SENIORS FOR SOCIAL ACTION (ONTARIO)

Editorial

EFFECTIVE LOBBYING BY THE ASSOCIATION REPRESENTING LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES HAS RESULTED IN TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES

November 16, 2026

On November 17, the Ontario Long Term Care Association (OLTCA), representing Ontario's for-profit long-term care industry, will present its case to MPPs during the provincial Pre-Budget Consultations.

Historically, the Association has consistently lobbied for more government funding and more long-term care beds. And time and again, the Ontario government has listened and responded favorably.

THE TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR LOBBYING

This is how we have arrived at a system that has resulted in the mass institutionalization of approximately 78,000 older adults in more than 600 long-term care institutions across Ontario.

The consequences extend far beyond the institutions themselves.

- **Community care has been shortchanged.** The relentless focus on expanding institutional long-term care has diverted funding and attention away from strengthening non-profit, community-based care.
- **Innovative residential alternatives have been neglected.** There has been little meaningful investment in non-profit options such as assisted living apartments with integrated PACE Wellness Hubs.
- **Small, community-based homes have been overlooked.** Older adults living with complex health conditions and/or dementia deserve the opportunity to live in small, fully staffed, non-profit homes within their own communities—not to face institutional placement in locked behavioural units because better alternatives are unavailable.

We have created a system that continues to prioritize institutional beds over the development of diverse, compassionate, community-based residential options.

There is another way. But it requires a fundamental shift in government priorities.

THIS IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY – NO ONE ELSE'S

It is easy to assume that institutional long-term care will never happen to us or someone we love. We would all like to believe that. But unless we speak up and demand change, we may have very little choice when the time comes.

On November 17, the OLTCA will make its case to MPPs. Its voice will be heard. Its priorities will be clearly presented.

Who will speak up for non-profit alternatives? Who will speak for older adults and families who want something different?

We cannot leave that responsibility to someone else.

If you have not contacted your MPP to demand greater investment in non-profit residential alternatives, now is the time. SSAO leaders cannot do this alone. We need our members' help.

Tell your MPP that Ontario needs a more balanced system that invests in non-profit community care, assisted living with integrated PACE Wellness Hubs, and small, non-profit, fully staffed homes for older adults with complex needs and/or dementia.

The future of long-term care should be about choice, dignity, community, and quality of life—not simply adding or refurbishing more institutional beds.

If we remain silent, we allow others to decide what our future will look like.

Make your voice heard. Contact your MPP. Demand a better alternative.

You can locate contact information for your MPP by clicking on their photo here: https://www.ola.org/en/members/current



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