



SENIORS FOR SOCIAL ACTION (ONTARIO)

Editorial

FOLLOW THE MONEY

September 30, 2024

For years elders in Ontario have said that they want to spend their last years living in their own homes and communities. That does not seem an unreasonable request after a lifetime of paying taxes, raising families, and contributing to society.

But the current Ontario Government is [continuing to spend billions on building institutions](#) refurbishing them, and [giving bed expansions to some of the worst long-term care corporations in this province](#).

More progressive jurisdictions like Denmark changed direction long ago, choosing not to build more institutions since 1988, but to invest instead in enhanced home care and assisted living services. [“Denmark now provides 80% of its aged care services in the home after the Danish Government passed legislation in 1988 to put a brake on the construction of new aged care homes. The legislation also forced existing homes to convert to single-occupancy rooms, leading to a 30% fall in the number of aged care beds available between 1985 and 1995”](#).

Mr. Ford and his Cabinet are ignoring elders and pursuing their own spending agendas and those agendas are resulting in the mass institutionalization of older adults and people with disabilities.

The question is why? Could this government be serving the interests of the long-term care industry and developers rather than the interests of older adults?

Actual government expenditures may answer that question. You simply have to follow the money.

Home Care Expenditures in Ontario

[Ontario's 2024-25 Expenditure Estimates show that spending for Home Care amounted to \\$4,064,800.00 - an increase of 6% over the 2022/23 figure of \\$3,594,000.00.](#)

This seems a lot until you examine what the Ontario government spent on long-term care institutions.

Expenditures on Long-Term Care Institutions in Ontario

[Ontario's 2023-24 Expenditure Estimates show that spending for Long-Term Care institutions amounted to \\$7,877,800.00. That jumped to \\$9,328,300.00 in the 2024/25 Estimates – an increase of 18.4%.](#)

Analysis

This means that in one year, as older adults in Ontario were saying they wanted to avoid institutionalization and were asking the Ontario government to invest much more on keeping them in their own homes and communities, the Ford government increased expenditures on institutions by over three times as much as they increased expenditures for Home Care.

Please keep these facts in mind when an election is called, and we all head to the polls.

Dr. Patricia Spindel is the Chair of Seniors for Social Action Ontario, a former Associate Dean of Health Sciences at Humber Polytechnic, a co-founder of the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly, and a former President of Concerned Friends of Ontario Citizens in Care Facilities. She is also a recipient of a Government of Canada medal for service to her community.

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