

SUBMISSION



**CANADIAN
NURSES
ASSOCIATION**®

2021 ONTARIO PRE-BUDGET CONSULTATION

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Addressing health-care system gaps

The COVID-19 pandemic has unmasked many health-care system shortfalls around care for older adults and mental wellness. The pandemic is negatively impacting employment, housing, and access to education. As these social determinants of health continue to erode, they contribute to and perpetuate inequities experienced by racialized people and other vulnerable groups. Action is needed now to strengthen the health-care system.

Nurses and health-care workers across Ontario are facing unprecedented challenges and can experience significant work-related stress due to increased workload and lack of resources.

Furthermore, a new model for long-term care (LTC) is urgently needed to improve care while keeping the dignity of Ontario's older adults. Due to longstanding gaps in this sector, more than 3,600 LTC residents have died during COVID-19.¹

Recommendations

SUPPORTING VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES AND POPULATIONS

- ▶ Enhance collection and analysis of race- and ethnicity-based data by government and health-care providers during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic to inform interventions, policy, and program delivery. The government should work in collaboration with racialized communities in the collection, reporting and application of this information.
- ▶ Invest \$6 million to support key recommendations provided by the Canadian Indigenous Nurses Association:
 - Work with Indigenous leaders and communities to develop a pandemic preparedness plan that addresses the needs of Indigenous communities.
 - Work with Indigenous organizations to develop ways, such as audio translations, to deliver COVID-19 resources and guidance to Indigenous communities.

SUPPORTING THE HEALTH-SYSTEM

- ▶ Invest \$25 million to provide direct mental health supports tailored for health-care workers delivering direct-care services during and beyond the pandemic.



- ▶ Invest \$100 million to develop and implement a new health human resources strategy which would include:
 - Strengthening the Nursing Graduate Guarantee (NGG) initiative to better support the successful transition of new nursing graduates into practice. In addition to LTC and acute care, priority should be given to the recruitment of NGG positions in public health and community health settings.
 - Creating a mechanism to ensure that nursing graduate/MScN students can secure an internship during their studies to better prepare them for the profession.
 - Investing in a program to support career laddering where personal support workers can transition to registered practical nurses and registered practical nurses to registered nurses.

RE-IMAGINING AGING IN ONTARIO

- ▶ Accelerate the current timeline from four years to two years, for implementation of the government's commitment to increase average daily direct care per resident to four hours a day. LTC homes need support today, not four years from now.
- ▶ Invest \$200 million to:
 - Close longstanding compensation gaps among acute care, LTC and home care.
 - Recruit, support and retain a safe mix and effective workforce of energized professionals and support staff in institutional and congregate LTC settings.
- ▶ Invest \$150 million to enhance access to home- and community-based care to help alleviate the pressure on the acute and LTC systems while helping Ontarians to remain in their homes.

¹ <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/data/long-term-care-homes>

