



**BULLETIN – SEIU TESTIMONY TO THE COVID-19 LONG TERM CARE COMMISSION
October 15, 2020**

Highlights of the testimony: http://www.ltccommission-commissionsld.ca/transcripts/pdf/SEIU_Transcript_October_15_2020.pdf

- Nearly 70% of their members reported constant short staffing since 2019 and earlier;
- 59% work short staffed almost all the time (Pg. 11);
- CEO's of LTC companies refused to invest profits in staffing, SEIU also ignored by government (Pg. 12/13);
- 1 PSW taking care of up to 38 residents (Pg 12/13);
- Recruitment for LTCF's almost impossible and retention is challenging (Pg. 13);
- Increased use of agency staff working in more than one facility (Pg. 14);
- Horrendous conditions and treatment of PSW's documented for many pages;
- 60% of workers in long term care are part-time (Pg. 38);
- 48% turnover in 95 long term care facilities (combined part-time and full-time) – full-time only 12- 14% turnover (Pg. 41);
- Non-profit and municipal facilities (much less turnover) are better on staffing (Pg. 42);
- Only one brief call with Dr. Williams, Ontario Medical Officer of Health – calls to action being ignored (Pg. 45);
- March 23, 2020 call with Minister of Long Term Care – not enough workers, variances in pay would leave some facilities short-staffed – government implemented universal wage rate in response – SEIU also asked for more full-time staff (Pg. 48);
- 30% of SEIU PSW's and frontline LTC workers left since May and are not coming back – in worse condition than January, 2020 (Pg.49);
- Shared concerns with media, Chief Coroner, Ombudsman, police (Pg. 49);
- Analyzed 16 struggling facilities (Altamont, Anson Place, Chartwell Gibson, Downfield LTC, Eatonville, Guildwood Extendicare, Manoir Marochel, Birchwood Villa, Woodbridge Vista, Millacare, Markhaven, Midland Gardens, Hawthorne Place, West Park, Humber Heights, Shelburne) and 9 successful ones (no COVID outbreak – Yee Hong Markham, Yee Hong McNicoll, Yee Hong Mississauga, Yee Hong Scarborough, John Melville, Sunset Manor, Central Manor, Trillium Manor) – bad homes resisted working with union, good homes worked with them (Pg. 50);
- Worst facilities – for-profit, best facilities non-profit and municipally run (Pg. 51);
- March 5, 2020 - Sienna lied in saying they were well prepared and that the risk in Ontario and B.C. was low – government ended up taking over management of their facilities – Altamont, Camilla Care etc. (Pg. 52);

- SEIU received info from media – health and safety committees were not operational (Pg. 55);
- Masks kept in storage until workers did a sit in because they were dying (Pg. 57);
- Ministries saying no PPE available – next door neighbor had boxes of it which union delivered to facilities – Bob Bassen and Associates told her to stop delivering PPE – workers wearing masks at door told to take them off – workers broke lock on supply cabinet to get PPE – put garbage bags over their gowns at Chartwell (with market cap of over 2 billion) (Pg. 57, 58);
- Problems with Ministry directives while people were dying (Pgs. 66-68);
- May 4, 2020 SEIU wrote to Minister of Labour – asked for investigations and charges for Health and Safety non-compliance - Minister did not respond until June 10th – form letter to union reports of people dying (Pg. 68);
- Desperate pleas and urgency from union went unheeded by government –Ministry of Labour stopped doing in-person inspections after emergency measures around March 17th – left union with no legal measures to enforce the health and safety legislation – Sienna Care – unsafe working conditions and Min. of Labour inspector conducted a phone interview with no orders issued so nothing to appeal – later validated by Trillium Health Partners – Camilla Care where 60 PSW’s tested positive by June, 2020, SEIU filed complaints for health and safety violations with Labour Board – Ministries all argued Board had no jurisdiction (Pg. 69-74);
- Finally got consent awards forcing Ministry of Labour to re-start inspections (Pg. 76);
- Request by SEIU to take over facilities rejected by Premier, Health, Long Term Care and Labour Ministries – May 12 emergency order allowing Ministry of Long Term Care to take over facilities - delay in government acting on it (Pg. 77, 79);
- In first six months of pandemic as residents and staff were dying, large chains paid out an additional \$116 million – for-profits have 17% fewer staff than other facilities (Pg. 82);
- SEIU says it is not getting information back from big chains – Chartwell and Sienna sent them form letters with the same wording (Pg. 83);