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Economic and Community Development Committee
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: EC 10.8 Seniors Services and Long-Term Care Implementation Plan and Update

November 29th, 2019

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing to request that the Committee consider the Staff recommendations in EC 10.8 *Seniors Services and Long-Term Care Implementation Plan and Update*.

For the first time in history, there are now more Torontonians over the age of 65 than children aged 15 and under. Looking ahead, the number of people in Toronto aged 65 and over is expected to almost double by 2041. In order for the City of Toronto to meet the diverse and complex needs of this growing demographic, proactive meaningful change, such as emotion-centred approaches to care, must be implemented within our homes.

As Toronto's Seniors Advocate, I had the pleasure of visiting Wesburn Manor, one of 10 City of Toronto-operated long-term care homes, and Malton Village, one of 5 Peel Region operated long-term care homes. Wesburn Manor employs various models of emotion-centred care and Malton Village specifically uses the Butterfly approach. Both homes have demonstrated reductions in unintended weight loss, falls, negative responsive behaviors, and the use of anti-psychotics. At the same time, there have been improvements in pain levels, social engagement, as well as staff and family satisfaction.

Each home was able to transform their provision of care by taking a holistic approach that addresses the resident's quality of life and individual interests. This shift in how long-term care homes view and deliver their care promotes resident direction, homelike atmospheres, close relationships, staff empowerment, collaborative decision-making and quality improvement processes.

However, in order to successfully incorporate these approaches within homes, staffing ratios must be increased. This will shift the focus of staff's care from a task-based, to an emotion-centred approach.

With the demographic of our city changing, we must begin taking the major steps required to ensure the quality of life and care in our City's long-term care homes is both innovative and thoughtful. I strongly support the recommendations provided in this report and commend City Staff on the remarkable work they've done to begin this transformation. As Toronto's Seniors Advocate, I request that the Committee approve the report's recommendations.

Sincerely,