



## News Release

### **Absence of Home Care Funding in 2021 Budget Means Less Care at Home for Seniors, More Hallway Healthcare: Home Care Ontario**

MARCH 24, 2021 (HAMILTON) - The provincial government has limited seniors' ability to age at home and has failed to protect them and other vulnerable people by not investing in Ontario's Home Care sector as part of today's provincial budget, further destabilizing the sector and resulting in less care for seniors and more hallway healthcare.

"Home care is a key pillar of Ontario's health care system and critical to helping seniors age at home – where they want to be. That is why we are disappointed by the Government's decision to neglect Home Care in today's budget," said Sue VanderBent, CEO, Home Care Ontario. "We were hoping to see something in today's budget designed to stem the tide of workers leaving Home Care. Unfortunately, we didn't and we believe this is a very big opportunity missed to improve seniors care in Ontario."

Home Care draws many of its staff, including nurses, personal support workers and others, from the same pool as long-term care. The pandemic has increased the severe staffing challenges that the home care sector has faced for several years, and this coupled with the higher wages in LTC are causing an exodus of staff out of home care, leading to a reduction in service. This is the opposite of what seniors and other vulnerable people want.

Home Care is also a protective factor for our hospitals that helps reduce hallway healthcare. Not investing in Home Care, however, is going to lead to exactly the opposite. It will increase hallway healthcare once the pandemic is behind us, because more and more people won't be able to get care at home.

"The consequences of not investing in Home Care in today's budget is clear," concluded VanderBent. "A reduction in home care will lead to an increase in hallway healthcare. Without an urgent intervention by government, we are on a path to further hospital overcrowding."

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#### **About Home Care Ontario:**

Home Care Ontario, *The Voice of Home Care in Ontario™*, is a member-based organization with a mandate to promote growth and development of the home care sector through advocacy, knowledge transfer, and member service. Home Care Ontario members include those engaged in and/or supportive of home-based health care. In Ontario, service provider organizations are responsible for providing nursing care, home support services, personal care, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, respiratory therapy, infusion pharmacy, social work, dietetics, speech language therapy and medical equipment and supplies in the home to individuals of all ages.

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