

Ontario's health care system needs to be rebalanced

OCSA releases their 2020 pre-budget submission with solutions to help people receive care at home

TORONTO, JANUARY 23, 2020 – [Ontario Community Support Association](#) (OCSA) and the home and community care service providers we represent want to help the government rebalance the health care system so that Ontarians can receive care in the right place. Close to 5,300 patients are receiving hospital care each day while waiting for care in more appropriate settings. Based on the real experiences of many Ontarians, our [pre-budget submission](#) highlights two examples of clients in the health system and details how a strategic investment of under a half a billion dollars will allow the home and community care sector to help people live well at home longer for less.

Home and community care services can help prevent Ontarians from going to the hospital in the first place and allow them to live safely at home, instead of costly and unnecessary long-term care. When funded appropriately, the home and community care sector can also discharge people quickly out of hospital. However, the sector's solutions face a serious issue; frontline care workers are in short supply and wage freezes threaten to make an already precarious situation even worse. Closing the current wage gap is key to ensuring that people can be supported properly and move through the health care system efficiently.

As stated in our [Pre-Budget Submission](#) released today, OCSA believes the government should:

1. **Increase service volumes by 5% by investing \$208 million in 2020-2021** – with targeted investments in the expansion of assisted living services for frail seniors and community based transitional care programs.
2. Issue a directive from the Ministry of Health that **all Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) must provide a comprehensive and equitable basket of home and community care services** that include home care services, community support services and independent living services.
3. Direct an average of \$156 million a year for 5 years to frontline home and community care workers in order to **close the wage gap with hospitals and long-term care**.
4. **Invest a much needed \$125 million directly into the base budgets** of home and community care providers.

“Our current health care system is incredibly out of balance,” says Deborah Simon, CEO of OCSA. “The home and community care sector can help if supported properly, so that Ontarians can receive the care they need in the right place. We know that if no changes are made, the waiting list for long-term care could balloon to 40,000 people over the next few years. Ontarians need relief now. Last year, almost 18,000 people living in long-term care homes could have continued to live at home and in their communities with appropriate funding. With more investments to frontline workers, like PSWs and nurses, and adequate funding for home and community care providers, we can relieve hospital system pressure and free up much-needed resources.”

For more information, please see our pre-budget submission [here](#). Follow #careathome2020 on social media.

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About OCSA

The Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA) represents over 220 not-for-profit organizations that provide home care and community support services to over one million Ontarians. Our members help seniors and people with disabilities live independently in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. These proactive and cost-effective services improve quality of life and prevent unnecessary hospitalizations, emergency room visits and premature institutionalization. They are the key to a sustainable health care system for Ontario. For more information, visit www.ocsa.on.ca.

Interviews are available with OCSA CEO Deborah Simon. For more information please contact:

Michele Vantrepote
Communications Manager
Ontario Community Support Association
416-256-3010 x 242
michele.vantrepote@ocsa.on.ca