



SENIORS FOR SOCIAL ACTION (ONTARIO)

Editorial

WARNING! THE FOR-PROFIT WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING IS AT THE DOOR!

THE CAMPAIGN FOR PRIVATIZED SMALL HOME DEVELOPMENT IN ONTARIO

March 6, 2025

The writing has been on the wall since 2020 when thousands died of preventable infections in long-term care institutions and Seniors for Social Action Ontario formed and led the charge for in-home and residential alternatives to these institutions.

One of the things SSAO promoted was small homes of no more than 6 people, operated by non-profits or municipalities, and located in neighborhoods and communities, not in segregated settings.

The National Institute on Aging Promotes a Flawed Concept of Small Homes

In November of 2023, Dr. Samir Sinha, considered by many to be an advocate for frail older adults, joined with Dawn Harsch, the President of [ExquisiCare Senior Living](#), a for-profit company, and John Yip, President and CEO of SE Health, a social enterprise business, to [promote the idea of small care homes in an Op Ed piece in the Calgary Herald](#).

Over a year later, in January, 2025, the National Institute on Aging (NIA) of which Dr. Sinha is the Director of Health Policy Research, issued a [report on small homes](#). Dawn Harsch, the founder and president of ExquisiCare Senior Living was listed under the Reviewer/Contributor heading of this report.

SE Health Social Enterprise Business Acquires ExquisiCare

On January 14, 2025 SE Health supported the NIA report publicly. This should not be surprising since on April 11, 2025 SE Health [acquired the ExquisiCare group of companies](#) including “ExquisiCare Seniors Living and Care at Home by ExquisiCare as a strategic new venture within its evolving housing and health portfolio, SE Homes”.

[The plan](#) appears to be to work “with a range of affordable housing providers, funders, municipalities, Ontario Health Teams and other community organizations to develop and refine new age-friendly models including a future demonstration site in Kingston, Ontario”.

Now ExquisiCare and SE Health have joined forces to launch a PR exercise promoting their vision of small home development in Ontario. Their vision is not SSAO's vision, but we were not asked our opinion.

SE Health Care and its Foundation have a lot of money. "Saint Elizabeth Foundation leverages the resources of SE Health and more than a century of service to our communities to act as a catalyst for change. We're working together with donors, sponsors, other organizations, and volunteers to provide leadership and lasting impacts on community infrastructure and end-of-life care for Canadians most in need". [Nowhere on this site are its donors and sponsors listed.](#)

Seniors for Social Action Ontario Answers the NIA Report

In late January of 2025, fearing that the NIA report would negatively portray to government that small homes of 10-16 beds could be operated by for-profit companies or poorly defined social enterprise businesses, SSAO took the unprecedented step of publicly issuing [a critique](#). In the critique it pointed out how the report completely missed the mark:

- The principles of community integration, inclusiveness, and avoidance of segregation of elders are not addressed;
- There appears to be an emphasis on input from private, for-profit enterprises that are listed as contributor/reviewers;
- The "models" listed are questionable;
- There is a pro-institutional bias running through the report;
- There is more of an emphasis on the needs of service providers than on the comfort, care, and safety of elders;
- The report is silent on how funding directed to non-profits could be used more efficiently than continuing to funnel billions in public funding to institutions - be they large or "small homes" – segregated and located on predominantly for-profit institution "campuses"
- Discussion about the impact of size of small homes in meeting the needs of residents is absent;
- Elder voices are also absent in spite of Seniors for Social Action Ontario having provided research, elder perspectives, and direct input to an author of the report.

Political Action Alone Will Stop For-Profit and Social Enterprise Business Delivery of Small Homes in Ontario

The implications of this are clear. With a PC government that favors commercial enterprises in health care in power for four more years, for-profit Home Care and Small Home companies are seeing an opportunity for expansion, aided by so-called social enterprises like SE Health, and sadly, researchers at the National Institute on Aging.

Now is the time for members of this organization to speak with their provincial MPP's and federal MP's to tell them that you do not want even more for-profit businesses operating

mini-institutions they are calling “small homes” in Ontario. The principles and practices that need to be in place are outlined earlier in this report and can be conveyed to MPP’s and MP’s.

Unless there is significant public political pressure brought to bear, Canada can expect to see segregated, for-profit small homes of 10-16 residents for frail elders as the new reality in Ontario.

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