

# Prioritizing Long-Term Care: A Call to Action for Canada's Future

Long-term care (LTC) should be a top priority in this federal election. With approximately 200,000<sup>1</sup> Canadians currently living in LTC, and the demand for LTC expected to rise by 38% in Ontario<sup>2</sup> alone in the next 10 years, the need for support is urgent. The sector continues to face challenges exacerbated by an aging population with increasingly complex needs. To address these challenges, we need a strategy that includes effective solutions to infrastructure and workforce concerns.

## Demand for Long-Term Care

- It is estimated that Canada will require 454,000 long-term care beds by 2035<sup>3</sup> and that 50% of people over the age of 65 living in Canada will require some kind of long-term care in their lifetime<sup>4</sup>.
- Within the next few years, Canada will join the ranks of other nations, where at least 21% of our population will be age 65 and older<sup>5</sup>.

## Key Challenges Facing Long-Term Care

- The vast majority of Canada's long-term care homes are understaffed and do not have adequate specialized personnel needed to provide resident-centred care.
- A rising number of seniors have complex social and medical needs, putting additional pressure on an already strained system.
- Canada's housing crisis has not spared long-term care. In Ontario alone, the waitlist for a person to access a long-term care home bed is at 45,000<sup>6</sup>



To meet this need, it is essential that our health workforce and long-term care infrastructure expand and adapt in step with the level of care required for our population.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/programs/consultation-safe-long-term-care/document.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.olca.com/about-long-term-care/the-data/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.cma.ca/sites/default/files/2018-11/9228\\_Meeting%20the%20Demand%20for%20Long-Term%20Care%20Beds\\_RPT.pdf](https://www.cma.ca/sites/default/files/2018-11/9228_Meeting%20the%20Demand%20for%20Long-Term%20Care%20Beds_RPT.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.rbcinsurance.com/files/00105/file-105623.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.aarpinternational.org/initiatives/aging-readiness-competitiveness-arc/canada>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.olca.com/about-long-term-care/the-data/#:~:text=Waitlists%20for%20long-term%20care%20have%20doubled%20in%202010,over%206%20months%20to%20move%20into%20long-term%20care.>

# Action Needed

## Health Human Resources

- 1 Ensure health human resource planning has specific considerations for long-term care and is captured in the health workforce sectoral planning that is in progress with the following organizations/departments:
  - Health Canada;
  - Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada;
  - Health Workforce Canada;
  - Canadian Institute for Health Information;
  - Statistics Canada; and
  - Other government-funded projects.
- 2 Support a national credential recognition program for regulated health professionals to enable the movement of health care professionals across jurisdictions.
- 3 Broaden and extend immigration programs to welcome qualified health professionals looking to move to Canada permanently, to work specifically in the long-term care sector.
- 4 Include long-term care homes into funding opportunities for settlement supports and resources to improve retention rates and support newcomer employees and their families.

## Infrastructure Investment and Development

- 1 That the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) allows long-term care homes to apply to the MLI Select program to support access to capital financing for new builds and updating existing, outdated home infrastructure.
- 2 Offer a specific funding program as part of a National Housing Plan, that is available for long-term care home development.

- 3 Support and scale up existing provincial and territorial housing investment programs targeted for long-term care homes. Examples of existing programs include:

- Modernizing Funding Model;
- Accelerated Build Pilot Program;
- Continuing Care Capital Program;
- Long-Term Care Capital Infrastructure Pilot Program.

## Infrastructure Technology

- 1 As policies, regulations, standards and guidelines are developed around information flow, artificial intelligence, and cyber security, the long-term care sector must be considered and included during decision making processes.
- 2 The adoption of new technologies has the potential to enhance care delivery and address challenges within the sector. For example, technology can facilitate communication, increase safety of residents, and improve accessibility.

## About the Canadian Association for Long Term Care

CALTC is the leading voice for long-term care in Canada. Working collaboratively with long-term care leaders, employees, volunteers, residents and their families, CALTC and its members share valuable insights, best practices, and evidence to continue to improve long-term care in Canada. This includes providing recommendations to the federal government, which plays a vital role in the funding and support of the sector.

**We invite you  
to learn more at  
[www.caltc.ca](http://www.caltc.ca) or  
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