

# Long Term Care Covid-19 Commission Mtg.

Meeting with Commissioners and York Region  
on Friday, January 29, 2021



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MEETING OF THE LONG-TERM CARE COVID-19 COMMISSION

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--- Held via Zoom, with all participants attending  
remotely, on the 29th day of January, 2021,  
3:29 p.m. to 4:48 p.m.

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1 BEFORE:

2

3 The Honourable Frank N. Marrocco, Lead

4 Commissioner;

5 Angela Coke, Commissioner;

6 Dr. Jack Kitts, Commissioner.

7

8 PRESENTERS:

9 Lisa Gonsalves, General Manager, Paramedic and  
10 Seniors Services, Paramedic and Seniors Services,  
11 Community and Health Services;

12 Katherine Chislett, Commissioner, Community and  
13 Health Services;

14 Gino Rosati, City of Vaughan Regional Councillor  
15 and Chair of Community and Health Services, York  
16 Regional Council;

17 Enza Barbieri, Executive Assistant, Regional  
18 Councillor Gino Rosati;

19 Dr. Catherine Meunier, Medical Director, Paramedic  
20 and Seniors Services, Community and Health  
21 Services;

22 Julie Casaert, Director, Seniors Services Paramedic  
23 and Senior Services, Community and Health Services;

24 Mark Rovere, Director, Operational Planning,

25 Paramedic and Seniors Services, Community and

1 Health Services;

2 Lisa Cramarossa, Program Manager, Strategic

3 Engagement and Emergency Management, Strategies and

4 Partnerships, Community and Health Services;

5 Tricia Wretham, Communications Associate, Strategic

6 Engagement and Emergency Management, Strategies and

7 Partnerships, Community and Health Services;

8 Hanna Samater, Senior Policy Analyst, Strategies

9 and Partnerships, Community and Health Services;

10 Janet Rurak, Program Manager, York Region Seniors

11 Strategy, Paramedic and Seniors Services, Community

12 and Health Services;

13 Joanne Mitchell, Senior Counsel, York Region, Legal

14 & Court Services.

15

16 PARTICIPANTS:

17

18 Alison Drummond, Assistant Deputy Minister,

19 Long-Term Care Commission Secretariat;

20 Jessica Franklin, Policy Lead, Policy Unit,

21 Long-Term Care Commission Secretariat;

22 Derek Lett, Policy Director, Long-Term Care

23 Commission Secretariat;

24 Alain Daoust, Team Lead, Long-Term Care Commission

25 Secretariat;

1 Lynn Mahoney, Counsel to the Ministry of Health and  
2 Long-Term Care;

3 John Callaghan, Counsel, Long-Term Care Commission  
4 Secretariat;

5 Rose Bianchini, Senior Policy Analyst, Long-Term  
6 Care Commission Secretariat;

7 Angela Walwyn, Senior Policy Analyst; Long-Term  
8 Care Commission Secretariat.

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10 ALSO PRESENT:

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12 McKaya McDonald, Stenographer/Transcriptionist.

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1 -- Upon commencing at 3:29 p.m.

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3 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

4 Good afternoon.

5 LYNN MAHONEY: Hi, commissioner. Hello  
6 to everybody.

7 GINO ROSATI: Good afternoon.

8 COMMISSIONER JACK KITTS: Good  
9 afternoon, everybody.

10 LISA GONSALVES: Good afternoon.

11 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: Hi, everybody.

12 LYNN MAHONEY: I think we have -- oh,  
13 there's Katherine.

14 Do we have everybody on your side,  
15 Lisa, who will be participating?

16 LISA GONSALVES: We do.

17 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay. Terrific. So,  
18 commissioners -- Commissioner Marrocco,  
19 Commissioner Coke, and Commissioner Kitts -- this  
20 is a panel from York Region. And they have asked  
21 to make a presentation, and I have had a  
22 preliminary meeting with them as well, and they're  
23 here to talk about the two homes that York Region  
24 runs and how they have fared during the pandemic  
25 Wave 1 and Wave 2 and some of the issues that they

1 have encountered.

2 So they have a presentation, and I  
3 believe somebody on our end is going to operate  
4 that deck. I think Rose is going to do that for  
5 us.

6 So with that -- Commissioner Marrocco,  
7 I just wanted to give you that introduction.

8 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

9 Well, good afternoon. Nice to -- thank  
10 you for coming. We're quite interested in local  
11 the experience because of the -- some of the  
12 evidence that we've heard which -- I think you  
13 appreciate what it was in terms of how they fared  
14 generally during the pandemic, and so we're all  
15 ears.

16 There's a transcript. We have a court  
17 reporter, and we will post the transcript on the  
18 website. We do that so that people who are  
19 interested in what we're doing can keep an eye on  
20 us. And so with that, we're ready when you are.

21 GINO ROSATI: Okay. Well, good  
22 afternoon, commissioners. On behalf of York  
23 Regional Council and York Regional Chairman,  
24 Wayne Emmerson, thank you to the Ontario Long-Term  
25 Care COVID-19 Commission for the opportunity to

1 meet with you today.

2 I'm the City of Vaughan Regional  
3 Councillor, Gino Rosati, member of the York  
4 Regional Council and the chair of the Regional  
5 Community and Health Services Committee.

6 Joining me today from York Region, we  
7 have Katherine Chislett, Commissioner of Community  
8 and York Services; Lisa Gonsalves, General Manager  
9 of Paramedic and Senior Services; and Dr. Catherine  
10 Meunier, Medical Director of both Newmarket and  
11 Maple Health Centre; and we also have other  
12 observers that will be introduced by Commissioner  
13 Katherine Chislett.

14 York Region is home to 28 long-term  
15 care homes, two of which are operated by the  
16 Regional Municipality of York.

17 Newmarket Health Centre and Maple  
18 Health Centre provide a total of 232 long-term care  
19 beds. York Region's homes are placed where  
20 residents live and receive assistance with daily  
21 activities, have access to 24 hours of nursing and  
22 personal care, and receive on-site supervision to  
23 ensure their safety and well-being.

24 Despite funding and operating these  
25 homes, York Region has a limited role in the key



1 decision that impacts residents in long-term care.

2 Yesterday, Regional Council unanimously  
3 approved York Region's submissions to the Ontario  
4 Long-Term Care Commission. While Regional Council  
5 stands behind the 28 recommendations outlined in  
6 York Region's submission, we recognize there is an  
7 immediate urgency to act now to support the  
8 well-being and safety of residents and staff in the  
9 long-term care.

10 York Region supports the steps needed  
11 and, at the same time, remains committed to ongoing  
12 discussion and the critical long-term care issues  
13 that require changes. We look forward to future  
14 discussion and being a leadership voice as we  
15 continue to work with our provincial partners.

16 LYNN MAHONEY: So, Rose --

17 GINO ROSATI: And I will now turn  
18 things over to Commissioner Chislett, Lisa  
19 Gonsalves, and Dr. Meunier.

20 KATHERINE CHISLETT: I've got it from  
21 here.

22 Lynn, do you need anything before I get  
23 into it?

24 LYNN MAHONEY: No, I'm just trying to  
25 get your deck put on the screen.

1                   So, Rose, I believe you're dealing with  
2 the deck?

3                   I don't know if Rose is even --

4                   Yeah, here we go. Perfect. Thank you.

5                   KATHERINE CHISLETT: Yeah, it's just  
6 opening. Okay. Thank you very much, Rose.

7                   And thank you. We're really pleased to  
8 be here. Thank you very much Councillor Rosati,  
9 our chair, for introducing.

10                  I'll start with a really brief overview  
11 of our municipality and the role that we play in  
12 our community, and it's just to give you a bit of  
13 our context before we talk about our COVID-19  
14 experience in our two long-term care homes.

15                  Next slide, Rose, and then the one  
16 after that. Thank you.

17                  Now, you know, York Region, it's just  
18 north of Toronto, and we've got nine local  
19 municipalities. Our population -- we're currently  
20 about 1.2 million people, and we're projected to  
21 grow to 1.5 million in ten years.

22                  The map shows the 28 long-term care  
23 homes in York Region, as Councillor Rosati  
24 mentioned, and those 28 homes have over 3,700  
25 long-term care beds.

1           Now, we just operate two of the homes,  
2 and they're shown on the map with blue. We have  
3 one called Newmarket Health Centre in Newmarket,  
4 and we have Maple Health Centre in the city of  
5 Vaughan. The Region is only responsible for our  
6 two homes we operate.

7           Now, we do -- as a municipality, an  
8 upper-tier municipality, we do have a role for  
9 services like childcare, affordable housing,  
10 serving people who are homeless where the regional  
11 government is the service system manager, and  
12 that's done by law by the Province.

13           And that means that we're responsible  
14 for managing the whole system of that whole area --  
15 whether it's child care, homelessness services, or  
16 housing -- regardless of who actually provides the  
17 service. Some, we provide; some we contract out;  
18 some, we influence.

19           But in long-term care, that role  
20 doesn't fall to municipalities. It belongs to the  
21 Province should the Ministry of Long-Term Care,  
22 Ministry of Health, and all of those different  
23 ministries that are involved in this issue --

24           LYNN MAHONEY: Could I -- commissioner,  
25 could I just interject for a minute?

1 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Sure.

2 LYNN MAHONEY: Just in terms of your  
3 role in York Region, the local medical officer of  
4 health -- who's the local medical officer of  
5 health?

6 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Our medical  
7 officer of health is Dr. Karim Kurji.

8 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay.

9 KATHERINE CHISLETT: And Karim --  
10 Dr. Kurji will be giving a presentation here at a  
11 later date. He wasn't --

12 LYNN MAHONEY: Yes.

13 KATHERINE CHISLETT: -- able to do  
14 that.

15 LYNN MAHONEY: Thank you for that.  
16 Yes, I've been coordinating with your team about  
17 that but just wanted to confirm. So Dr. Kurji --  
18 what's the reporting role? And, I guess,  
19 Dr. Kurji, within his purview would have -- all of  
20 the long-term care homes would be part of his  
21 jurisdiction. And Dr. Kurji, does he report  
22 through you, commissioner?

23 KATHERINE CHISLETT: He does. And how  
24 about we go to the next slide. That's a beautiful  
25 segue.

1 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay.

2 KATHERINE CHISLETT: We didn't even  
3 plan that. Yes, he does. So this is really,  
4 actually, my department. So you're going to see  
5 all the services here that York Region provides,  
6 and it gives you a sense of all the regional  
7 services.

8 So when you see the red stars there,  
9 those are the ones that report directly to me as  
10 commissioner. And the little baby there, that's  
11 public health, and that's with the medical officer  
12 of health.

13 We really -- as a department function,  
14 our role is really to provide the administrative  
15 services and oversight. It's the medical officer  
16 of health -- although he reports directly to me for  
17 administrative purposes, really reports to the --  
18 directly to the Board of Health.

19 And in York Region, the Board of Health  
20 is our council. So that's where he goes on issues  
21 of public health concerns and programs. But a big  
22 part of the department -- we try very hard to work  
23 together on things like the social determinants of  
24 health and how our various programs can support  
25 getting good public health in our community. So

1 that's why he'll come later on.

2 What we're seeing right now through  
3 COVID is that Karim is really responsible for the  
4 COVID response which includes long-term care homes.  
5 On a usual basis, pre-COVID, generally, the role of  
6 long-term -- I'm sorry, of public health is  
7 inspections for food. They don't have much of a  
8 greater role than that. But, again, Dr. Kurji can  
9 talk to you in more detail about how that works.

10 LYNN MAHONEY: And could I just ask  
11 you, as well, just to close that off --

12 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Yeah.

13 LYNN MAHONEY: And, Councillor Rosati,  
14 I'm just wondering whether or not you are part of  
15 the Board of Health that Dr. Kurji reports to?

16 Sorry, you're on mute.

17 GINO ROSATI: Yes, yes, I am. In fact,  
18 all the members of Regional Council are the Board  
19 of Health for York Region --

20 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay.

21 GINO ROSATI: -- through which  
22 Dr. Kurji reports to.

23 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay. Thank you very  
24 much.

25 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Thank you. So,

1 again, as you can see from that, our two homes are  
2 really well integrated into the municipal  
3 structure, and they don't work in isolation. We  
4 try to really support them through our other  
5 services.

6 And I know you'll have heard before  
7 that municipal homes tend to have more resources  
8 than non-profits or privates because we benefit  
9 from supports like the corporate program areas:  
10 things like information technology, legal, finance,  
11 procurement, property services, communications,  
12 emergency management, and human resources.

13 We also -- particularly, though, our  
14 municipal homes benefit from the additional funding  
15 that we can provide through the property tax base,  
16 and Lisa will talk to that shortly.

17 You know, there's so many partnerships  
18 and connections and services and supports that we  
19 can leverage for our homes. And because of this,  
20 our municipal homes really are better places for  
21 seniors. We're able to do a bit more for them.

22 So we're really at the top of the food  
23 chain when you think about it in terms of what we  
24 should be able to do, particularly in COVID. And  
25 we're considered to be the best resource in

1 Ontario, municipal homes are, because of that  
2 additional municipal funding and those resources.

3 But you know what? We're in an  
4 outbreak. We're currently in outbreak in both our  
5 homes. So even with all the extra that we are able  
6 to get, we still struggle to respond to all those  
7 demands.

8 So that's why I really -- one of the  
9 reasons we really wanted to talk to you is that  
10 even when we have all of the additional supports  
11 and resources that we do have, that's still not  
12 enough.

13 And I can't even imagine what it's like  
14 for the others in the long-term care sector who  
15 don't have the good fortune that we have as a  
16 municipal home.

17 You know, again, you've heard -- I've  
18 seen from the transcripts I had a chance to look at  
19 that you've already heard about the longstanding  
20 issues that have led homes to the place we're in  
21 now with COVID.

22 And I really, really do believe it's  
23 time for us to raise the bar in long-term care to  
24 ensure that seniors across the sector are  
25 experiencing and receiving appropriate, respectful,



1 and compassionate care that they deserve. It's one  
2 of the reasons we want to be here. Because we do  
3 believe this commission is an important opportunity  
4 to get that change that the sector so desperately  
5 needs.

6 So to help in that mission, that's why  
7 we're here today. We want to tell you about our  
8 experiences as probably the best-resourced type of  
9 homes in Ontario and tell you about recommendations  
10 that we feel will help raise the bar.

11 Again, we have a written submission.  
12 The written submission was approved by York  
13 Regional Council.

14 And now I'm going to turn it over to  
15 the really smart people, and that would be  
16 Lisa Gonsalves, our general manager of paramedic  
17 and senior services -- the two are combined; and  
18 Dr. Catherine Meunier, our medical director, who's  
19 been such a hero throughout this whole process.

20 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

21 Before you do that, one of the things  
22 we've heard -- and it doesn't seem to be  
23 disputed -- is that there's a shortage of beds in  
24 the long-term care sector and a waiting list and so  
25 on.

1           And I was wondering whether you thought  
2 or York Region thought that an expansion of the  
3 number of beds is better dealt with by the  
4 Municipality. Obviously the Municipality can't  
5 fund the expansion.

6           But it would be better to see an  
7 expansion of municipal participation in long-term  
8 care homes as opposed to other kinds of expansion.  
9 Do you have a view on that?

10           KATHERINE CHISLETT: Sure. Shall I  
11 jump in Councillor Rosati?

12           COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):  
13 Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to  
14 misdirect the question. It was really directed at  
15 the most appropriate person, so...

16           GINO ROSATI: Well, what I can say,  
17 from my point of view, I think we have better  
18 control and a greater level of care for the  
19 municipal, regional level.

20           But having said that, it doesn't mean  
21 that the private sector can not work the job. It's  
22 a matter of proper screening, proper supervision,  
23 proper inspection, and adequate regulation by which  
24 they have to abide. And then I think that can  
25 work.

1                   But from our point of view, yes, I  
2 think we're probably better equipped to look after  
3 our seniors if we are given the opportunity to do  
4 so. And obviously the --

5                   COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):  
6                   The resources.

7                   GINO ROSATI: -- the (indiscernible)  
8 guideline, but the financial support for that goes  
9 a long way.

10                  COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):  
11                  Thank you.

12                  KATHERINE CHISLETT: And I think from  
13 my perspective, I raised that issue of a service  
14 system manager because it's a very important  
15 concept.

16                  This came about about 20 years ago when  
17 provincial government downloaded a whole bunch of  
18 social services onto regional municipalities --  
19 onto municipality -- municipal governments.

20                  And what we've seen over that time is  
21 that maturities -- that because we're the level of  
22 government closest to people, we can move fast, and  
23 we're very minimal. So we're really good at all  
24 those upstream things that are needed.

25                  So if you were to look at seniors

1 housing, helping people to live well in their  
2 communities, age well in place, we're very good at  
3 that even though we're not the service manager and  
4 don't have a responsibility.

5 But where it's more the challenge from  
6 the municipalities is to get into healthcare  
7 services. And, truly, over the -- you know, you've  
8 heard that over the last 10-15 years, 20 years,  
9 people have become much sicker in long-term care  
10 homes. Their needs are greater. It's really more  
11 of a healthcare service than municipal service, and  
12 that isn't an area where municipalities have  
13 expertise.

14 So I think you need kind of a  
15 partnership, but it's really a healthcare system,  
16 hospital base, whatever the Ministry is, for people  
17 who are in long-term care and perhaps even some  
18 retirement. So municipalities are really good when  
19 it comes to housing seniors.

20 I'm also president of Housing York. We  
21 house a lot of seniors, and we do very well at it  
22 and, also, in terms of developing communities to  
23 help them. So I -- that's kind of my opinion.

24 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):  
25 Thank you.

1                   KATHERINE CHISLETT: Thank you. So  
2 over to you, Lisa. Give them a break from me.

3                   LISA GONSALVES: Thank you. Thank you,  
4 Katherine.

5                   And so I'm going to just walk you  
6 through -- provide you a little bit of context  
7 about our two homes, if that's okay.

8                   So next slide, Rose. Next slide --  
9 there we go.

10                  So our two homes -- we have two homes,  
11 as Katherine mentioned, one in Newmarket and one in  
12 Maple. Combined, we have 232 beds, and we serve  
13 about 530 residents annually.

14                  The one -- the Newmarket home, which is  
15 on the top of the screen there -- you can see we  
16 began operating it in 1991. It's a fairly old  
17 building, but we did some major renovations and  
18 upgrades in 2004. So it's a Class A, new home.

19                  Maple Health Centre, a little younger.  
20 We've been operating it since 1998, 100 beds, and  
21 it's also Class A home. So both of our homes -- we  
22 don't have three and four-ward -- bed wards in  
23 either home.

24                  Next slide.

25                  So this -- I want to spend a little bit

1 of time on the funding piece because I know, in  
2 speaking to Lynn, this was an area of interest for  
3 the commissioners.

4 So like many other municipalities, we  
5 rely very heavily on our property tax to fill gaps  
6 in funding. Under normal, pre-COVID conditions, we  
7 spend about 17.9 million of our total operating  
8 which is about 46.6 percent covered by the tax levy  
9 for the full costs of our operations.

10 You know, it's interesting. We have  
11 never ever received any funding to cover things  
12 like IPAC or PPE either. We also -- in terms of  
13 our funding envelopes, where we have some  
14 discretion under our "other accommodations," we  
15 allocate 100 percent of our "other accommodations"  
16 envelope right back into "operations and resident  
17 care."

18 Same goes for our "global level of  
19 care" funding as well. All of that money goes back  
20 into the "nurse and personal care envelope." So we  
21 use any additional funds to enhance direct care to  
22 residents.

23 LYNN MAHONEY: Can I just -- so just so  
24 I'm clear, York Region contributes to the two  
25 municipal homes that we've talked about -- the two

1 homes that we've talked about, those 235 beds?

2 LISA GONSALVES: 232 beds.

3 LYNN MAHONEY: 232 beds. You

4 contribute annually 17.9 million?

5 LISA GONSALVES: 17.9 million, correct.

6 LYNN MAHONEY: 17.9 million --

7 LISA GONSALVES: Yes.

8 LYNN MAHONEY: -- in addition --

9 LISA GONSALVES: That was before COVID,  
10 m-hm.

11 LYNN MAHONEY: Before COVID. Okay.

12 Thank you.

13 LISA GONSALVES: Yes, yeah. And so

14 just to add to that -- so during COVID, we've

15 actually invested about -- it's costing about

16 7.3 million in addition that was unbudgeted to

17 support COVID.

18 And of that 7.3 million, we've actually

19 funded about 46.6 percent of that from our own tax

20 base, and the rest of it has come from the

21 containment funding from the Province. We actually

22 received some today which is welcomed news, so I

23 have factored in that number.

24 Prior to this, we were at about 60 of

25 those costs. So as a municipality, because you've

1 had access to additional funds, primarily the  
2 property tax, we were able to do some things that  
3 probably other homes couldn't. So I did want to  
4 make a point of that as well.

5 You know, to go along with this, the  
6 investment in our homes, you know, and the  
7 additional resources has allowed us to provide --  
8 and I think Katherine mentioned as well our level  
9 of care is higher.

10 As an example, when we look at the "raw  
11 food" envelope, we get funded about \$9.54 per  
12 residence per day from the Province. We've topped  
13 that up another 1.50. So that allows us to provide  
14 more fresh food, juices, more -- better cuts of  
15 meat.

16 We also have, also, invested in our  
17 human resources, so all of our chefs are red seal  
18 qualified as well. So those are just some of the  
19 things that maybe set a municipal home apart from  
20 another home.

21 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):  
22 Can I just -- can I just --

23 LISA GONSALVES: M-hm. Sure.

24 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):  
25 -- make sure I understand?



1 LISA GONSALVES: Sure.

2 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

3 So in addition to the contribution --  
4 for example, the "other accommodation" funds which  
5 are contributed back to the maintenance of the  
6 home -- there's an additional 1.50 that you're  
7 contributing on top of that?

8 LISA GONSALVES: Correct.

9 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

10 Okay.

11 LISA GONSALVES: Correct.

12 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Yeah. But, Lisa,  
13 just for the food, right?

14 LISA GONSALVES: Just for the food.

15 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Yeah.

16 LISA GONSALVES: That's just for the  
17 raw food part of the budget -- envelope.

18 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Yeah.

19 LYNN MAHONEY: So what you're saying is  
20 in addition to the four funding envelopes that you  
21 receive from the Province which you fully invest in  
22 the home -- you don't return anything back, and  
23 it's no distribution of anything back to the  
24 regional tax base in any way -- you use -- fully  
25 use those four envelopes, and, in addition to that,

1 you top up those different components of those  
2 envelopes?

3 LISA GONSALVES: Correct.

4 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay. And one example  
5 that you provided was raw food?

6 LISA GONSALVES: Correct.

7 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay.

8 LISA GONSALVES: You got it. Okay. So  
9 just -- so simply put, one of the things we are  
10 asking from the province is funding -- a funding  
11 arrangement that is sustainable.

12 You know, I think a lot of -- and as  
13 Councillor Rosati said, you know, many  
14 municipalities have continued to talk about the  
15 fact that we cannot continue to subsidize  
16 healthcare through property tax.

17 So we've continuously advocated through  
18 associations like AMO, AdvantAge Ontario, and  
19 others for sustainable funding from the Province.  
20 So that's just an example of the funding gap and  
21 how we've been able to try and close that gap, but  
22 it's not sustainable.

23 Can I have the next slide, please?

24 So this is --

25 LYNN MAHONEY: Can I ask you -- can I

1 ask you --

2 LISA GONSALVES: Sure, of course.

3 LYNN MAHONEY: -- what percentage of  
4 the tax base, for example -- and I don't know if  
5 that was covered on the previous slide. I don't  
6 think it was. What percentage would long-term care  
7 be of your -- like, of the tax base? You get the  
8 money from the tax base --

9 LISA GONSALVES: M-hm.

10 LYNN MAHONEY: -- and how much of the  
11 tax base is going towards long-term care?

12 LISA GONSALVES: I --

13 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Lisa, do you want  
14 me to try?

15 LISA GONSALVES: Sure. Go ahead,  
16 Katherine.

17 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Yeah.

18 LYNN MAHONEY: I just want it as a  
19 percentage. Like, is it --

20 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Yeah. An easy way  
21 to think about it is usually a 1 percent property  
22 tax increase is about 11 million, 11-12 million.

23 So with council putting in 17 million a  
24 year -- and then with the COVID, what was it?  
25 Another -- close to 7 million? Something like

1 that.

2 Like, we're talking points on the tax  
3 base. So people are actually seeing it in the  
4 envelopes. So that's probably the easiest way to  
5 do it. We can find exact numbers with that, but we  
6 have, obviously, a massive budget as a region --

7 LYNN MAHONEY: Yes.

8 KATHERINE CHISLETT: -- and one of that  
9 is provincial. But when you think if it, if we  
10 were to turn around today and say "here's how much  
11 money we need," we'd probably have to pass through  
12 probably about a 1.5 percent tax increase.

13 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay. Thank you.

14 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Yes.

15 LISA GONSALVES: Does that help? Thank  
16 you --

17 LYNN MAHONEY: Yes.

18 LISA GONSALVES: -- Katherine.

19 Okay. So on this next slide here, we  
20 wanted to show you a bit of the trend lines  
21 around -- and I know you probably are well aware of  
22 the increasing cases, but just to put it in  
23 perspective for York Region, we have -- this graph  
24 really shows -- we've got 28 homes in York Region.

25 So as you can see -- in Wave 1, you can

1 see that the number of -- the number of homes in  
2 outbreak was just over half of the homes in York  
3 Region. But, again, you can see here that we  
4 were -- we were not hard-hit in our own homes.

5 You will see here that we did not  
6 experience an outbreak until November, and this was  
7 closely correlated to the significant increases in  
8 the community that we are seeing.

9 In York Region, actually, we've had  
10 close to 443 deaths as of January 27, 2021. And  
11 within long-term care homes in York Region that  
12 represents about half of that is about -- is for --  
13 is our own homes. So 224 deaths, which is quite  
14 tragic.

15 But, again, I guess the -- we knew that  
16 we were -- we felt we were in a good place, but we  
17 knew it was inevitable, I guess, is the message on  
18 this slide.

19 LYNN MAHONEY: So can you just clarify  
20 for me, Lisa, when you say "our own homes," it's  
21 not the two municipal homes. It's all of your 27  
22 or 28 --

23 LISA GONSALVES: Yeah. It's all of our  
24 28, but I would say our municipal homes -- you can  
25 see in Wave 1, they were not in any outbreak. It

1 was in Wave 2.

2 LYNN MAHONEY: Correct.

3 LISA GONSALVES: And it was closely  
4 aligned -- it was actually directly aligned to the  
5 community outbreaks --

6 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay.

7 LISA GONSALVES: -- in York Region.

8 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Yeah. And, Lynn,  
9 with our homes going into outbreak in November, I  
10 believe we had four resident deaths, if I'm  
11 correct, Lisa.

12 LISA GONSALVES: We've actually had six  
13 resident deaths altogether, yes, yeah. And there's  
14 only one home -- and I know, Lynn, you mentioned  
15 you were going to be reaching out to that home.  
16 There's only one home in York Region that has not  
17 had an outbreak.

18 LYNN MAHONEY: Yes, we've already  
19 spoken with that home.

20 LISA GONSALVES: Okay.

21 LYNN MAHONEY: The commissioners have  
22 already heard from that home.

23 LISA GONSALVES: Okay. All right.

24 So the next slide, please.

25 So this slide, really, is a high-level

1 picture of the timeline of some of the things that  
2 we did in preparing and responding. So you can see  
3 that in -- and I'll speak in more detail on the  
4 following slides.

5 But in Wave 1, you can see that we were  
6 primarily focussed on preparation. We're doing a  
7 lot of work to ensure that our IPAC measures and  
8 health and safety measures were in place.

9 And we also held webinars, one of our  
10 first webinars with families. And Dr. Meunier  
11 headed up that. We had town halls with staff. But  
12 in Wave 2, the real focus was outbreak management  
13 because that's when both of our homes were hit in  
14 November.

15 I did want to note that the first  
16 outbreak happened at Maple. And it was declared on  
17 November 7th, and it was only one staff case, and  
18 it was declared over by November 15th. So we  
19 managed to -- there was no spread.

20 However, Newmarket, it was actually  
21 declared in and around the same time, actually, and  
22 they've been in outbreak since November 7th. We're  
23 still in outbreak, so I think we're heading into  
24 12 weeks of this.

25 So it's been quite a challenge, and I'm

1 going to talk about what those challenges look like  
2 in the next couple of slides.

3 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

4 Before you do that --

5 LISA GONSALVES: Sure.

6 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

7 -- you start preparing -- according to  
8 the slide, you start preparing for COVID-19 in  
9 January 2020. What causes you to do that?

10 LISA GONSALVES: So because we are part  
11 of the region -- so remember -- so Public Health --  
12 so under Katherine, Katherine has Public Health  
13 under her department.

14 And so as a department of leadership  
15 team, we hear what's happening. And so we were  
16 getting information through Public Health, and we  
17 had also -- Public Health had opened their health  
18 emergency operating centre on the third week of  
19 January.

20 So we were already getting information,  
21 so we were taking that back to the long-term care  
22 management team. And we were starting to pull up  
23 our plans, look at our PPE supply; mask fit testing  
24 started as well. So that really was the real  
25 impetus as well as Dr. Meunier, and she was



1 watching everything.

2 And so she was, at the same time, also  
3 telling us "people, we need to meet. We need to  
4 talk about this. It's coming". So that was the  
5 real trigger.

6 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

7 Okay. Thank you.

8 LISA GONSALVES: Does that help? Okay.

9 So if you can go to the next slide,  
10 Rose.

11 So Dr. Meunier and I are going to walk  
12 through the next set of key challenges. Our  
13 submission has a lot more information, but we  
14 thought we would focus on these key areas.

15 And I'm going to speak a little bit  
16 about -- Dr. Meunier will talk a little bit about  
17 the leadership piece. I'll talk about the planning  
18 and preparedness. And then we're going to talk  
19 about the key challenges we faced when it came to  
20 testing, outbreak management -- staffing was  
21 huge -- and the communications and the multitude of  
22 directive and directions we were getting from the  
23 Province and some of the challenges.

24 And then we'll end with some of the --  
25 a summary of some of our key immediate and medium

1 to long-term actions.

2 Can you go to the next slide, please?

3 All right. So this is --

4 LYNN MAHONEY: I like the way this  
5 slide is set up. And, commissioners, you'll note  
6 that the dates compares the date that York Region  
7 implemented some of these actions compared with  
8 dates when they -- the direction came from the  
9 Province.

10 LISA GONSALVES: Yes. So you can see  
11 here, again, our planning and preparedness -- there  
12 was a significant amount happening. We actually --  
13 we have a regional emergency plan. We have a  
14 public health response plan as well. We also had  
15 our business continuity plans.

16 We take an all-hazards approach in our  
17 planning, so we plan for all sorts of emergencies  
18 including loss of staff. So there's lots of  
19 scenarios around loss of staff which would include  
20 labour relations and strikes, illness; pandemic,  
21 would also be part of those plans as well.

22 For our homes, we also have a pandemic  
23 plan as well. And, again, it's -- it was -- and we  
24 were using that to prepare. And we were -- we  
25 thought we were ready to face what was coming, but

1 the execution of the plan was where the challenge  
2 lied.

3 And, you know, I think we were really  
4 prepared theoretically. We weren't prepared for  
5 something that was going to last this long, most  
6 definitely. But we were ahead of the game when it  
7 came to planning and preparedness.

8 As I mentioned before, Commissioner  
9 Marrocco, we had -- we had started planning in  
10 January and February and primarily looking at our  
11 PPE supplies. We had started to look at our -- we  
12 were also doing the mask fit testing, and we were  
13 participating regularly --

14 AdvantAge Ontario was our sector  
15 association which I know you have heard from. They  
16 were quite proactive as well, and we knew that  
17 COVID could be an issue for congregate living,  
18 especially long-term care. We -- but we started to  
19 put measures in place in March.

20 So in my branch, we actually set up a  
21 senior services response group in March, and that  
22 included members from our leadership team in  
23 long-term care for both homes.

24 We also have an operational planning  
25 division within my branch because we're combined

1 with the paramedic services, and that includes a  
2 team of policy and data and procurement staff. We  
3 also used our finance team within our department  
4 and our partners, some of which are on the phone  
5 today, from legal services, HR, employee health and  
6 safety as well.

7           So we were proactively planning, and we  
8 had about -- we did about 15 preventative measures,  
9 and there are 11 of them shown on the screen. One  
10 of the most important ones or the one to highlight  
11 is that we restricted frontline staff from working  
12 between our homes. So they used to be able to  
13 cross over in our two homes, so we restricted that  
14 on March 13th.

15           And then we went further, and then we  
16 told staff they needed to choose one -- to work for  
17 only one employer on March 25th. And so you can  
18 see on the slide here we were several weeks ahead  
19 of when the province made the directive. And I --

20           LYNN MAHONEY: Can I ask you about  
21 that, Lisa?

22           LISA GONSALVES: M-hm.

23           LYNN MAHONEY: What measures did you  
24 implement to assist workers financially to the  
25 extent it was -- it was required given the

1 single-site directive that York Region --

2 LISA GONSALVES: Right.

3 LYNN MAHONEY: -- implemented?

4 LISA GONSALVES: So we -- the staff who  
5 chose their other employer, most times it was  
6 because that was their -- they had more hours with  
7 their other employer.

8 We did offer them a leave of absence,  
9 so they are still at -- they still have their job  
10 should and when they come back. But also for staff  
11 who stayed with us, any part-time or casual staff,  
12 we also provided them with sick benefits. So when  
13 they're self-isolating, if they had to --

14 So we did offer some better benefits  
15 for those who were part-time and casual, and the  
16 leave of absence also allows them to have their  
17 job. So we provided some job security. We haven't  
18 given their job away. Put it that way.

19 LYNN MAHONEY: And what about the  
20 impact that that may have had on your staffing  
21 levels?

22 LISA GONSALVES: Yes, so -- and I will  
23 get to it, but I can -- I can briefly say to you  
24 that -- there is a whole slide on it, Lynn. Did  
25 you want me to talk about that now?

1 LYNN MAHONEY: No, that's fine.

2 LISA GONSALVES: Okay. Okay.

3 LYNN MAHONEY: You can get to it then.

4 LISA GONSALVES: Okay.

5 LYNN MAHONEY: Thank you.

6 LISA GONSALVES: Okay. Yeah, there's a  
7 lot on that one as well. So just around  
8 communications, again, another key area for our  
9 planning -- our planning and preparedness and  
10 webinars.

11 I know that families were --  
12 Dr. Meunier actually had brought the concept of a  
13 webinar. We have never done -- we had never done a  
14 family webinar until this happened, and a lot of  
15 homes were starting to venture into this world of  
16 webinars and using technology.

17 So we had a family webinar. That  
18 turned into -- we had a couple of staff town halls.  
19 Then we started really ramping up our  
20 communications, and we had -- we actually -- we  
21 deployed a team from within the corporation to help  
22 us -- within my branch, actually -- to do all of  
23 our communications. And we had regular weekly  
24 reports, daily reports to staff and to residents.  
25 So the communications was key, a very key piece, of

1 our preparedness and response.

2 In terms of PPE, I did want to mention  
3 that as well because I think our process for  
4 enhancing our supply of PPE was a very good one.  
5 And, again, because we're positioned within the  
6 region and most -- and paramedic services is  
7 combined with seniors, we actually -- our paramedic  
8 services logistics team, they actually procure all  
9 of our PPE for public health as well and for  
10 long-term care.

11 And through COVID, regionally, they're  
12 now procuring for our corporate partners as well.  
13 So we've created automated systems, dashboards. We  
14 monitor our burn rates, daily run rates.

15 So we are quite ahead in terms of  
16 knowing what's -- where we're short or where we  
17 need build our supply base, and we actually  
18 diversified our supplier base as well. But we did  
19 it with other people. Like, other people helped us  
20 to do this. And --

21 LYNN MAHONEY: What was your  
22 stockpile -- what was your stock pile of PPE like  
23 at the outset of the pandemic.

24 LISA GONSALVES: Yeah, so we are -- we  
25 were about three months. We always have about a

1 three-month stockpile. But, you know, we thought  
2 about what would happen if we were in outbreak, and  
3 when you do the math, it was quite evident that we  
4 would run out quickly. So we --

5 LYNN MAHONEY: So even your three-month  
6 stockpile wasn't going to be enough?

7 LISA GONSALVES: No.

8 LYNN MAHONEY: And you realized that  
9 very early on?

10 LISA GONSALVES: Very early on because  
11 we --

12 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay.

13 LISA GONSALVES: -- have a logistics  
14 team that does that computing for us.

15 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay.

16 LISA GONSALVES: So that was very  
17 helpful. Just to put it in perspective, when we  
18 went into outbreak in November, we were looking at  
19 the numbers for both homes on a daily basis.

20 We were -- we burned through 12,325  
21 gloves each day and 2,225 gowns each day during the  
22 outbreak.

23 LYNN MAHONEY: Wow.

24 LISA GONSALVES: That hopefully puts it  
25 into perspective for you.



1 LYNN MAHONEY: That does.

2 LISA GONSALVES: And --

3 LYNN MAHONEY: And so that's for --  
4 that's for the combination, the two homes?

5 LISA GONSALVES: The two homes. The  
6 two homes.

7 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay. Yeah.

8 LISA GONSALVES: And then, also, we --  
9 and even though we have the supplier base, we did  
10 access the provincial stockpile as well because we  
11 were burning through it so quickly.

12 And there's a reason for why we were  
13 burning through it so quickly. I know Dr. Meunier  
14 has some thoughts on that as well. But I would say  
15 that the -- there was a lot of changing direction  
16 around use of PPE and when to use it, how to use  
17 it. So that contributed to probably a lot more --  
18 a higher burn rate in our opinion.

19 The other --

20 LYNN MAHONEY: This is the direction  
21 that you were getting from whom?

22 LISA GONSALVES: We were getting that  
23 through Public Health Ontario, but it was  
24 inconsistent. I think across all the health units,  
25 there were different interpretation of when to use

1 PPE and how to use it. So it all depended on how  
2 you would interpret it.

3 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay.

4 LISA GONSALVES: So that's -- and,  
5 again, that's, again, the confusion between how  
6 to -- interpreting directives and guidelines.  
7 There's a little bit of subjectivity to it  
8 sometimes.

9 The other thing I want to mention is  
10 that although we didn't have, you know, trouble  
11 procuring PPE like others may have, one of the  
12 major issues for us was the appropriate use of PPE,  
13 and it still remains a challenge particularly  
14 around communicating to our frontline staff about  
15 the proper use of PPE.

16 And I think, again, that, we can --  
17 we'll discuss that a bit more when we talk about  
18 the outbreak experience.

19 And then around IPAC, which --  
20 infection prevention and control, and we did a lot  
21 to enhance our IPAC measures. We ramped up our  
22 infection and prevention control processes. We  
23 looked at our design and layout. We put up -- you  
24 know, a lot of people put up Plexiglas and other  
25 things.

1                   So we did a whole walk through. We  
2 have -- our occupational health and safety team did  
3 a whole safe space plan for both homes, and so we  
4 were able to use that knowledge, expertise to put  
5 in place a lot of pandemic resilient infrastructure  
6 measures.

7                   LYNN MAHONEY: And when was that done?  
8 When was that done, Lisa?

9                   LISA GONSALVES: That would have --  
10 that was done -- if you look at our chart here,  
11 that started --

12                  LYNN MAHONEY: Yes.

13                  LISA GONSALVES: -- to be done --  
14 actually, starting in March, we started doing that  
15 walk-around, looking at our safe plan. And then  
16 throughout the rest of the summer --

17                  LYNN MAHONEY: Okay.

18                  LISA GONSALVES: -- we've been  
19 implementing those changes.

20                  LYNN MAHONEY: Okay.

21                  LISA GONSALVES: When we look at  
22 visitors -- you remember when they opened up back  
23 the visitors which was in the summertime? As an  
24 example, we actually had already procured fencing.  
25 We had already procured specific tables to put

1 outside. We had already set up a process to do  
2 enhanced infection and -- cleaning in those -- in  
3 our parking lot. We had fences in our parking lot,  
4 actually, for the visits. So that -- a lot of  
5 those things were done well in advance.

6 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay.

7 LISA GONSALVES: And, also, we did --  
8 we were -- we put in place a process for the weekly  
9 spot -- the enhanced swabbing and surveillance  
10 testing. It went from biweekly to weekly very  
11 quickly when we got into the grey zone.

12 And just to give you an example, we've  
13 completed, to date, over 1,500 swab tests for  
14 residents -- and that's not because of  
15 surveillance, necessarily -- but over 7,000 for  
16 staff alone in both homes.

17 So somebody has to do it, so it's been  
18 a combination of our own staff doing the swab  
19 testing as well as our paramedics. So we've been  
20 able to use some of our paramedics to help us with  
21 those swabbing clinics.

22 So I'm now going to turn it over to  
23 Dr. Meunier who is going to talk about leadership.  
24 And I have to also stress that she's been  
25 invaluable in this whole experience and in our

1 response, and she's going to talk about her -- some  
2 of her challenges as a medical director.

3 Over to you, Catherine.

4 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: Thank you.

5 Thank you very much for giving me a voice and talk  
6 about my experience as medical director, and I will  
7 try to answer the two questions that were posed.

8 So in starting, one of the reasons --  
9 in January, at one of our PAC (ph) meeting where we  
10 have a multidisciplinary approach with the  
11 physicians -- and I presented it to that team on  
12 January 22nd that through the readings and the  
13 information I was collecting in international  
14 literature, I could see that something was coming  
15 on and that we needed to prepare.

16 I'd be looking at the trends in China  
17 and Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, looking at what was  
18 going on and then seeing the first cases come in BC  
19 and also the first case in Washington State in the  
20 United States.

21 Through my readings and the research of  
22 the literature and because of what was happening  
23 internationally, I kind of made it my mission to  
24 try and be proactive and be at the forefront of the  
25 information that I was providing to York Region so

1 that I could be ahead of the game and prepare the  
2 whole team because it was obvious that it was going  
3 to come.

4 And I think at the beginning, the  
5 long-term care sector did not really grasp the  
6 COVID threat to the long-term care facility as it  
7 was more of an interpretation that, you know, we're  
8 used to managing outbreaks, and --

9 But if you really looked at what was  
10 going on, it was quite obvious that we were going  
11 to be running into issues.

12 I started contacting medical directors  
13 of the first home in BC. I spoke to that medical  
14 director. I spoke to the medical director in the  
15 United States. I was trying to understand their  
16 lesson learned. Like, what should they have done  
17 better to contain their outbreaks. And I was  
18 collecting a lot of data, collecting a lot of data.

19 I, then, quickly, was able to identify  
20 that there were three major points that we needed  
21 to address.

22 Number one would be the staffing. Over  
23 and over again when I spoke to people in Europe,  
24 spoke to people, like, internationally, that was  
25 their one -- their biggest issue to deal with.

1                   Number two, obvious that you needed to  
2 test and test, and the swabbing were so critical in  
3 being able to be ahead of the game, be proactive,  
4 and also be able to manage the outbreak.

5                   And the third component that we really  
6 saw, you know, throughout the newspaper and  
7 everything here in Ontario is the communication  
8 part, being transparent, being able to tell people  
9 "we've thought about this. This is our plan of  
10 action. Let me tell you how I'm going to protect  
11 your mom inside our long-term care facility."

12                   So I tried to identify what would be  
13 the best practices based on all the reading and the  
14 one-to-one discussion and all the webinars that  
15 were being organized internationally and try and  
16 put some directive for York Region to put the  
17 parameters in place so that we'd be ready to react.

18                   To answer one of the questions -- so  
19 when you're asking about the municipal home, were  
20 we in a different place than other homes? So I  
21 joined a lot of community of practice groups or  
22 association and things like that where I would be  
23 able to collaborate with other medical directors in  
24 Ontario either through the OLTCC, with the Canadian  
25 medical directors as well.

1                   And to answer your question, I do think  
2 that because I was part of a municipal home sector,  
3 that -- by trying to prepare our team, that team  
4 was able, then, to go back and get the support that  
5 we needed which, what I was hearing on all of these  
6 calls and exchanges, is that, "well, oh, yes,  
7 Catherine, you can do that because you have the  
8 support of the paramedics or because you have the  
9 support of the corporate whatever." So I do think  
10 that we are in a -- at an advantage because of  
11 where we are at.

12                   So I was trying to be proactive. Also  
13 try to establish very clear communication,  
14 communication with staff and communication with the  
15 substitute decision-makers and the resident.

16                   And to me, wanted to reassure everybody  
17 that I was making the right connections at the  
18 right place. So I approached our local hospitals,  
19 spoke to the internists, the emergency room  
20 physicians, palliative care ahead of the  
21 government, you know, finally saying "oh, you know,  
22 you need to start partnering with your hospital."

23                   I did that way back in March. Making  
24 sure that, you know, the seven physicians who work  
25 with me at the two homes would have access to the



1 support they needed if we went into outbreak as I  
2 knew that we wouldn't be able to transfer our  
3 residents and that we needed to bring the tools  
4 inside our long-term care facility or the  
5 professional support or the extra, special support  
6 that we would need from outside inside our own  
7 facility.

8           So establish -- I tried to establish  
9 all of those links and keep all of our physicians  
10 ahead of the game. Communicate with the  
11 pharmacist. Making sure that everything was in  
12 place. Making sure that all the medication -- that  
13 the physician knew what to use when. I tried to  
14 collect all the statistical epidemiology data to  
15 try and show -- you know, have approved and best  
16 practice and what was working, what should be  
17 avoided.

18           You know, there were a lot of talks on  
19 antivirals, a lot of talks on (indiscernible) or,  
20 you know, all different forms of supportive  
21 treatment for the resident. Wanted to make sure  
22 that we had the supply in place as well.

23           So made it my mission to be proactive  
24 and try to be ahead of the game, and I think that  
25 we had prepared -- the whole team had prepared York

1 Region extremely well to -- if, ever, we went into  
2 outbreak.

3 LYNN MAHONEY: So, Dr. Meunier, can I  
4 ask you a question, please?

5 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: Sure.

6 LYNN MAHONEY: So you're medical  
7 director at the two municipal homes of York Region?

8 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: Yeah.

9 LYNN MAHONEY: Is that your  
10 full-time --

11 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: No.

12 LYNN MAHONEY: -- job?

13 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: No, which is --  
14 okay. I will lead into that if you want right  
15 away.

16 So I've been medical director for York  
17 Region for over 20 years on and off overseeing both  
18 of those long-term care facilities. I've made sure  
19 that I had very strong medical teams for both of  
20 those. I have four physicians, basically, on both  
21 sides. One cross-covers. Hand picked those  
22 physicians.

23 I usually dedicate one day a week to my  
24 long-term care work. Always -- I've always tried  
25 to make myself available. I have a -- I do

1 addiction medicine as a -- my private practice.  
2 And as you know, both the long-term care sector and  
3 the homeless addiction -- those are both the  
4 vulnerable sectors, and I basically work on both of  
5 those sectors.

6 What happened is basically since -- I  
7 can tell you, January 22nd, at that meeting, the  
8 demand on my time, my expertise -- and I chose. I  
9 chose to give that kind of support.

10 But I've basically been on call 24/7  
11 since January 22nd trying to put myself out there  
12 for the seven physicians that I support, for all  
13 the staff, for the DOCs at both homes, for the  
14 management team as I think that I was able to --  
15 because of my background and my interest in  
16 research, be able to understand the literature and  
17 be able to translate it into direct steps that  
18 could -- concrete steps that could be taken for our  
19 long-term care facilities.

20 LYNN MAHONEY: Okay. Thank you.

21 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: Okay. So --

22 LYNN MAHONEY: You must be tired.

23 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: Burnt.

24 LYNN MAHONEY: Yeah.

25 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: I'm better now.

1 If you had spoken to me back in May and June, I  
2 just couldn't -- it was -- and that's something  
3 that the commission needs to learn -- to hear.

4 The emotional toll in trying to deal  
5 with an outbreak -- for myself, supervising the  
6 physician -- for the physicians that I had to put  
7 in there on the front line, the constant demand on  
8 the DOC, the nursing, the frontline staff is  
9 unbearable.

10 And we don't really talk at all -- we  
11 don't talk about the mental well-being as a  
12 support, but I don't think people realize that it's  
13 not just your worksite. It's your whole family,  
14 your whole practice, your whole environment that  
15 changes. And, yes, it's -- I would say for me, the  
16 intellectual drain is what really got to me.

17 LYNN MAHONEY: M-hm.

18 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: That's the  
19 difficult part that I have to deal with. So I try  
20 to make myself available to everybody. I try to  
21 provide virtual support because we were asked to  
22 work from the home, and I tried to be there all the  
23 time for the people.

24 And when we had our first case, I  
25 called on the floor and said "you know what? I

1 know we've just told you we have our first case.  
2 We've drilled to you what to do. You know what to  
3 do. You have the -- you have the ability to  
4 conduct that." Because there was a lot of stress,  
5 and I -- anyways, I tried to be there. I hope I  
6 was there for everybody.

7 Also difficult, also, to try and  
8 mitigate the risk with the pool of physicians that  
9 we have because that's something else that we don't  
10 talk about.

11 As physicians, we work at multiple  
12 sites. We're asking the staff to pick one place.  
13 I can't tell my physician "pick only my home"  
14 because then there will be nobody at the other  
15 home. And so physicians have been pulled right,  
16 left, and centre to try and provide support.

17 And with the directives that are  
18 coming, you know, at the 11th hour and that we have  
19 to change and very quickly -- very difficult, also,  
20 to manage that whole aspect of preparing for a  
21 pandemic and making sure that you have the best  
22 medical support 24/7, all the time.

23 And what I did is when there was  
24 specific issues -- so I went in on the floor, and I  
25 tried to be there for people to ask the questions.

1                   And I think trying to be an ear for the  
2 people -- because we hear different things, and  
3 it's -- and one thing that I will have learned from  
4 all of this is how I think that, "oh, you know,  
5 I've sent you a memo. You should understand." It  
6 doesn't work that way. It really doesn't.

7                   And we are going to have to change the  
8 way we try to pass our message and adapt to make it  
9 culturally appropriate, educational level, all  
10 sorts of things. So this is what I tried to work  
11 on. This has been extremely challenging.

12                   Do you want me to go into the testing  
13 process?

14                   LYNN MAHONEY: Yes, please. I think  
15 that's the --

16                   LISA GONSALVES: That's important.

17                   DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: Okay. So the  
18 staff was a huge problem, and your question was  
19 very astute.

20                   So, yes, when you -- or when we had the  
21 directive where, you know, you need to pick and  
22 choose where you're going to work and we lose 95  
23 staff like this, obviously this is a challenge.

24                   I think we try to, really quickly, you  
25 know, fill in those gaps, and people were extremely

1 good at stepping up and saying "you know what?  
2 I'll do my double shift. I'll work more."

3 People who work in long-term care want  
4 to be working there, okay? Those are difficult  
5 jobs to have, and I think that -- I would say as a  
6 whole, at both of our homes, people stepped up. So  
7 that was the staffing challenge.

8 But it's all very nice to lose, you  
9 know, 95 percent of your people when you start  
10 looking at the infectiousness and the risk of the  
11 contagiousness between the different units in a  
12 long-term care facility. Not only do you need to  
13 have the staff, but you also need to cohort your  
14 staff to try and --

15 LYNN MAHONEY: M-hm.

16 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: -- be able to  
17 mitigate that risk.

18 LYNN MAHONEY: Yeah.

19 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: This is where  
20 is the huge challenge between, in theory, what you  
21 need -- you know needs to happen but, in practice,  
22 it's just not feasible and non-sustainable.

23 So the poor person who was in charge of  
24 our staffing -- what's the word that I'm looking  
25 for?

1 LYNN MAHONEY: HR?

2 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: -- master  
3 schedule, doing all of this --

4 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Sorry. Lynn,  
5 could I interrupt? We have a slide on that. Would  
6 it be better if we just jumped to the slide on  
7 staffing, or do you want us to stick to talking  
8 about testing right now?

9 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: I could go back  
10 to testing. Sorry. Okay. This is my number --

11 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Yeah, if we could  
12 just put that up. It might make it easier.

13 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: -- my number  
14 two point for the swabbing -- so I knew that that  
15 was going to be so incredibly important that, if  
16 you want to be ahead of the game, if you wanted --  
17 you --

18 I knew from talking to all of the  
19 medical directors that as soon as you have your  
20 first case, you have probably ten percent more that  
21 are asymptomatic sitting on your floor, okay?

22 So my -- the way I was looking at it  
23 for York Region is "let's be proactive. Let's  
24 start swabbing right away to try and detect our  
25 asymptomatic carriers."



1                   And Lisa has alluded to the fact that  
2 my views and the directives were not always really  
3 aligned. And I think because I was trying to read  
4 so much and I was trying to speak to so many  
5 people, I knew that we needed to do this. And one  
6 of the challenges as medical director is that I may  
7 have the title and potentially I have the medical  
8 knowledge and the expertise, but I don't have the  
9 authority to execute what I have learned and my  
10 knowledge.

11                   And when I've worked so incredibly hard  
12 in educating myself on COVID -- and things were  
13 changing so, so, so quickly in March and April and  
14 May, you know, going from only droplet to what kind  
15 of droplet to may be airborne and what about the  
16 (indiscernible) and all of this. And it was  
17 changing and changing all the time.

18                   I think that I was able to provide the  
19 education and the information to our team, but it  
20 didn't always align to what was supposed to be  
21 done.

22                   So when you look at the swabbing and  
23 when we finally got the directive that we were  
24 allowed to start swabbing, then there's a whole  
25 process that is a problem. We were -- it was very

1 rigid, what we were allowed to do. And in that  
2 rigidity, we were missing opportunities.

3           When I asked way back in April or May,  
4 "let's start doing some serial swabbing" -- and  
5 what I wanted to do was do -- you know, if you have  
6 background in epidemiology statistic, you know that  
7 you can do samples here and there to try and  
8 increase your odds. So this is what I wanted to do  
9 at both of our facilities, but I wasn't able to do  
10 that.

11           And then when we started swabbing  
12 people, then the delay -- and I knew because I had  
13 spoken to so many medical directors that that was  
14 going to be an issue.

15           And beforehand -- well, during the  
16 Wave 1, I automatically connected with Dynacare,  
17 Lifeline, all the managers and said "you know what?  
18 I'm hearing this is an issue. We want to -- York  
19 Region wants to partner with you to make sure that  
20 we can have a turnaround time 24-48 hours."

21           And we did secure those things. After  
22 a while, I finally understood how the whole  
23 swabbing thing worked through the public health and  
24 that our swabs at York Region were big dispersed  
25 any which way around in the -- in Ontario.

1           And then I learned that SickKid was one  
2 of the main point where they were doing testing. I  
3 reached out to the microbiology -- microbiologist  
4 that's head of the SickKid and had an agreement  
5 with him that they would take our swab from York  
6 Region.

7           York Region was kind enough to back up  
8 all of that plan and, you know, secure a special,  
9 private courier so that we could send our swabs.  
10 And SickKid was going to have a turnaround of 10 to  
11 12 hours.

12           When I finally understood the process  
13 and why it was taking five, seven, eight days for  
14 us to get back our swabbing results, it was all  
15 because we swab in one silo. Then there's the  
16 whole transport that is a different silo. Then  
17 there's a lab that's a different silo. Then  
18 there's the lab reporting to the other silo who has  
19 to put it into the OLIS system. And then as  
20 medical director, I didn't even have access to  
21 those results.

22           So it was extremely -- it is and it  
23 still is extremely frustrating that I know what  
24 needs to be done. I think I -- we, at York Region,  
25 secure the tools to do that, but we were not able

1 to do it. It was never delivered to us.

2 So our first outbreak at Newmarket  
3 Health Centre -- I won't exaggerate. The  
4 turnaround time for the swabs was probably four or  
5 five days at the best, and we were looking at seven  
6 and eight days.

7 If you have a positive case, you know  
8 you've got asymptomatic residents. I don't know  
9 how many I have. I don't have the swab results. I  
10 don't know. I can't be proactive. I can't move  
11 the residents. I can't protect the other resident,  
12 and I cannot protect the staff. So this is a huge  
13 problem and something that needs to be addressed  
14 and improved in my opinion.

15 And then the --

16 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Catherine, I'm  
17 going to jump in.

18 Lynn, I just want to check how we are  
19 for time because we've got some -- I know we've got  
20 a bit, and I want to make sure we get through this.  
21 Do we have enough -- how are we for time?

22 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):  
23 Well, we can take a little bit more  
24 time.

25 KATHERINE CHISLETT: Yes.

1                   COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):  
2                   We want to hear your presentation. But  
3 I take your point that maybe we should move on a  
4 little bit.

5                   DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: Yeah.

6                   COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):  
7 So fine.

8                   DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: So the  
9 swabbing, very, very important --

10                  KATHERINE CHISLETT: And if I --

11                  DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: And now, as  
12 we're going into the rapid testing, we're always --  
13 we're also going to be facing some challenges from  
14 an organizational point because how are we going to  
15 get the staff to be able to run those swabbing  
16 clinics waiting 15 minutes?

17                  So there's a lot of challenges here.  
18 And, yes, we're getting all these directive to  
19 change, but there seems to be a -- maybe a lack of  
20 understanding on the forefront what needs to be  
21 given to the long-term care sector to be able to  
22 execute those changes in a timely manner.

23                  KATHERINE CHISLETT: Yeah. And if I  
24 could just summarize really quickly on the testing  
25 one -- and you're the expert, but I know the one

1 that really struck me in a big way on the testing  
2 is that I can tell you that one of my -- one of my  
3 branches in my own department is getting all of the  
4 data on test results, but they can't give that data  
5 over to people like Dr. Meunier to manage her  
6 homes.

7 So that OLIS system that's mentioned  
8 there -- I know you've heard from the people at the  
9 Province who do testing. We are recommending that  
10 the medical directors should have the right and  
11 ability to find out what the test results are.

12 We've heard stories of test results  
13 being mailed to people who give consents, and so  
14 it's not only the delay in testing. But even when  
15 the result is known, it doesn't come forward.

16 And on the point with respect to the  
17 rapid testing, when it comes in, you'll have heard  
18 from others that our staffing is so tight on the  
19 amount of time on a shift. So when you add on two  
20 or three days a week that people have to devote  
21 20 minutes of their time waiting for a rapid test  
22 plus all of the resources to implement the test, it  
23 really cuts in, added to the time it takes to don  
24 and doff the PPE.

25 So it's not just the numbers of staff,

1 but the amount of time that they can spend with the  
2 residents is really limited. And, again, we're in  
3 homes that have a lot of resources. So that was  
4 just -- sorry, just a quick summary there, and  
5 heres's the more interesting one.

6 LISA GONSALVES: So I guess -- so thank  
7 you, both K(C)atherines.

8 And so in terms of the outbreak  
9 itself -- and I just want to cover off a couple of  
10 things that we wanted to make sure that we  
11 emphasized. It's that, as you know, we've had 38  
12 residents, 6 deaths, and 47 staff who have tested  
13 positive.

14 And during all of this, I think one of  
15 the things that was a bit of a -- maybe a bit of a  
16 surprise, I know for me, was the heightened and  
17 intense scrutiny and oversight in terms of the fact  
18 that many, many agencies and ministries -- as soon  
19 as an outbreak was declared, they all came to help,  
20 we thought -- or it felt, but it was happening --  
21 they were often happening -- speaking to us and  
22 working to us in isolation of the other.

23 So the home and the leadership team was  
24 being pulled in so many different directions. And  
25 the request placed a lot of demands on staff and

1 the leadership teams, and there was increased  
2 meetings and reports and surveys and questionnaires  
3 which I understand is very important to have the  
4 data. However, it was coming -- it comes all at  
5 once.

6 And as you've heard from Dr. Meunier  
7 and Katherine that the pressures are immense  
8 especially due to an outbreak. So it did  
9 contribute to high levels of anxiety and stress  
10 amongst the staff. As well, you know, inspections  
11 would occur at any time, any moment. And I  
12 understand that the Ministry would have to come in  
13 and inspect, but it was very, very -- it was  
14 pulling away staff from more central duties when we  
15 had the inspections.

16 The inspections were also, again,  
17 compliance-based, and there was, all of a sudden, a  
18 feeling of fear of repercussion and reprisal. And  
19 we feel that collaboration would have been -- we  
20 desperately needed more collaboration.

21 There was also, you know, gaps in IPAC  
22 knowledge as -- sorry, I did talk about that as  
23 well. So that was, I think, the main areas I  
24 wanted to identify there.

25 The other thing I wanted to mention was



1 that in terms of staffing -- so the -- and if you  
2 go to the next slide, please.

3 So in terms of our staffing -- so I  
4 wanted to talk about our staffing as it relates to  
5 Wave 1 and 2 because there were different things  
6 that happened. And as Dr. Meunier mentioned, we  
7 lost about 25 percent of our staff when we issued  
8 the one-employee order.

9 And we also had to rely on a number of  
10 staff to -- the staff who were left to do double  
11 shifts and to do lots of overtime. We had it -- we  
12 actually developed a -- what we called at the time  
13 a COVID master schedule.

14 And so in Wave 1, because of all of the  
15 staff departures, we had to actually upstaff. And  
16 so we spent quite a bit of time working with HR.  
17 So we had our HR department --

18 LYNN MAHONEY: So this is your regional  
19 HR.

20 LISA GONSALVES: Yes, correct.

21 LYNN MAHONEY: You were able to reach  
22 out, and that's another reason why we've heard that  
23 the municipal homes had fared better us because the  
24 surge capacity -- you were able to reach out to  
25 other parts of the region to get staff --

1 LISA GONSALVES: Exactly.

2 LYNN MAHONEY: -- to assist in the  
3 homes?

4 LISA GONSALVES: Exactly. And we were  
5 also able to redeploy from across the corporation.  
6 So we had about 40 in the Wave 1. We upstaffed by  
7 about 40 redeployed staff which --

8 Again, as I may have mentioned, some of  
9 our programs had closed, and so we were able to  
10 use, for example, our early intervention workers  
11 within our social services area to support us.

12 We were also able to use our adult day  
13 program workers as well to support the nursing  
14 teams. The one major gap, though, was that we  
15 didn't have a lot of clinical staff, right? So we  
16 had nonclinical staff helping us, which was  
17 fantastic, but we were still -- a major gap around  
18 the more specialized skill sets that our nursing  
19 teams would have.

20 And, again, this was significant --  
21 presented some significant challenges from a mental  
22 health perspective for staff who were starting to  
23 work very long hours and very long shifts.

24 And then we get to Wave 2. And in  
25 Wave 2, the staffing perspective really, really

1 changes. I think we thought that we had done a  
2 fairly -- pretty good job in, you know, covering  
3 some gaps and upstaffing. But when we went into  
4 outbreak, I think almost immediately, we lost quite  
5 a few staff who had to self-isolate. And what we  
6 realized was that --

7           And then we also learned about  
8 cohorting. I think cohorting is -- has been  
9 something that we knew about, but it became a  
10 requirement. And that was, again -- and we hadn't  
11 ever planned to have a cohort on every home area.

12           So if I take Newmarket as an example,  
13 we have five home areas. And we used to have a  
14 practice where we could use our full-time and  
15 casual staff to cover -- to backfill, cover  
16 vacations, and so they may work across different  
17 home areas.

18           When COVID -- when we had the outbreak,  
19 we now -- we couldn't use that model anymore, so we  
20 basically created, like, five separate teams on  
21 every home area which means you almost have to  
22 double your staff to be able to provide coverage  
23 and backup and give people a break and also plan --  
24 you know, incorporate and anticipate people being  
25 off because they may be sick.

1                   So that costs severe services for us,  
2 and we're still in that place where we're madly  
3 recruiting. And we're grateful for the -- you  
4 know, the help. But as an example, we've had to  
5 bring in about 100 agency staff. So we've -- we  
6 quickly mobilized. We have agencies about -- I  
7 think we have seven or eight contracts with agency  
8 staff primarily RNs, RPNs, and PSWs. But I want to  
9 note that when I say 100, it doesn't mean they're  
10 available all the time. So they kind of cycle in  
11 and cycle out.

12                   We've also had partnerships are Red  
13 Cross, and Red Cross has been fantastic, and  
14 they've actually been on site at both homes and  
15 more predominantly at the Maple Health Centre as  
16 well.

17                   We also -- the Province also has their  
18 PSW program as well. And, you know, while it  
19 sounds like a great program, which it's not a bad  
20 program. But, you know, out of all -- there was a  
21 lot of work to actually apply and be part of the  
22 program, and we've only on boarded 12 PSWs, you  
23 know, in that whole effort.

24                   In the MEST teams, you know, the teams  
25 that were set up by the Province and the hospitals

1 and the LHINs, we've only gotten two PSWs from the  
2 MEST teams. So there's a lot of churn, and, you  
3 know, I think the real issue is that there isn't a  
4 market. The market is -- it's so highly  
5 competitive that we're unable to get the resources  
6 we need now.

7           So, again, recruitment continues to be  
8 a huge challenge for us. The other thing that I  
9 also want to mention is that, you know, we're  
10 really pleased to see that, you know, there's work  
11 underway. We see that the Province is doing -- is  
12 looking at their -- you know, providing more direct  
13 hours of care, looking at enhancing the -- you  
14 know, the long-term care staffing complements, but  
15 it's a bit late in the game.

16           And I did also want to stress -- and I  
17 know that for the commission, not to forget that  
18 long-term care is part of a continuum. And so we  
19 cannot forget the implications of -- you know, if  
20 we only focus on one part of that continuum, there  
21 will be upstream implications for the rest of the  
22 sector, and I primarily mean the home and community  
23 care sector.

24           We rely on them to keep our seniors  
25 safe and in their homes so that when they come to

1 long-term care, they really need it.

2 And I think, Lynn, you may have been  
3 asking earlier about -- or maybe it was Chief  
4 Justice Marrocco. You may have been asking about  
5 whether or not we need more beds and where  
6 municipalities should be.

7 I would say, yes, you need more beds,  
8 generally, in York Region. We did a study not too  
9 long ago. We're short about 15,000 beds by 2041  
10 based on our analysis. So we know we'll never  
11 build enough. So we need to make sure that our  
12 home and community care sector is also resourced  
13 adequately. So I would argue -- or we would argue  
14 that the whole health and human resource strategy  
15 needs to look at that fuller picture.

16 So that's the staffing piece of it. I  
17 don't know if we answered your questions there,  
18 Lynn. I know you had questions earlier --

19 LYNN MAHONEY: Yes.

20 LISA GONSALVES: -- around staffing.

21 Okay.

22 LYNN MAHONEY: Yes, you did. Thank you  
23 very much.

24 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

25 I did have one question, but it wasn't

1 related to staffing. It had to do with the  
2 reference to the arrangement that had been made  
3 with SickKids to analyze the swabs and turn them  
4 around within a day.

5 And so my question was did that  
6 arrangement occur, and did it work like that?

7 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: No.

8 Unfortunately, so -- and I don't want to take the  
9 time. So the bottom line of all this is despite  
10 everything we had organized, at the last minute, I  
11 finally -- or we finally realized that Public  
12 Health was going to be the manager of the outbreak.

13 So at that point, then -- and that  
14 alludes to the fact that I think I had the  
15 knowledge. I think I have the frontline, having  
16 worked in the sector for a long time, knowledge.

17 But at that point, my ability to  
18 execute the plan that we had worked so hard to put  
19 was taken away from -- I'm going to say from me but  
20 from us as a group.

21 So part of it was, no. When we went in  
22 outbreak, it was very -- it was made extremely  
23 clear to me that all the swabs were directed by  
24 Public Health who was deciding who I was allowed to  
25 swab, when I was allowed to swab -- when we were,

1 we were -- and note that I was not going to be  
2 allowed to use the -- my partnership that I had  
3 established with SickKids, that it had to be all  
4 pooled within the Public Health.

5 And that's where the whole delay  
6 happens into the inputting of the data, the  
7 reporting of the data. Because they're managing  
8 22 homes in outbreak. I have, well, two homes that  
9 I have interest in --

10 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

11 I understand.

12 DR. CATHERINE MEUNIER: Yeah.

13 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

14 I've got it.

15 LISA GONSALVES: So does that answer --  
16 you've got anymore questions on the --

17 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

18 No, that answers that.

19 LISA GONSALVES: That's it? Okay.

20 Okay. So can you go to the next slide, Rose? I'm  
21 conscious of time.

22 So, again, you know, our recommendation  
23 when it comes to staffing is just, you know, we  
24 need a comprehensive health and human resources  
25 strategy. We need to have immediate access to a



1 team. I think a team of two wasn't -- certainly  
2 isn't enough.

3 And you can understand that, again,  
4 being able to get the resources and the staffing  
5 groups needs to be planned way ahead of time to  
6 make that -- to make that a reality. And, again,  
7 addressing precarity continues to be top of mind as  
8 well.

9 And one of the things I didn't mention  
10 and I should have is that we also -- to try and  
11 stabilize and to support the cohorting, we actually  
12 made all of our part-time and casual staff -- we  
13 offered them temporary full-time hours. So that  
14 was another thing that we did, and that has been  
15 very helpful for us. But it's come at a very big  
16 cost, and that's being covered primarily through  
17 the property tax base as well.

18 So if we can go to the next slide,  
19 Rose.

20 So I just -- so this is probably our  
21 sort of final challenge we wanted to highlight for  
22 you today, and that's really around the constant  
23 monitoring of provincial directions and  
24 communications.

25 So we did a tally of the numbers of --

1 and this is probably growing as we speak because it  
2 is Friday and lots of announcements come out on  
3 Fridays. But since the start of the pandemic, we  
4 have received over 470 documents from the Province  
5 including directives, policy guidance documents,  
6 Qs and As, and memos.

7 And each of them required a very  
8 thorough review, and it required us to really -- to  
9 look at -- to determine what we would do in the  
10 best interest of our residents.

11 As an example, when the visitor  
12 directives came out, there's been so many of them  
13 that we had to -- you know, we relied very  
14 heavily -- we have a legal services group as well  
15 who's been -- and a policy group. So they've been  
16 able to dive deep, and we found many complicating  
17 directives when it came to visitors and then  
18 corrections and updates. And so it's been  
19 challenging for us to maintain and keep up with all  
20 of these changes.

21 We're also having to constantly -- and  
22 a lot of these directives, you have to communicate  
23 them to staff, right? So you're -- you have to  
24 take that information. You've got to distill it,  
25 interpret it, and then you have to communicate and,

1 oftentimes, more than once, to your staff teams.  
2 So that's another challenge and struggle for us as  
3 well.

4 There was also a lot of judgment  
5 required because the directives were conflicting,  
6 as I mentioned. And in some -- and in different  
7 health units, different jurisdictions, the  
8 interpretation was different.

9 So even when you had communities of  
10 practice, I know that many of us found it sometimes  
11 confusing because, you know, they were getting --  
12 different homes were getting different advice and  
13 different interpretation. So that has probably led  
14 to quite a bit of confusion across the sector.

15 And like anything, education -- you  
16 know, we have a group of staff who have been  
17 working tirelessly for months and months. So  
18 our -- educating them in a time of crisis is very  
19 difficult. So I think one of the things that, you  
20 know, we are also advocating for is that there  
21 needs to be, coming out of this, you know, some  
22 real education around how to manage and what to do  
23 during a pandemic so that our staff, the ones that  
24 are the most important, keeping our residents safe,  
25 understand what it is they're supposed to do.

1                   And this is going to require lots of  
2 coordination across the various ministries to  
3 ensure that we have clear and consistent direction  
4 and also engagement with the sector because a lot  
5 of the directions that are coming down -- some of  
6 them just aren't operational. You know, all of our  
7 homes have different sizes, different structures.

8                   I think of rapid testing as one quick  
9 example. You know, it makes sense you have to have  
10 a waiting room when you have a test, but some homes  
11 don't even have space for that. So, you know,  
12 where are people going to go? And I've heard  
13 people say "well, then they can wait in their  
14 cars." A lot of frontline workers/staff at this --  
15 don't have cars.

16                   So these are just some of the  
17 challenges that we're trying to grapple with at the  
18 operational level. And I know that the intention  
19 is the right one, but in terms of execution, there  
20 really needs to be more engagement with the  
21 operation -- with the management teams and medical  
22 directors.

23                   So, finally, next slide, this is just  
24 really -- I'm not going to walk through it, but we  
25 thought we would highlight for you some of the more

1 immediate and medium to long-term actions. And I  
2 think it's great that the commission has already  
3 come out with a lot of interim directions, and many  
4 of them are aligned with the directions you've  
5 already provided to the Province.

6 Next slide.

7 LYNN MAHONEY: And we have your --  
8 we'll have your --

9 LISA GONSALVES: The submission.

10 LYNN MAHONEY: -- submission as well,  
11 and it will contain this information so the  
12 commissioners will --

13 LISA GONSALVES: Correct.

14 LYNN MAHONEY: -- have that as well.

15 LISA GONSALVES: Correct. And, again,  
16 you know, just to conclude, you know, as Katherine  
17 started at the beginning of this, that, you know,  
18 these are long-standing issues that cannot go  
19 unaddressed any longer.

20 On this slide, this is what we hope  
21 will result if the Province implements and acts on  
22 our 28 recommendations that are included in our  
23 submission. We also hope that they these  
24 recommendations will help to raise the bar in  
25 long-term care as Katherine mentioned earlier.

1           And, again, these are the outcomes that  
2 we feel, if we can make these system changes. And  
3 I think -- more than anything, I think it's  
4 important that we think about the residents and  
5 what this will mean for their improved quality of  
6 life and care and also creating a culture around  
7 long-term care that's based on collaboration.

8           So that is it. Those are the points we  
9 wanted to cover today, commissioners. And, again,  
10 if there's any other questions, we'd with be happy  
11 to answer. Thank you for your time.

12           COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

13           I don't think the other commissioners  
14 have any further questions. But I would say to you  
15 that I know you were moving along because of the  
16 time frame, but if it occurs to you that there's  
17 something that you either neglected to say or  
18 should have said or whatever, please communicate it  
19 to Ms. Mahoney. Ms. Mahoney will make sure that it  
20 comes to our attention. So, you know, don't feel  
21 like this was the only opportunity for us to  
22 communicate. On the contrary, it's just the first  
23 opportunity.

24           LISA GONSALVES: Yes.

25           COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

1                   And thank you very much for the --  
2                   Mr. Rosati?

3                   GINO ROSATI: Thank you, sir. And if I  
4 can make one -- emphasize one point which was the  
5 second-last bullet is the objective should be, I  
6 hope, to integrate long-term care into healthcare.  
7 That will probably solve most, if not all, of the  
8 problems and issues.

9                   But I do have a couple of questions.  
10 One is your time frame. I don't know when you will  
11 be reporting.

12                   And, two, are you restricted to just  
13 COVID implication, or you can expand into long-term  
14 care beyond the COVID-19 matters?

15                   COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):  
16 April 30th is -- we will report on  
17 April 30th.

18                   GINO ROSATI: Okay.

19                   COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):  
20 In terms of restrictions, we're  
21 naturally concerned with the long-term care sector,  
22 but we'll say whatever it occurs to us we ought to  
23 say, we'll find a way to fit that into our terms of  
24 reference.

25                   GINO ROSATI: Thank you, sir. Well, we

1 appreciate the time that you've given us, and we  
2 expect that the work you have to do, I'm sure, is  
3 not going to be an easy one. But we look forward  
4 to your report and possible implementation  
5 thereafter. Thank you again.

6 COMMISSIONER FRANK MARROCCO (CHAIR):

7 Well, thank you for your help, and  
8 thank you for the presentation.

9 LYNN MAHONEY: Thanks, everybody.

10

11 -- Adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

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1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

2  
3 I, MCKAYA MCDONALD, Chartered  
4 Shorthand Reporter, certify;

5  
6 That the foregoing proceedings were  
7 taken before me at the time and place therein set  
8 forth, at which time the witness was put under oath  
9 by me;

10  
11 That the testimony of the witness  
12 and all objections made at the time of the  
13 examination were recorded stenographically by me  
14 and were thereafter transcribed;

15  
16 That the foregoing is a true and  
17 correct transcript of my shorthand notes so taken.

18  
19 Dated this 31st day of January, 2021.

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C L A R I F I C A T I O N S :

Page 7, line 7: Should say "Community and Health Services."

Page 13, lines 4-9: In addition to inspections related to food, Public Health also conducts IPAC inspections/audits.

Page 42, lines 15-16: Add date: Completed Safe Space Plans for the LTC homes were in place in November 2020.

Page 44, line 9: Clarify PAC is Professional Advisory Committee.

Page 53, line 9: Correct percentage is 25 percent.

Page 57, line 17: Change "Lifelines" to "Lifelabs."

Page 66, lines 14-15: Change to: We used to have a practice where we could use our casual staff to provide back-up coverage for full-time staff.

1 Page 67, line 1: Change to: This caused sudden  
2 and severe staffing shortages, and we are still in  
3 that place.

4  
5 Page 74, line 5: Change "directives" to  
6 "directions."

7  
8 Page 56, line 2: Change "directive" to  
9 "directions."

10

11 Page 23, line 12: Should say "per resident."

12

13 Page 31, line 4: Should say "departmental  
14 leadership team."

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