



## OCSA welcomes strong commitment to home and community care in Ontario government's new action plan

TORONTO, January 30, 2012 - The Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA) welcomes the Ontario government's strong commitment to home and community care as outlined today in the release of *Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care*.

Under the umbrella of a new Senior Care Strategy, the Minister of Health and Long Term Care outlines proposals to provide 3 million new hours of personal support to seniors in their homes, expand doctor house calls and better coordination of how resources are allocated which all means more comprehensive and compassionate care for Ontario's seniors.

"Greater public investments in home care and community support services is consistent with the advice of health planning experts who clearly identify this sector as the first choice for patients and best, most affordable option for the long term sustainable delivery of health care," said Susan Thorning, CEO of OCSA. "We are very pleased to see this advice reflected the government's action plan for health care."

The OCSA is also very encouraged to see a fundamental shift in health care thinking outlined in the government's plan. The following statement from the action plan has been a core priority of the organization for some time: ***The most significant part of our plan focuses on ensuring patients are receiving care in the most appropriate setting, wherever possible at home instead of in hospital or long-term care.***

It is also a priority for Ontarians. A poll released by OCSA last spring as part of its Aging with Dignity ([www.agingwithdignity.ca](http://www.agingwithdignity.ca)) campaign shows voters support more public investment in non-profit home and community support services with six in ten (59%) agreeing new funding is better designated to these preventative care services rather than facilities and full-time nursing care.

Access to home and community care services helps to keep people out of hospitals and long-term-care facilities. Many people lying in hospital room beds or sitting on waiting lists for long-term-care homes do not require daily medical care, they just need help with things like bathing, household tasks or transportation to medical appointments. It is far more cost effective to help seniors stay healthy and at home than sick and in institutions. It is also where people want to be - in *their own homes*.

"The OCSA looks forward to the timely implementation of this action plan. This will require consummate funding commitments in the provincial budget for home and community care and clear direction to administrative bodies such as Community Care Access Centres and Local Health Integration Networks on the appropriate coordination and delivery of those services."

-30-

### **About the OCSA**

The Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA) is the voice of the home and community support sector. Across the province each year, more than a million people receive home care and community support services such as in-home nursing, therapy and personal support, Meals on Wheels®, adult/Alzheimer day programs, transportation to medical appointments, supportive housing and attendant services for persons with disabilities. These services are important, cost-effective measures that prevent unnecessary hospitalizations, emergency room visits and premature institutionalization. More information can be found at: [www.ocsa.on.ca](http://www.ocsa.on.ca).

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