 MELLISSA McVIE: Unfortunately we were
14 unsuccessful in having both Laura H. and Rita M.
15 join the line.

16 MS. BIANCHI: Maybe we can have a
17 separate telephone call with them if they would
18 like. I'll do that with them. I can arrange a
19 call with me if they have something they want to
20 tell the Commission.

21 MELLISSA McVIE: Sure. I also want to
22 let you know that Sage has some additional
23 recommendations. I'm not sure if they can be
24 integrated into part 2 of your question.

25 MS. BIANCHI: Sure. Let's move on

1 then because I think we're done with the first
2 question, let's move to the second.

3 And Sage, would you like to go first
4 this time? The question is relating to
5 recommendations. The question is: In your view
6 what is the most important thing that the
7 Commissioners need to know as they consider
8 their recommendations?

9 And I saw on the chat box, before I
10 got kicked off my Internet, that you asked if
11 you could send the recommendations to us. By
12 all means.

13 SAGE F.: I was going to send them as
14 well.

15 MS. BIANCHI: But you can say them
16 too. You can tell us right now in the meeting.

17 SAGE F.: Yeah.

18 MS. BIANCHI: Okay.

19 SAGE F.: So outside. Cognitive
20 residents/ECG, so essential care givers visiting
21 their loved ones were able to take a walk around
22 the block, like others in the province.

23 My home permits smoking on the
24 property so I personally cannot go outside in
25 the courtyard because of the smokers.

1 And also we have an outbreak right
2 now, so a lot of the residents that are from the
3 outbreak floor are going downstairs and smoking.
4 Makes total sense to me. Anyways.

5 Staff ratios is another big problem.
6 It doesn't meet the care needs even without a
7 Covid pandemic.

8 And then the ability to handle an
9 outbreak. I believe that if a home is not able
10 to handle an outbreak like the one in Barrie, I
11 think it was Barrie.

12 MS. BIANCHI: Yes.

13 SAGE F.: Then they must accept help
14 from whichever -- Ministry of Long-Term Care and
15 government thinks is best. And they should have
16 a code system for the severity of outbreaks like
17 they do for the regions.

18 Visitors should not be restricted in
19 LTC, especially when the visitors are on the
20 main floor.

21 All visitors who have a negative
22 Covid-19 test should be allowed to visit, as per
23 the Resident Bill of Rights. For example, my
24 friend wants to come over and watch the Leafs'
25 game on the main floor. No more of this

1 categorization.

2 A senior's advocate. We need a
3 civilian-run oversight body of all LTCH in
4 Ontario, like similar to the children's advocate
5 we used to have. Then essentially so the
6 Ministry is not overrun with minor complaints
7 about, oh, well I didn't get my coffee.

8 And written communications. Those
9 aren't happening in my home. I'm told, oh,
10 you're not allowed to have a shower. Well,
11 what's the policy?

12 Or things that impact the residents'
13 daily life, or their rights, should be and must
14 be sent to [indecipherable] substitute decision
15 maker and resident, no matter how cognitive the
16 home thinks they are.

17 MS. BIANCHI: Okay.

18 SAGE F.: Because a resident can be a
19 CPS level 0 but still be able to read -- or CPS
20 level 5, sorry, cognitive skill.

21 MS. BIANCHI: What's CPS stage?

22 SAGE F.: Cognitive skill. Level 5 is
23 when somebody is total care.

24 So that was really a summary.

25 MS. BIANCHI: Will you send us the

1 recommendations by email, Sage?

2 SAGE F.: Yes.

3 MS. BIANCHI: Okay.

4 SAGE F.: And I just put like a little
5 snippet that says, it is time for the government
6 to start treating the residents of long-term
7 care like they would treat someone they love and
8 care about and not like an accused convict.

9 I know that they are not treating
10 their own families like this. Why are we any
11 different?

12 That was my closing.

13 MS. BIANCHI: Thank you, Sage, that
14 was very powerful.

15 Okay. Mary J., can I ask you to
16 answer the second question if you'd like? I can
17 read it to you again. Do you have any
18 recommendations, Mary?

19 MARY J.: No, just get on your hands
20 and knees and pray that this is going to be over
21 soon. That's all I can tell anybody. What are
22 we going to say?

23 MS. BIANCHI: We're all hoping for
24 better days, Mary. Thank you.

25 Marc, would you like to answer the

1 second question?

2 MARC. M.: Can you just repeat the
3 question.

4 MS. BIANCHI: Sure. Marc, in your
5 view what is the most important thing the
6 Commissioners need to know as they consider
7 recommendations?

8 MARC. M.: Family. Family. To see
9 family more and for them to be able to come in
10 here.

11 MS. BIANCHI: Okay. That's very
12 important. Thank you, Marc.

13 MARC. M.: Job well done.

14 MS. BIANCHI: Oh, thanks. It doesn't
15 feel like that today after being kicked off the
16 Internet so I appreciate that very much.

17 Margaret, can I turn to you now?

18 MARGARET F.: Yes. I've been
19 listening and I've always felt that people
20 complain about petty things that I wish they
21 wouldn't. But I realize I have a lot of things
22 that I do that keep me busy, and I have family
23 I'm always in contact with. But if something
24 can be done for people that don't have family
25 and are very lonely.

1 If they could have -- I know they
2 can't now with the Covid, but when school choirs
3 used to come in and children would chat with the
4 old people. They were so thrilled when the
5 children would come in.

6 I realize this can't be done now, but
7 it's just that they're so lonely. I can only
8 speak for myself because I'm not lonely and I'm
9 in constant touch. But that's all -- I don't
10 know what kind of recommendations that can be
11 made until all of this is over with.

12 It's big problem.

13 MS. BIANCHI: Well, do you think if
14 different activities could be done over -- does
15 your home have computers where activities could
16 be done over the web? Do you think that would
17 make things better.

18 MARGARET F.: Not everybody is
19 computer literate. I know personally some of
20 the older people here who are lonely, and say
21 when the recreation person comes around they all
22 love her dearly. And they just would like more
23 activities that they can be with this person.
24 And even like sing-alongs and things like that.
25 They're lonely. It would have do be done

1 through the individual homes I suppose.

2 MS. BIANCHI: Yup. Okay.

3 Mary and Warren, can you -- did you
4 want me to repeat the question?

5 MARY T.: No. But go ahead and repeat
6 the question. I can't even remember what it
7 was.

8 MS. BIANCHI: Okay. I didn't hear you
9 ask for a repeat. I will repeat it now.

10 In your view what is the most
11 important thing the Commissioners need to know
12 as they consider recommendations?

13 MARY T.: They need to know that no
14 one tells -- no lies. That they speak sincerely
15 so that they will be believed and trusted. And
16 that can happen if a person is honest and
17 doesn't go offside somewhere. That is no good.

18 But when you speak straight to them
19 then you know that you're going to get some
20 service. That's all I have to say, thank you.

21 MS. BIANCHI: Thanks, Mary, and we
22 certainly are going to try. We certainly will
23 speak straight in the report, I'm sure. Thank
24 you.

25 MARY T.: Thank you.

1 MS. BIANCHI: Warren.

2 WARREN P.: I think at the home here
3 we're getting the best of care.

4 And my prediction is that in 2022 this
5 pandemic is going to be over by February 22,
6 2022. And I believe the vaccine we receive
7 today is going to keep us from getting Covid-19
8 and I appreciate it. Thank you for the
9 interview.

10 MS. BIANCHI: Thank you. Okay. Over
11 the Myra.

12 MYRA R.: I'm here.

13 MS. BIANCHI: I can hear you. Do you
14 want me to repeat the question?

15 MYRA R.: Yeah, go ahead.

16 MS. BIANCHI: Okay. In your view what
17 is the most important thing that the
18 Commissioners need to know as they consider
19 recommendations?

20 MYRA R.: Well, there's -- I
21 understand why everyone wear those masks, but in
22 some cases it does scare a person, a resident.
23 They don't understand why.

24 And I myself find it hard to wear. I
25 do have one on my chair and I've only worn it

1 two or three times, very briefly. And I try to
2 stay clear of people when I leave my room.

3 And one of the things that does bother
4 me, we have several residents that like to walk
5 about. It's okay to walk about but not when
6 you're constantly in and out of other residents'
7 rooms. I have put a stop sign outside my room.
8 Well, in some cases it doesn't stop them. They
9 just take it down.

10 I have had money stolen. And I don't
11 keep much but when I win a small amount at Bingo
12 that even disappears; and from personal cards.

13 But I know it's hard to keep some
14 people what they're supposed to. So it's in a
15 way things just -- I hate to say it, but hire
16 somebody to work with this person that likes to
17 walk around. They have done it in some cases
18 but not all the cases.

19 MS. BIANCHI: We've heard that before.
20 We've heard that the folks who wander need
21 greater support from staff, for sure.

22 MYRA R.: Yes.

23 MS. BIANCHI: That's what we've heard
24 from others as well.

25 MYRA R.: I used to work for a company

1 called West Way, and I would go in with -- and
2 take clients out, or a husband out while the
3 wife went and did her shopping, or whatever.
4 And it was nice being able to take an individual
5 out for a dinner, for lunch, take them for a
6 long walk.

7 And I know here it's hard because --
8 now with the weather but it's a shame some of
9 them couldn't get out a little bit more.

10 There is a [indiscernible] here and we
11 put flowers all on it. It's nice when the
12 flowers are blooming to bring more of them down,
13 even if it's only for 15 minutes or 20 minutes.

14 MS. BIANCHI: Yup.

15 MYRA R.: So I think that's pretty
16 much it on my end.

17 MS. BIANCHI: Myra, thank you so much.

18 MYRA R.: You're welcome.

19 MS. BIANCHI: Have a good day.

20 Maria C., are you there?

21 MARIA C.: Yes.

22 MS. BIANCHI: I will repeat the
23 question. Is there something that the
24 Commissioners need to know when they're making
25 their recommendations to make things better?

1 MARIA C.: More staff. And that's the
2 way the girl sent over here they help us,
3 please, even 15 minutes each. It is going to be
4 good for us to talk a little bit; to make, you
5 know, company for 15 minutes. That's what we
6 want. We want something to do. For a long stay
7 by not talk all day, to say nothing, and it's
8 not fair. No help. You can't do nothing.

9 MS. BIANCHI: Maria, thank you.
10 Thanks for sharing that idea.

11 Melissa, I think that's it unless
12 Laura and Rita join the call in the interim.
13 Have you -- I just want to check in with you on
14 that.

15 MELLISSA McVIE: Thank you, Ida. I
16 haven't received any messages over chat or email
17 so we will follow-up with them after the
18 session.

19 MS. BIANCHI: Okay. All right.

20 So I'm sorry that I can't see all of
21 you but it was really lovely to have this
22 conversation, and thank you so much for
23 participating and sharing what sound like very
24 difficult stories to us.

25 And I'd like to now turn it back over

1 to Commissioner Kitts to say a few concluding
2 remarks.

3 COMMISSIONER KITTS: Thank you, Ida.
4 And thank you all again for sharing your
5 thoughts with us today. Your messages are
6 certainly heard by -- and I speak for
7 Commissioner Coke and the rest of the team.
8 We've listened and your messages will help shape
9 our report.

10 I've taken a few notes. A nice
11 surprise was that many of you are living in
12 homes where the Covid virus has not entered, or
13 if it has the outbreaks have been minimized; and
14 others have experienced Covid and the spread and
15 the impact that there is. So we've heard a mix
16 today.

17 Many of you where the Covid hasn't
18 entered feel that the staff are working hard but
19 there's not enough staff. And one of the
20 consequences of not enough staff is that it adds
21 to the loneliness that you feel when other
22 people can't talk to you and the staff are too
23 busy to be with you. So we've heard that.

24 Others have experienced the outbreaks,
25 Sage, and made some recommendations. And we

1 will certainly take your lists, Sage. We've
2 heard you today.

3 You spoke to communication as being a
4 really important thing during this crisis, and
5 you also were very clear in saying that we need
6 to -- no matter whether there's a pandemic or
7 not we need to continue to respect the
8 residents' rights.

9 One thing you all have in common, I
10 believe, is that the loneliness that this almost
11 a year now has brought, because of the isolation
12 in your homes, and that's compounded by the
13 restrictions to family because it's essential
14 caregivers, et cetera.

15 So we've heard that, and indeed
16 loneliness due to isolation and restriction of
17 visits is just very important. And we'll take
18 that .

19 I think, Sage, I wrote this down. I
20 didn't get the wording right but we will get it
21 right, is basically your last comment on
22 recommendations was something to the effect of,
23 treat us like family. And I think that's a very
24 powerful

25 SAGE F.: I'll say it slowly.

1 COMMISSIONER KITTS: Okay.

2 SAGE F.: It is time for the
3 government to start treating the residents of
4 long-term care like they would treat someone
5 they love and care about, not like an
6 accused/convict.

7 I know that they are not treating
8 their own families like this! Why are we so
9 different?!

10 COMMISSIONER KITTS: Thank you for
11 clarifying. I'm sure it's on the record and we
12 will --

13 SAGE F.: I just put it up to my web
14 cam if anyone wants to read it.

15 MS. BIANCHI: Sage, you can send it to
16 me too.

17 SAGE F.: I sent it to Melissa.

18 MS. BIANCHI: She'll send it over to
19 me.

20 COMMISSIONER KITTS: So thank you very
21 much for that.

22 So I want to end by reassuring you
23 that all of us, Commissioner Coke, Commissioner
24 Marrocco, everyone, Ida, everyone in the
25 Commission, are absolutely committed to doing

1 the very best we can possibly do in preparing a
2 report that will have the impact of never
3 allowing this to happen again. It will have the
4 impact of keeping long-term care residents and
5 staff safe should there be, likely will be any
6 future pandemics.

7 So thank you again for taking the time
8 to spend with us this afternoon. And I think
9 I'll turn it back to Ida now for closing
10 thoughts.

11 Ida.

12 MS. BIANCHI: Sure. Thank you. Thank
13 you, Dr. Kitts. And thank you again to Melissa
14 and Jennifer and Dee of the OARC. I don't know
15 if the residents know this, but they have been
16 instrumental in enabling us to speak to you. So
17 thank you so much guys. I know it's taken a lot
18 of work but the Commission team and the
19 Commissioners really appreciate all that you've
20 done for us. Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER COKE: Thank you very
22 much everyone.

23 MELLISSA McVIE: Thank you very much
24 to team members as well for supporting
25 residents' involvement today as well. Lots of

1 behind-the-scenes helpers.

2 Thank you very much for your time and
3 effort as well.

4 MS. BIANCHI: Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER KITTS: Thank you.

6 --- Meeting ended at 3:09 p.m.

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1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

2
3 I, HELEN MARTINEAU, CSR, Certified
4 Shorthand Reporter, certify;

5 That the foregoing meeting was taken
6 before me at the time and date therein set
7 forth;

8 All discussions had by the
9 participants were recorded stenographically by
10 me and were thereafter transcribed;

11 That the foregoing is a true and
12 accurate transcript of my shorthand notes so
13 taken. Dated this 27th day of January, 2021.

14
15 

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17 PER: HELEN MARTINEAU
18 CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER
19
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