

Long-Term Care in Ottawa: We Need Change Now!

The Council
on Aging
of Ottawa



Le Conseil sur
le vieillissement
d'Ottawa



Plan for beds

Ensure that enough LTC beds are available to meet current and future needs and that all beds meet Ministry standards.

Concerns: The number of Canadians over age 85 is expected to more than triple over the next 30 years and in Ottawa, seniors represent the fastest growing segment of the population. There has been a growth of 47% in the population aged 85 and over in the past 10 years in Ottawa along with increasing diversity in the seniors' population (e.g., visible minorities, Indigenous People).⁶

Despite the population growth and diversity of older adults, there has almost been no construction of new long-term care beds across the province. Between 2011 and 2018, the number of long-term beds in Ontario increased by only 0.8% while the population of Ontarians aged 75 and over grew by 20%.⁷ In Ottawa, there have only been 84 new regular LTC beds created since 2013 when the new St. Patrick's Home opened its doors. The lack of new beds is complicated by the number of homes in the Ottawa area that do not meet current safety and design standards. Of the 4,488-regular long-stay beds in the Ottawa area, 1,385 beds (31%) are rated as below Ministry standards and this situation has been known for at least nine years. These beds must be renovated by 2025. In these older homes, many residents share a room and bathroom with two or three other residents and with only a curtain for privacy between beds.

⁶ Norris, D. (2018). Ottawa's Rapidly Growing, Changing, and Aging Population. In Tapping into Ottawa's older consumer market: Worth \$12.6B a year and growing, pp. 2-4. Retrieved from The Council on Aging of Ottawa website: coaottawa.ca/capital-aging-special-report-2018/

⁷ Financial Accountability Office of Ontario. (2019). *Long-Term Care Homes Program: A Review of the Plan to Create 15,000 New Long-Term Care Beds in Ontario*. Retrieved from fao-on.org/en/Blog/Publications/ontario-long-term-care-program

Construction of new beds should also consider the mix of for-profit versus non-profit beds. Ontario currently has the highest percentage (58%) of for-profit LTC beds in the country, yet wait lists show a clear preference for non-profit homes. The Ottawa area has a slightly lower percentage of for-profit LTC homes – 50% of homes and 52% of beds. Research has demonstrated poorer health outcomes in for-profit homes. A study published in 2015 concluded that for-profit residences in Ontario have significantly higher rates of both mortality and hospital admissions.⁸

As a result of the shortage of long-term care beds, and the increasing demand for this level of care, the waiting list in Ontario has increased by over 78% since 2011-12 to the present. Ottawa saw an increase of 80% from 2013 to October 2019, with the monthly average of distinct clients waiting for LTC growing from 1,973 in 2013 to 3,560 in October 2019.

The median wait time in the Champlain region has been increasing over the past eight years and is now 186 days compared to the provincial median wait time of 146 days. People waiting in the community, and not in hospitals, will wait almost 2 months longer for admission to LTC (232 days).

These long wait times contribute considerably to caregiver stress and burnout as unpaid caregivers struggle to provide care for their increasingly frail loved one while they wait for a LTC bed. In many cases, families must pay for care to supplement what is provided by the provincially funded home and community care services.

⁸ Tanuseputro, P., Chalifoux, M., Bennett, C., Gruneir, A., Bronskill, S.E., Walker, P., & Manuel, D. (2015). Hospitalization and Mortality Rates in Long-Term Care Facilities: Does for Profit Matter? *Journal of the American Medical Directors Association*, V16, I10, 874-883. Retrieved from [jamda.com/article/S1525-8610\(15\)00414-4/abstract](http://jamda.com/article/S1525-8610(15)00414-4/abstract)

Measuring Progress/Current Status and Data⁹

4. Planning to meet the changing LTC needs of seniors in Ottawa (and Ontario) over the next decade. The plan must respect diversity, location, and the complexity of needs as well as health human resource requirements

- *No public plan for development of LTC in Ontario exists. The recent report by the Financial Accountability Office of Ontario on the Plan for Long-term Care¹⁰ provides a clear assessment of the need for additional growth in LTC beyond the announced 15,000 new beds*

5. Eliminating substandard physical plant (currently 31% of available LTC beds in Ottawa and 42% in the Champlain region) – no home should be left behind

- *No publicly available plans for improving these beds are available. Cuts to the Structural Compliance Premium Program¹¹ may delay upgrading*

6. Building of beds in Ottawa where they are needed “announced” by the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care

- *There are no publicly available details on the 212 beds announced in the Spring of 2019 for the Central (84 beds) and Eastern Ottawa (128 beds) sub-regions*
- *Beds are most needed in Western and Central Ottawa. The ratio of beds per 1000 people over the age of 75 is: Western Ottawa 76.7 beds, Central Ottawa 77.6 beds, Eastern Ottawa 84.1 beds*

7. Maintaining the current non-profit sector in LTC in Ottawa

- *Current percentage of non-profit homes (50%) and regular long-stay LTC beds (48%) (2019)*

⁹ Data taken from the Province of Ontario, Home and Community Care, Client Health and Related Information System (CHRIS) unless otherwise provided. hssontario.ca/News/Pages/Meet-CHRIS.aspx

¹⁰ Financial Accountability Office of Ontario. (2019).

¹¹ Government of Ontario, Ministry of Long-Term Care. (2019, September 20). *Ontario Extends Long-Term Care Funding to Ensure Quality Care for Patients* [Press Release]. Retrieved from news.ontario.ca/mltc/en/2019/09/ontario-extends-long-term-care-funding-to-ensure-quality-care-for-patients.html

8. Establishing and monitoring benchmark/targets for wait times

- *No benchmark/targets for wait times in Ontario*

9. Reducing waitlists and wait times

- *Waitlists are growing larger in Ottawa (3,560 in October 2019) and in Ontario (34,900 in 2018-2019)*
- *Median number of days people waiting for LTC placement in Champlain region is 186 days (compared with Ontario median wait time of 146 days) 2016-2017*

10. Reducing the alternate level of care (ALC) patients in hospitals (i.e., those waiting for LTC and specialized LTC) and time for transfer

- *In Champlain region, 14.6% of inpatient days in hospitals are occupied by people waiting to move to LTC homes (the provincial percentage is 15.4%) [2018-2019 data]. As of September 2019, 40% of all ALC patients in the Champlain region are destined for LTC: 60% in Ottawa Centre, 10% in Western Ottawa, 9% in Eastern Ottawa*
- *As of October 2019, of the total of 3,560 people waiting for LTC, there were 153 people designated as ALC in Ottawa*

11. Reducing the unmet needs in home care

- *Total waitlist for Personal Support Services in Ottawa went from 125 people in April 2019 to 370 in November 2019¹²*
- *Monitoring limits to home care services (regulatory and funding changes)*

12. Reducing the unpaid caregiving burden and stress

- *49% of caregivers feel the negative impact of caregiving on their mental health and 41% say caregiving has affected their physical health¹³*

¹² Champlain Local Health Integration Network. (2019, November 30). *Home and Community Care Wait Times/Waitlist Information*. Retrieved from healthcareathome.ca/champlain/en/Our-Performance/wait-times-waitlist-information

¹³ The Change Foundation. (2019). *2nd Annual Spotlight on Ontario's Caregivers*. Retrieved from changefoundation.ca/spotlight-on-caregivers-report/