

The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole
Community and Health Services
October 14, 2021

Report of the Commissioner of Community and Health Services

Analysis of Ontario's Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission's Final Report and Recommendations for Urgent Provincial Action

1. Recommendations

1. Council approve the priority recommendations set out in Attachment 1 for urgent provincial action to transform the long-term care sector including recommendations related to accelerated staffing investments, sustainable and long-term provincial funding across the seniors continuum of care, pandemic preparedness and legislative and regulatory changes to align with resident-centred care as informed by [Ontario's Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission's Final Report and Recommendations](#).
2. The Regional Chair, on behalf of Regional Council, send this report and a letter to the Ministers of Health, Long-Term Care, Finance, Seniors and Accessibility, Municipal Affairs and Housing, and Children, Community and Social Services and communicate Council's request that the Province urgently act on the priority recommendations identified by York Region.
3. The Regional Clerk provide a copy of this report to the Members of Parliament and Members of Provincial Parliament representing York Region requesting their support to advocate for urgent provincial action on the priority recommendations identified by York Region.
4. The Regional Clerk circulate this report for information to local municipalities, York Region Human Services Planning Board members, Home and Community Care Support Services Central, Ontario Health Teams in York Region, Ontario Health Central Region, AdvantAge Ontario, Ontario Long-Term Care Association and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

2. Summary

This report analyzes recommendations from Ontario's Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission's Final Report, seeks Council approval of the priority recommendations for urgent provincial action proposed in Attachment 1, and requests a letter be sent to Provincial Ministries involved with long-term care and seniors advocating for action on the priority recommendations set out in Attachment 1.

Key Points:

- In April 2021, Ontario's Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission released its final report with 85 recommendations to improve the long-term care sector
- The majority of the Commission's final recommendations reflect the 28 recommendations from [York Region's Submission to the Ontario Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission](#), approved by Council in [January 2021](#)
- The Commission's report includes many positive references to York Region's Submission and its two presentations to the Commission
- Informed by extensive internal and external consultations and York Region's Submission, staff have identified 23 priority recommendations from the Commission's report for urgent provincial action to transform the long-term care sector and developed a detailed analysis of the impact of the Commission's recommendations
- In addition to identifying urgent supports for long-term care, consultations also identified the need for transformation of the whole system for seniors' care with further provincial investments in home and community care, affordable senior-friendly housing and innovative community-based solutions
- The Region has already begun taking steps to strengthen operations at Newmarket Health Centre and Maple Health Centre, however fully operationalizing changes resulting from the Commission's recommendations will require significant funding, guidance and support from the Province

3. Background

York Region operates two long-term care homes, but has a limited role in the long-term care homes system

There are currently 29 long-term care homes in York Region providing a total of 4,041 beds. The Region operates two long-term care homes, Maple Health Centre and Newmarket Health Centre, which provide 232 beds (approximately 6% of the total amount of beds). Of the remaining homes, 14 are operated by for-profit organizations and 13 are operated by non-profit organizations.

Despite funding and operating the Homes, the Region has a limited role in the key decisions that impact its Homes. The Ministry of Health and Ministry of Long-Term Care license, approve and regulate long-term care homes with Home and Community Care Support Services (formerly Local Health Integration Networks) arranging all applications, waitlist maintenance and admission to long-term care homes.

The Region is currently short by 2,000 long-term care beds and by 2041 that shortage will climb to almost 15,000

On [March 18, 2021](#), the Province announced 7,500 new long-term care spaces with an investment of \$933 million for 80 projects across the province as part of its commitment to

add 30,000 new long-term care beds over the next 10 years. To date, 1,530 of those beds have been allocated to York Region.

As discussed in the [November 2020](#) Forecast for Long-Term Care and Seniors' Housing Implications Report, the rapid growth in the seniors population will place pressure on long-term care services in York Region. York Region was already short 2,000 beds in 2019, and by 2041, York Region will be short by nearly 15,000 beds.

In July 2020, the Province appointed an independent commission to investigate the impact of COVID-19 on the long-term care sector

Former Minister of Long-Term Care, Dr. Merrilee Fullerton, appointed the [Ontario Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission](#) on July 29, 2020 with a mandate to investigate how COVID-19 spread within long-term care homes, how residents, staff and families were impacted and the adequacy of provincial and other measures to prevent, isolate and contain the spread.

The Commission conducted its investigation during the second wave of the pandemic from September 2020 to March 2021, interviewing more than 700 individuals and receiving over 300 submissions. The Commission released two interim reports in [October 2020](#) and [December 2020](#).

In January 2021, the Region presented to the Commission and made recommendations to address long-standing issues within the long-term care sector which were exacerbated by COVID-19

In Fall 2020, the Region prepared a submission to the Commission outlining the challenges faced by the Region's two Homes. The [York Region Submission to the Ontario Long-Term Care Commission](#) was approved by Council in [January 2021](#). It identified 28 recommendations for immediate action to be taken by the Province. Recommended areas for action included resources and funding to effectively manage outbreaks, additional funding to support the true costs of operating a long-term care home, addressing severe staff shortages across the entire continuum of care for seniors, creating a culture grounded in continuous quality improvement, and strengthening partnerships to integrate long-term care into the health care system.

On [January 29, 2021](#), Gino Rosati, Regional Councillor and Chair of Community and Health Services, Katherine Chislett, Commissioner of Community and Health Services, Lisa Gonsalves, General Manager, Paramedic and Seniors Services and Dr. Catherine Meunier, Medical Director for the Region's two municipally-operated homes, presented to the Commission on York Region's Submission.

York Region Public Health also presented to the Commission

On [February 25, 2021](#), Dr. Karim Kurji, York Region's Medical Officer of Health, at the request of the Commission, presented to the Commission and discussed the experiences and challenges of York Region Public Health during the COVID-19 pandemic. The presentation also included recommendations related to infection, prevention and control

(IPAC), outbreak management, partnerships and collaborations, and public health resourcing and structure.

Ontario’s Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission released its Final Report in April 2021 with 85 recommendations addressing shortcomings in the long-term care sector

The Commission’s Final Report was released to the Minister of Long-Term Care on April 30, 2021. It contained 85 recommendations to address the significant, well-known shortcomings in the long-term care sector, including IPAC, staffing, funding, oversight and compliance issues. The Commission notes its recommendations may require additional funding, legislative or regulatory amendments and supporting actions by various government actors and long-term care homes. The Commission recommends the government provide a progress report on implementation of these recommendations in April 2022 and April 2024.

The release of the Commission’s report reflects broader public support for long-term care sector reform. Results from an [Angus Reid Survey](#) conducted in July 2021 demonstrate that Canadians expect system transformation in long-term care with three quarters saying either significant or a total overhaul is necessary. In terms of what needs to change, one in three Canadians include staffing (e.g., raise pay for long-term care workers), administrative practices (e.g., preparation for future pandemics) and infrastructure (e.g., build newer, modern residences) as top priorities for action.

The Province has not released an official response to the Commission’s report or recommendations. The Ministry of Long-Term Care is currently consulting with sector organizations, including AdvantAge Ontario, on reforms to the *Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007* (the Act). Staff have heard from AdvantAge Ontario that these reforms will be tabled in the Fall and anticipate that amendments will address some of the Commission’s recommendations.

Many of the Commission’s findings and recommendations align with York Region’s experiences and submission

The Commission’s Final Report contains several references to York Region’s presentations and submission:

- York Region was proactive in placing many preventative infection prevention and control (IPAC) measures in advance of provincial direction, including the “single employer” policy and conducting IPAC and environmental audits (Single employer policy required long-term care staff to only work for one employer to limit the spread of COVID-19)
- The Region demonstrated strong municipal and public health leadership, including the Long-Term Care Medical Director reaching out to long-term care homes in Washington State and British Columbia during their outbreaks to learn from their experiences very early in the pandemic

- York Region Public Health filled personal protective equipment (PPE) shortages for many long-term care homes in York Region
- York Region subsidizes the cost of operating its two municipally-operated long-term care homes with tax levy funding, paying 46.6% of the total cost of care in 2019, whereas the provincial subsidy pays 39.5% with residents' fees and service charges making up remainder
- The Region's Homes received 470 documents from the Province for analysis, interpretation and/or action between the beginning of the pandemic and January 2021
- Staffing shortages were not as severe in the Region's Homes as in other homes in the sector due to redeployment of Regional staff to assist
- The Region's Homes did not experience an outbreak in wave 1

Other sector organizations have released reports responding to the Commission's Final Report

AdvantAge Ontario and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario have released reports in response to the Commission's Final Report:

- AdvantAge Ontario has released [Response to the Ontario LTC COVID-19 Commission Final Report](#), which details the organization's position on the 85 recommendations, and [Proposed Amendments to the Long-Term Care Homes Act \(LTCHA\)](#) which recommends a complete overhaul of the Act to enable critical transformation in seniors' care in Ontario
- Association of Municipalities of Ontario has released [Moving Forward on Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission Final Report](#), which proposes recommendations for the Ministry of Long-Term Care in response to the Commission's Final Report, and [Long-Term Care Staffing Plan – Four Hours of Care Standard Implementation](#), which proposes recommendations to the provincial government to ensure implementation of the four hours of care standard meets the needs of municipal governments

Staff have reviewed these reports and the recommendations align with the priority recommendations for urgent provincial action identified in Attachment 1. Staff support the additional actions identified in these reports for the Province to consider when implementing the Commission's recommendations.

4. Analysis

The Commission's recommendations reflect the majority of the recommendations proposed by York Region

The majority of the Region's 28 recommendations are reflected in the Commission's recommendations, with the exception of those related to reversing pharmacy funding reductions, expanding criteria for High Intensity Needs Funding, and receiving accurate, up-to-date information from Home and Community Care Support Services Central (formerly

Central Local Health Integration Network). Details on these recommendations are provided in Attachment 1.

The Commission's recommendations also align with recommendations put forward in York Region Public Health's presentation to the Commission:

- Infection prevention and control expertise with on site dedicated resource expertise in each long-term care home
- Emergency preparedness whereby long-term care partners engage in emergency preparedness and planning, including tabletops or other exercises involving communicable disease outbreaks
- Partnerships and collaboration and continued work across agencies (e.g., hospitals, ministries, IPAC hubs, etc.) to support long-term care including clarification of roles and responsibilities
- Increasing the long-term care workforce and improved full-time staffing complements

Public Health's current collaborative role in the prevention, detection and management of infectious disease outbreaks supports the Commission's recommendations

The Commission's Final Report includes several recommendations proposing enhancements to and further support and collaboration between Public Health Units and long-term care homes. This aligns with the vision York Region Public Health follows in its work with all long-term care homes in York Region. On an annual basis and during outbreaks of respiratory and enteric pathogens, York Region Public Health proactively engages with long-term care homes focusing on outbreak management, infection prevention and control and education, such as:

- Providing guidance and consultation on IPAC measures and participating in home's infection control committees
- Providing outbreak management preparedness and support, including enhanced disease surveillance, reporting activities and recommendations for outbreak control measures based on identified pathogen(s)
- Supporting homes with outbreak prevention (respiratory and enteric) through IPAC education and training of staff and essential caregivers
- Providing updates to homes and supporting the interpretation of new directives and best practice guidance documents
- Assisting homes, upon request, with the review and implementation of IPAC policies and procedures for staff, residents, and essential care givers

York Region Public Health's existing strong collaborative relationships with the Region's 29 long-term care homes would be further strengthened by the Province's adoption of the

Commission's recommendations as they relate to Public Health's role. Public Health will continue to be guided by the [Ontario Public Health Standards](#) and [Institutional/Facility Outbreak Management Protocol](#) and any new direction received from the Province. Further enhancements to public health's roles and responsibilities through the adoption of Commission recommendations may need to be complemented with additional resources and funding for Public Health in infection prevention and control and outbreak management.

Staff have identified priority recommendations from the Commission's report for urgent provincial action, informed by extensive consultations with internal and external stakeholders

Provincial action on all 85 recommendations is required to bring transformative change to the long-term care sector. Tackling change within a system as large, complex, and diffuse as long-term care will take time, consideration and effort. However, feedback from consultations with internal and external stakeholders demonstrated that there are several recommendations that require urgent action by the Province.

Attachment 1 sets out 23 priority recommendations identified by staff for urgent provincial action. Attachment 2 provides a detailed analysis of the Commission's recommendations, informed by consultations, as well as alignments between the Commission's recommendations and York Region's Submission. The proposed priority recommendations for urgent action align with the recommendations from York Region's Submission.

Internal consultations included subject matter experts from all areas of both Homes and corporate and departmental partners. Consultations were also held with residents and families from the Region's two homes.

External consultations were held to obtain insight from community partners on the Commission's recommendations. Those engaged included members from the Ontario Health Teams in York Region and Seniors Cluster Response Table under the COVID-19 Community Coordination Initiative (expanded to include interested members of the York Region Human Services Planning Board).

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR URGENT PROVINCIAL ACTION AND ANALYSIS

Accelerated staffing investments will help build a strong workforce in long-term care and ensure resources are in place for potential future outbreaks

To help address the urgent need for skilled staff in long-term care homes, the Province should implement Commission **recommendations 36, 40, 43, 44, 49, 51 and 54**, which primarily relate to accelerating the implementation of [Ontario's Long-Term Care Staffing Plan](#), providing further full-time employment opportunities and enhancing education and training.

The Province must accelerate its staffing investments to provide the resources needed to build a strong long-term care workforce and to increase the overall pool of qualified candidates. Staffing targets in the Plan are to be achieved by 2024 to 2025, however, these

investments and changes need to be in place much sooner. Staff recommend they be in place by 2022 to 2023 to address immediate and significant staffing challenges, including the need for additional staffing resources during outbreaks to manage the pandemic when it moves into an endemic state and to prepare for the planned development of new long-term care beds.

Recommendation 43 requests that the Province ensure delivery of the Staffing Plan for long-term care does not undermine the delivery of home care services. Community partners noted that excessive focus on long-term care staffing investments may divert resources from the home and community care sector. A balanced approach must be taken with consideration of equitable funding and wages between the sectors, particularly pay equity for personal support workers.

The Region's Homes are currently undertaking a staffing model and schedule study to ensure the Region is positioned to meet Staffing Plan requirements. The Region has consistently invested in staffing in its homes; however, this has required significant tax levy investments. Any improvements in staffing must be accompanied by increased provincial funding for long-term care homes. Staff support the Association of Municipalities of Ontario [recommendation](#) that the Province fully fund the implementation of the four hours of care standard for municipal homes, reimbursing their current staffing levels and wage rates. This will help ensure municipal homes that invest resources for higher levels of care have equal access to four hours of care funding.

Long-term, sustainable provincial funding is critical to address existing challenges and to implement the Commission's recommendations

To ensure provincial funding reflects the true costs of operating a long-term care home, the Province should urgently implement Commission **recommendations 56 and 77**, which request an enhanced funding model for long-term care and funding to implement a comprehensive inspections regime.

In internal consultations, staff noted that provincial funding for nursing and personal care is inadequate. As a result, York Region must continuously invest additional tax levy funding in its long-term care homes to help achieve requirements set by the Province, provide high quality care to residents and to perform beyond what is expected of a well-run home by provincial standards. In 2020, the Region contributed \$16.9 million (44.6% of the total costs) in tax levy funding to cover the total gross operating costs of the Region's two homes.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Homes have benefitted from being a part of a municipal structure with access to much needed additional funding, staffing and supports which other private and non-profit homes do not have. This structure enabled both Homes to be more proactive and better positioned to implement numerous provincial changes. Without these vital resources and supports, the situation in the Region's Homes may have been significantly worse during the pandemic.

As noted by AMO, municipalities cannot continue to fill the shortfall in provincial funding. The Region's Submission strongly advocated for long-term, sustainable provincial funding to

effectively meet the care demands of residents and further funding will be needed to implement the sector improvements required by the Commission's recommendations. Provincial funding allocated to the sector must also be accompanied by support on best practices and guidelines to ensure the funding is spent appropriately within each home.

The Province should also implement recommendations 13 and 14 of York Region's Submission which were not addressed in the Commission's Final Report. These recommendations advocate for reversing pharmacy cuts and expanding criteria for High Intensity Needs Funding.

Pandemic preparedness and infection prevention and control are crucial in safeguarding the long-term care sector

To ensure residents remain protected and are not exposed to risks from the spread of infectious diseases, the Province should urgently implement Commission **recommendations 2, 5, 23 and 24**, which include amending long-term care legislation to provide specific requirements for infectious disease outbreak plans and requiring a dedicated IPAC specialist in each home. The foundation of the Commission's pandemic preparedness and IPAC recommendations is the adoption of the precautionary principle which states that reasonable action to reduce risk should not await scientific certainty.

The Province must ensure IPAC is embedded in upstream education (e.g., nursing and Personal Support Worker professional education and development programs) with investments in further in-person and on-the-floor training to strengthen and reinforce IPAC knowledge and competency. Long-term care homes should also apply the precautionary principle to ensure IPAC principles in homes meet best practices in training and education for staff. Consultations with staff noted that IPAC training and education are the key to pandemic preparedness and outbreak management.

Although the Commission recommends one dedicated IPAC specialist in a home (one per 120 beds), this may not be sufficient to run a robust and enhanced IPAC program. Additional investments in dedicated IPAC staff for long-term care, Public Health and hospital resources may be required to support pandemic planning.

Changes to home operations are required to improve and support resident-centred care

To encourage improved resident-centred care and enable staff to holistically address residents' needs, the Province should urgently implement Commission **recommendations 34, 58 and 62** to provide residents with a right to technology, promote and provide funding to homes transitioning to person-centred models of care and provide additional support for applications that prioritize the availability of culturally specific care.

Consultations with residents and families at the Region's Homes noted that resident-centred care should consider improvements to the dining room experience, allowing residents to have autonomy over their care, improved communication between staff and residents, and

culturally and linguistically diverse programming. This aligns with the Commission's findings and recommendations for improving resident-centred care.

The Region regularly explores opportunities to better support engagement and interactions with residents and plans improvements to more meaningfully assess resident and staff experiences on a more routine basis. This feedback will help the homes in identifying actions to improve resident-centred care.

Legislative amendments and changes to the oversight regime are needed to achieve a culture in long-term care grounded in resident-centred care

The Province must urgently implement Commission **recommendations 29, 53, 71 and 75**, which propose legislative and regulatory changes to support resident-centred care.

The Province must amend the *Long-Term Care Homes Act* (the Act) as recommended by the Commission to remove barriers and provide funding that encourages homes to adopt alternate, person-centred models of care. One of the major tenets of resident-centred care is allowing homes to use creativity, flexibility and innovation to provide care to residents. However, this approach does not align with the prescriptive nature of the Act. In addition, many homes have adopted more progressive resident-centred models, for example, the butterfly model in Peel Region. However, provincial funding does not cover the cost of these new models of care.

Further amendments to the Act beyond the Commission's recommendations may also be required. AdvantAge Ontario's [Proposed Amendments to the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007](#) highlights that substantive, systemic change is needed, not only to the compliance regime but also to the principles that underpin the Act to change the culture of long-term care. AdvantAge Ontario recommends legislative changes to the Act to recognize the special role of municipal and non-profit homes, enhance resident-centred models of care and reinforce continuous quality improvement.

Investments across the seniors' continuum of care will provide further options for seniors to stay in their homes or communities longer until they need long-term care

To ensure seniors are supported by comprehensive home and community care services, the Province must urgently implement Commission **recommendation 59** for increased funding for home care and community support services. This includes innovative models of delivering home care and community-based supports for seniors to acknowledge the importance of giving individuals the choice to age at home or their communities where possible.

The needs of seniors should be planned for holistically with long-term care considered as one component in the continuum of care. In consultations, community partners highlighted that seniors overwhelmingly prefer to age at home, however are unable to due to a lack of support and availability of services in the community. Seniors whose needs could be better addressed at home are often diverted to more costly long-term care.

Additional investments are also required to support the development of transitional programming for seniors with complex needs in the community awaiting long-term care. Consultation participants noted that current community programming cannot support the increasingly complex care needs of these seniors.

Improved integration of long-term care in the health care sector will help support system change and transformation

To ensure long-term care is further represented and integrated within the health care system, the Province should urgently implement Commission **recommendations 27 and 28** to fast-track implementation of Ontario Health Teams and for the Ministry of Health, Ontario Health and the Ministry of Long-Term Care to work together to ensure a coordinated continuum of care that includes all long-term care homes.

Integrating long-term care into the governance structure of every Ontario Health Team in the Province will allow health care partners to work collaboratively with the long-term care sector which has the on-the-ground expertise to understand how to deliver the most optimal care. Currently, long-term care is represented in the governance structure of all three Ontario Health Teams in York Region which has proved beneficial in integrating long-term care considerations into health care planning. As a signed partner with all three Ontario Health Teams in York Region, the Region has been able to leverage its partnerships to ensure the shared experiences, expertise and knowledge of the Region's homes help inform health care decision-making moving forward.

The Province should also consider Recommendation 19 from York Region's Submission which was not included in the Commission's Final Report. This recommendation supports improved information sharing between long-term care homes and Home and Community Care Support Services Central, which currently manages the waitlist for the Region's long-term care homes. Misinformation upon referral by Home and Community Care Support Services Central does not equip the Homes to make informed decisions based on the care and safety of all residents.

Operationalizing sector improvements will require guidance, support, resources and funding from the Province

As the Province considers the recommendations from the Commission, it must also recognize the guidance, support, resources and funding required by homes to operationalize these changes. Clear guidance, collaboration and coordination must be provided to each home as it should not be the sole responsibility of individual homes to determine implementation. Best practices should also be shared across the sector to allow homes to learn from each other.

The Region's homes have been proactively implementing changes and improvements to operations

While the Province has yet to implement recommendations from the Commission, the Homes have begun taking steps in response to recommendations that require urgent action. The

Homes are in the process of recruiting for a dedicated IPAC Specialist to build and enhance IPAC expertise within each home. The Homes are also reviewing organizational design to improve workforce stability. Recognizing the importance of pandemic preparedness for long-term care, a request for a resource to lead planning, coordination and execution of all emergency preparedness planning and compliance requirements will be included in the 2022 budget submission.

BROADER IMPACT ON SENIORS' CONTINUUM OF CARE

Long-term care system transformation must also consider transformation of the full continuum of care for seniors

While the Commission had a mandate to investigate the long-term care sector, a critical theme that emerged in the Region's consultations was the need for a fundamental shift in how aging and support for seniors are viewed.

Currently, long-term care is seen as the default option for seniors with complex care needs. The [November 2020](#) Forecast for Long-Term Care and Seniors' Housing Implications Report demonstrated there will not be enough long-term care beds to service the Region's aging population and they will need to find other options for housing, home care and related supports. There is a significant gap in housing options for seniors, including purpose-built rental and condominiums, and in the range of community supports available. Long waitlists for assisted living and long-term care often result in seniors, many with complex care needs, living unsupported in the community.

Although more long-term care beds are required, focusing primarily on long-term care will not lead to the innovative thinking and solutions required to transform the system, moving away from the traditional way seniors' care has been handled. The Province is undertaking health care system transformation which offers an opportunity to reimagine seniors' care and the type of programming and services required to support people to age-in-place in their own homes and communities. Long-term care should only be a last resort. This transformation should include comprehensive system planning for seniors, integration across the sector to eliminate siloes, and coordinated care planning with information following each step of an individual's healthcare journey.

The Province should also consider identifying and establishing a service system manager for seniors' care to coordinate and bring together the currently fragmented seniors' services sector. Consultations highlighted the difficulty in transforming seniors' care when there is currently no service system manager to oversee and manage planning, delivery, administration and funding for the entire continuum of care for seniors. There are several provincial ministries and agencies, such as Ontario Health, involved with overseeing seniors' care. The number of ministries listed in Recommendation 2 of this report further demonstrates the fragmentation in the system.

The Region is well positioned to understand and advocate for the local health needs of seniors

As a municipal government, the Region can help in building a stronger and more integrated seniors' services sector. This includes continued advocacy and more active lobbying efforts, in partnership with sector organizations, community partners and Ontario Health Teams, to other levels of government for investments in programs and services required by York Region seniors. The Region will also be looking at opportunities to leverage partnerships and coordination tables established during the COVID-19 pandemic, including the COVID-19 Community Coordination initiative, and its developing relationships with the three Ontario Health Teams in York Region to identify and support innovative community-based approaches to address the needs of seniors. Further information on the Region's involvement with Ontario Health Teams can be found in the memo brought forward in [September 2020](#).

A key planning document to support the Region's efforts is the [York Region Seniors Strategy](#), approved by Council in November 2016. The Seniors Strategy provides strategic direction for the Region in responding to growth in the seniors' population and identifies actions and areas for advocacy. As part of the Seniors Strategy Refresh, which staff anticipate bringing forward to Council in June 2022, the Region will continue to advocate for additional long-term care beds as well as investments in affordable senior friendly housing options and other support services seniors need to remain in their own homes longer. However, the Region is one player in the complex system of programs and services that serve seniors. The Seniors Strategy Refresh will identify actions where the Region has a mandate to act and advocacy efforts where others have a role to play to address seniors' needs. Further information on the plan for the Seniors' Strategy Refresh can be found in the memo brought forward in [June 2021](#).

These actions support the Healthy Communities priority approved by Council in the York Region 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan

The Healthy Communities priority in the 2019 to 2023 Strategic Plan focuses on the health, safety and well-being of the Region's residents through improved access to health and social support services. Reforming the long-term care system and continuum of care for seniors can help provide seniors with the quality care they deserve and connect them with the support they need to improve health and prevent crisis.

5. Financial

Table 1 shows the 2020 operating costs for the Region's two long-term care homes. Total gross operating costs for the Region's homes was \$44.9 million in 2020.

Table 1
Long-Term Care 2020 Operating Costs

Costs and Revenues	\$ (million)	% of total
Long-term care operating costs	33.1	87.7%
Allocated corporate support costs*	4.6	12.3%
Sub-Total	37.7	100.0%
COVID-19 operating & allocated support costs (January to December 2020)	7.2	100.0%
Gross Operating Costs	44.9	100%

*Allocated corporate support costs include administrative and departmental resources (e.g., Finance) allocated to the long-term care budget.

Table 2 shows the 2020 sources of revenue for the Region's two long-term care homes. In 2020, the Region contributed \$16.9 million (44.6% of total costs to run the Homes) in tax levy funding to cover the total gross operating costs of the Region's Homes.

Table 2
Long-Term Care 2020 Revenues

Revenues	\$ (million)	% of total
Fees and Services**	5.3	13.9%
Provincial Subsidy	15.7	41.4%
York Region Net Tax Levy	16.9	44.6%
Sub-Total	37.8	100.0%
COVID-19 Provincial Subsidy***	7.1	15.7%
Total Revenues	44.9	100.0%

**Fees and services include resident contributions and other sources of revenues such as donations

*** Includes additional Provincial funding related to April to December 2020 received in 2021

6. Local Impact

Many York Region residents will require higher levels of care as they age. A strong and high-quality long-term care sector is, therefore, essential to supporting seniors who live in our communities that will need these services as part of the continuum of care. Long-term care homes in York Region and York Region residents in need of long-term care services will benefit from the recommendations of Ontario's Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission as

they aim to improve sector outcomes and identify the supports required to deliver high-quality care.

7. Conclusion

Provincial action on all 85 recommendations from the Commission is needed to address long-standing challenges in the long-term care sector and to move the sector towards a future that upholds respect, dignity, compassion and kindness for the people who live and work in long-term care.

Action on all of the Commission's recommendations will take time; however, there are many areas where long-term care homes require immediate support. The proposed 23 priority recommendations identify where provincial action can begin urgently, particularly to ensure long-term care homes have the supports required to continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and are well-equipped to implement other improvements. This includes recommendations related to accelerated staffing investments, sustainable, long-term provincial funding across the seniors continuum of care, pandemic preparedness and legislative and regulatory changes to align with resident-centred care.

Looking beyond long-term care, it is clear that transformation of the whole continuum of care is needed for seniors. The future of seniors' care requires a new vision grounded in a senior's right to choose where they age. This system transformation requires equitable investments in home and community care, comprehensive planning and coordination for seniors' care, and collaboration and strong partnerships across all levels of government, community partners, and sector organizations to support seniors across the continuum of care.

The Region will continue to advocate for seniors' needs, influence decision-making and planning, and support key players across the sector to address issues related to the aging population.

For more information on this report, please contact Lisa Gonsalves, General Manager, Paramedic and Seniors Services at 1-877-464-9675 ext.72090 or Joseph Silva, Director, Strategies and Partnerships Branch at 1-877-464-9675 ext.74182. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.



Recommended by:

Katherine Chislett
Commissioner of Community and Health Services



Approved for Submission:

Bruce Macgregor
Chief Administrative Officer

September 24, 2021
Attachments (2)
eDOCS #13135145