

October 3, 2006

## **MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT TRANSFORMING LONG-TERM CARE**

The McGuinty government launched a plan in 2004 to ensure that residents of long-term care homes are safe, well cared for and treated with dignity. Since then, the government has taken several steps to transform long-term care homes by improving the quality of life for residents, strengthening enforcement, supporting long-term care home staff, and improving accountability.

### **Improving Quality of Life**

The government has introduced a number of initiatives to give families confidence that their loved ones are being provided with the best possible quality of life. This includes:

- Funding long-term care homes to hire 3,140 new direct care staff, including 682 new nurses
- Providing funding support for Family Councils and Residents' Councils, which work in partnership with government to promote quality care (August 2004)
- Changes to enable faster spousal reunification in the same long-term care home (October 2004)
- Ensuring all residents are given at least two baths or showers per week and all food menus are approved by a registered dietitian (January 2005)
- Requiring that a registered nurse be on-site and on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week (August 2005)
- Providing \$10,000 to \$30,000 per year to long-term care homes for on-call physician coverage (October 2005)

### **Strengthening Enforcement**

Homes must have a policy to promote zero tolerance for abuse and neglect of residents in long-term care homes. The government has strengthened enforcement by:

- Introducing unannounced annual inspections (January 2004)
- Creating a toll-free ACTION Line (1-866-434-0144) for family and friends of residents to report complaints or abuse in homes (January 2004)
- Separating the roles of compliance and enforcement. A newly created enforcement team ensures that homes quickly correct any problems and impose sanctions where appropriate (May 2004)

### **Expanding Long-Term Care**

The government is expanding the long-term care sector to meet the needs of a growing and aging population by:

- Putting 4,237 new long-term care beds into operation in the 2004/05 fiscal year (April 2004)
- Opening 675 more new beds in the 2005/06 fiscal year (April 2005)

## Supporting Long-Term Care Home Staff

A wide range of supports need to be in place for the staff of long-term care homes, if residents are to receive high quality care. The government has enhanced these supports by:

- Providing \$38.8 million for new and upgraded medical diagnostic equipment in long-term care homes (February 2005)
- Announcing \$29 million for the purchase of mechanical patient/resident bed lifts for hospitals and long-term care homes and \$7.9 million for wound care, pain management and safety equipment in long-term care homes (December 2005)
- Investing \$2.7 million to support putting research into practice with all health care providers who work in geriatric care as well as hiring eight regional coordinators to implement best practice guidelines for nurses (August 2005)
- Investing \$2.4 million in dementia training for the long-term care and community sectors in U-FIRST! and PIECES programs. This will reach 4,900 front-line staff and 300 regulated health professionals.
- Supporting the Activations professionals to share best practices on activities and recreation for all homes

## Improving Accountability

The government believes it is important for family members to understand how the long-term care system works and how they can find the best homes for their loved ones. To ensure this happens, the government launched a public reporting website in November 2004. This site provides information such as home profile, inspections conducted, and any unmet standards and citations under the current legislation. To access the site, log onto [www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca) and click on Public Reporting on Long-Term Care Homes.

- 30 -

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