



New Poll Shows Over 90% of Ontario Seniors Want to Live at Home as They Age, and Want Government to Invest to Help Them do it

(TORONTO, ON) August 7, 2020 - According to a new study conducted by Campaign Research Inc. on behalf of Home Care Ontario, virtually all Ontario seniors (91%) hope to stay in their own home or apartment as long as possible, and 95% believe being in their own home with the support of home care is the safest environment for them to live during a pandemic.

"Home care is often overlooked by policy makers and not talked about as much as other institutional parts of the health care system," said Sue VanderBent, CEO of Home Care Ontario. "However, the data released today shows home care is a key priority for Ontario seniors and policy makers should take note."

When Ontario seniors were asked to identify their first and second priority for additional government investments, publicly-funded home care was tied as a first choice (28%) with long-term care (28%). 27% of seniors would prefer to see the government provide financial relief for family paid home care. Only 14% of seniors chose additional investments in hospitals as their first priority.

Ontario's home care system already delivers more care to our seniors than any other part of the health care system, with over 35,000 professional home care workers, delivering care to approximately 440,000 seniors every year. This research underscores a strong desire from Ontario seniors for that important work to continue at an even greater level.

"Virtually all Ontario seniors want to stay at home as they age, and they are looking to the government to help them do it," concluded VanderBent. "With everything that is going on in the world right now, it is paramount that home care is supported the way seniors expect it to be, and this includes additional home care funding, wage rates that pay professional home care workers at parity with other parts of the health system, and tax relief for seniors and families who purchase additional care supports."

More Key Findings:

- 91% of seniors plan to stay in their own home or apartment as long as possible, while 3% plan to move into a retirement residence or already live in one, 1% plan to move in with a family member, 0% intend to move into a long-term care facility, and 5% are unsure of their future housing plans.
- If seniors were destined to move into a long-term care facility but additional supports could be provided to keep them at home or living with a family member, 93% of seniors would prefer to stay at home with their family with additional supports vs 3% who would prefer to move into long-term care and 4% who do not know.
- 95% of Ontario seniors believe that being in their own home with the support of home care is the safest environment for them to live during a pandemic, while 1% believe the safest place is in a retirement home, 1% believe it is in a long-term care facility, and 4% are unsure.



- 69% of Ontario seniors believe that professional caregivers such as personal support workers should be paid at the same rates regardless of whether they work in home care, long-term care or in hospital, while 20% believe they should be paid differently based on their workplace setting and 11% were unsure.
- 75% of Ontario seniors believe the government has a role to play to ensure people make informed, safe decisions about what to look for when purchasing additional home care services. 17% believe people should be responsible for who they decide to be their caregiver, and 8% were unsure.
- 77% of Ontario seniors believe the government should financially support seniors and families who purchase additional home care services from reputable organizations through something like a new tax credit or other relief measures. 7% said the government should not provide this support, while 16% were unsure.
- 96% of seniors believe it is either very (84%) or somewhat (12%) important for the government to provide home care workers with personal protective equipment during times of pandemic to assist with infection control measures.

Methodology:

The study was conducted on July 24th and 25th, 2020 by Campaign Research among a sample of 1,003 respondents who are residents of Ontario and are 55 years of age or older and part of Maru/Blue's research panel. A probabilistic sample of a similar size would have a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1% 19 times out of 20.

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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, social work, dietetics, speech language therapy and medical equipment and supplies in the home to individuals of all ages. An estimated 58 million hours of publicly and privately purchased home care service is provided annually across the province.

Original Data:

To view the full research study, please visit: <https://www.choosehomecare.ca/public-opinion>

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