



The Royal Canadian Legion
89 Industrial Parkway North
Aurora ON L4G 4C4

1-888-207-0939
Tel: 905-841-7999
Fax: 905-841-9992
Email: relontariocommand@on.legion.ca
Website: www.on.legion.ca

May 11, 2020

Honorable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislature Building
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

VIA FAX: 416 325 3745

Dear Premier Ford:

Re: Long Term Care in Ontario

I am writing today, as probably many have, to express the disappointment with the poor conditions and health care received by residents of Long Term Care Homes in Ontario. Many residents of these LTC Homes are Veterans who served their country to the highest esteem. Our concerns and these problems are not new and go as far back as the Mike Harris days if not farther.

Correspondence dated October 5, 2018 and August 22, 2019 was sent to MOH, Minister Elliott, advising of our concerns with LTC in Ontario. Neither letter received a response. The letter of October 5, 2018, acknowledged the announcement of an additional 1,500 LTC beds, but "the plan has no mention of staffing, that must be in place to tend to the needs of those who will fill the beds. The two must go hand in hand, as staffing shortages are already a problem in most areas and will become worse with additional beds and patients." We brought our concerns forward more than a year ago but were ignored by the Minister. Sadly, so many LTC residents have suffered and ultimately lost their lives to COVID-19.

Throughout the province there are more than 50 LTC facilities that have Priority Access beds, provided for wartime Veterans with Service prior to the Korean War. These beds are under the Veteran Health Care Act and the Ontario Long-Term Care Act, yet the care provided is, in some cases, very poor to say the least. Why were residents of these facilities left in diapers for days on end, dehydrated and malnourished? Were Veterans among those who suffered?

Premier Ford, for many years The Royal Canadian Legion, Ontario Command, through Legion Branches and Legion Seniors Committees, have forwarded concerns and complaints regarding LTC facilities, only to be told that the concerns were being reviewed. How many facilities actually received in person full inspections as required? Our understanding is that many inspections were completed by phone due to Government cutbacks.

.../2

Premier Ford, members of The Royal Canadian Legion in Ontario are calling upon your Government to step to the plate and order a complete review of staffing, working conditions, health care and compliance with Health Care Regulations. Veterans, Seniors and all families of residents in LTC facilities deserve the best.

Correspondence addressed to you August 22, 2019 was not answered. The content of the letter suggested the Legion “partner with your government to expand various programs beneficial to all parties.” Your Chief of Staff acknowledged receipt but no formal reply was ever received.

Premier Ford, thank you for the action your government is taking during this pandemic. There is a lot more that could be done to ensure Veterans and Seniors live their retirement days, safe, with great health care and fantastic life experiences. I look forward to your response and when things calm down, the opportunity to invite you to meet with us at your convenience.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Garry Pond', written in a cursive style.

Garry Pond
Provincial President

Cc: Andrea Horwath, Leader of the Opposition