



Humber Institute of Technology
& Advanced Learning

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November 14 2019

Economic and Community Development Committee
Deputy Mayor and Councillor Michael Thompson, Chair

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

Dear Deputy Mayor and Councillor Michael Thompson, and Members of the Economic and Community Development Committee,

My name is Gina Antonacci and I am the Associate, Vice-President, Academic at Humber Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning (Humber). It is my pleasure to write a letter of support in regards to the recommendations provided in the Seniors Services and Long-Term Care (SSLTC) Implementation Plan and Update Report.

Seniors entering LTC are older and have higher care needs, yet staffing levels have not responded to this change. In City homes, the average age of a resident is 85 years, 69% have moderate to very severe cognitive impairment, 65% have dementia, 58% exhibit aggressive behaviour symptoms, 90% use mobility devices, and 45% receive mechanically altered diets to address chewing/swallowing difficulties. SSLTC has developed a multi-year approach to respond to the demographic shift and care needs of residents in LTC homes. This approach was developed based on research of best practices of many different models of care, and incorporates feedback from recent consultation with over 1,500 stakeholders.

The SSLTC Implementation Plan and Update Report recommends that City Council increase direct care staffing from the current 3.5 hours of direct resident care per day to 4 hours per day to address the rising acuity and complex care needs of residents in City homes. The report also recommends a pilot for the new approach to care and urges the province to invest additional funding and resources. The proposed 12-month pilot would take place at Lakeshore Lodge, Ward 3, to ensure sustainable change, incremental, multi-year funding to be coordinated with other divisional priorities including the Capital Renewal Plan and the City's Toronto Seniors Strategy. As Advisory Committee Chair, Advisory Committee on Senior Services and Long-term Care, I look forward to seeing the results of this pilot project, as well as the improvements to patient care realized through the recommendations in the report.



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These recommendations are in direct response to City Council's request to implement emotion-centred approaches to care, and are in alignment with the findings of expert consultant, Dr. Pat Armstrong's report. In this report, Dr. Armstrong recommends staffing levels increase in City homes in order to *maintain* current quality, and suggests staffing levels must increase even higher in order to *improve* quality. Other providers have already implemented similar recommendations; municipal operators including Peel Region have enhanced staffing levels above what is provided by the province, and emotion-centred approaches to care, Butterfly and Greenhouse for example, provide enhanced staffing ratios.

The proposed changes would provide additional benefits to long-term care workers. Rising rates of dementia and clinical complexity are putting a strain on LRC workers. The sector is challenged with recruitment and retention, under-staffing and workload demands, insufficient time to provide direct care and support to residents, and training related to complex mental health conditions. SSLTC is addressing these challenges by implementing emotion-centred care, requesting increased staffing, using technology, redesigning physical environments and offering continuous education to support staff members.

With the implementation of the emotion-centred approach, SSLTC is looking to enhance its already exemplary care, guided by care values of compassion, accountability, respect, and excellence. I strongly support these recommendations and ask that the Economic and Community Development Committee and Toronto City Council consider approving these changes.

Sincerely,

Gina Antonacci
Associate Vice-President, Academic
Humber Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning

