



## SENIORS FOR SOCIAL ACTION (ONTARIO)

### *INFORMATION BULLETIN*

# **CASH FOR CARE, MONEY FOLLOWS THE PERSON. WHO CARES WHAT THEY CALL IT?**

**January 15, 2024**

Here is a happy thought to start off the new year.

Some of the lead researchers in Canada have heard us loud and clear about the need to have money follow the person, not be tied to service providers. In the U.S. it is predictably called Money Follows the Person (Medicaid, n.d.). In other places in the world it is called Cash for Care.

Cash for Care involves direct transfers of public funding to long-term care recipients or their caregivers to support care at home. Care can be provided by professionals or family and friends.

At the present time, about half of the OECD countries offer cash benefits of this kind that empower individuals and families to organize their own care and support, thereby enhancing control and autonomy.

Too bad Canadian policy makers have not awakened to the fact that this makes perfect sense – especially given the staffing problems in home, community, and institutional care.

Countries like Germany and the Netherlands offer these benefits through integrated public insurance programs that cover a full range of long term care services. And their popularity has sent spending on long-term care surging (Flood et al, 2021).

### **Elders With Choices? Imagine That!**

Imagine actually giving elders and their caregivers some choices! Coupled with a range of long-term care services from the least (at-home care) to the most restrictive alternative (institutional care).

Cash for Care could be the answer for thousands of elders and family caregivers currently struggling to keep elders at home. It would certainly take the pressure off hospitals and institutional long-term care wait lists if that is indeed the Ontario government's goal rather than mass institutionalizing this generation of elders while rewarding long-term care companies that have never met provincial standards.

In Ontario, long-term care institutions receive \$200+ per person per day (Migneault, 2022). Imagine how much care could be provided daily to an elder for that amount of cash?

Governments of Ontario and Canada – it's time!

Happy New Year everyone! This year let's increase the pressure on our MPs and MPPs to support Cash for Care solutions in Ontario and across Canada!

## REFERENCES

- Flood, C., DeJean, D., Doetter, L.F., Quesnel-Vallee, A., Schut, E. (April 7, 2021). Assessing Cash-For-Care benefits to support aging at home in Canada. *Institute for Research on Public Policy*. <https://irpp.org/research-studies/assessing-cash-for-care-benefits-to-support-aging-at-home-in-canada/>
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- Migneault, J. (November 29, 2022). Ontario's Bill 7 makes seniors living at home a lower priority for long-term care, says caregiver. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/sudbury-bill-7-home-care-impact-1.6667160>