

Proposed Resolution #9: Incentives to Adopt Current Standards for Long-Term Care

National Committee Name

Advocacy Standing Committee

Title of Proposed Resolution

Incentives to Adopt Current Standards for Long-Term Care

Resolved Clauses

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge the federal government to:

- a) Collaborate with the provincial, territorial, and Indigenous governments to integrate the most recent and current Health Standards Organization's and Canadian Standards Association's Long-Term Care Service Standards and their Infection Prevention and Control Standards into management frameworks for Long-Term Care;
- b) Encourage provinces and territories to develop, adopt, and implement long-term care strategies that comply with those standards and are for all long-term care facilities;
- c) Provide incentives to provincial, territorial, and Indigenous governments through bilateral agreements, allocated funding, and an accountability framework to facilitate adherence to these standards.

Background

The Resolution "Long-Term Care: Protect the Vulnerable – 2020" forms the foundation for this proposed resolution.

The goal of the new proposed resolution is to put in place incentives (funding and administrative) to persuade LTC service providers to prioritize the uptake and adherence to the new 2023 Service Standards for LTC which are currently not compulsory. We believe that with specific, accountable incentive funding put in place with Health Canada's bilateral agreements mechanisms, provinces and territories will apply the new LTC Service Standards (HSO2023). For example, the latest Aging with Dignity Agreements are bilateral and begin in February 2024. These agreements have specific targets for seniors with accountability processes in place when Provinces and Territories agree and sign off on them.

In the 2023-2024 year, the following financial transfer history between the federal government and the provinces and territories unfolded as below:

- The Federal Government indicated that as delivery of long-term care services is a provincial and territorial responsibility, federal legislation needs to be respectful of this provincial-territorial jurisdiction. That is, **the federal government will not mandate standards or regulate long-term care delivery.**
- As federal dollars are transferred to provinces/territories through the Ministries of Health, Seniors, and other related Ministries with a series of bilateral agreements, allocated funding and an accountability framework are put in place.

This allows funding for specific programs and at the same time does not rely on opening the Canada Health Act.

This proposal for incentives to adopt the new LTC Service Standards could persuade all Provincial/Territorial governments to take advantage of such funding while being accountable for its use. Each province and territory would develop strategies to put in place the new Service Standards with the variety of LTC service providers (non-profit and for-profit, corporate or NGO). These proposed **Incentive Funding Agreements** make provision for the uptake and adherence to the standards and create a strategy for continuous improvement of Long-Term Care.

What are the HSO 2023 Long Term Care Service Standards?

Briefly, the new LTC Service Standards bring up to date the various standards, terms and practices that had been scattered amidst various documents over a 10 year + period. (HSO and CSA National Long-Term Care Standards 2023)

The Content of this new LTC Service Standards includes:

- Governing LTC Home's Strategies, Activities and Outcomes
- Upholding Resident-Centred Care
- Enabling a Meaningful Quality of Life for Residents
- Ensuring High Quality and Safe Care
- Enabling a Healthy and Competent Workforce
- Promoting Quality Improvements

The standards integrate the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion. The standards guide Long Term Care home teams, leaders and governing bodies on:

- Providing evidence-informed, resident-centred care that values compassion, respect, dignity, trust and a meaningful quality of life;
- Working in a team-based way to deliver high quality care that is culturally safe and trauma informed to meet residents' goals, needs and preferences;
- Enabling a healthy and competent LTC home workforce and healthy and safe working conditions; and
- Upholding strong governance practices and a culture that is outcome focused and committed to continuous learning and quality improvement.

Many of these specific factors are covered in general in the 2020 resolution BUT with an LTC standard of service updated, it is essential that the new standards be applied and monitored in LTC settings as soon as possible. Whether the LTC home teams implement the new service standards is, at this time, a matter of independent choice and timing, if they implement them at all. They are NOT mandatory. So persuading provincial/territorial and local governments with incentives to develop strategies that put the new service standards in place is a critical part of this proposed resolution.

CURRENT FACTS, DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH

Over the past four years the CFUW National Study Group has worked with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Seniors to advocate for improvement in Long Term Care

Facilities. Our Canadian experience during the COVID19 Crisis highlighted that there were discrepancies among standards being applied to Long Term Care Services across Canada. (CIHI 2021)

FACT: 19.3% of Canadians are seniors over 65 years of age. (EnviroNics Analytics 2023)

Recommendations from several provincial and national inquiries *over the past decades*, included, but were not limited to, the need for increased staffing levels, and stronger infection control and prevention practices. Tied to these recommendations were calls for better inspection and enforcement/accountability across all LTC facilities in Canada. (See CFUW Adopted Resolution - Protect the Vulnerable). The report from Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI 2021) is an example of this work. These reports made the development of the HSO 2023 Standards an important step forward.

Although there was a federal Cabinet shuffle late in 2023, there has been continuity in the discussions about the needs of seniors through a variety of avenues with three levels of government, federal, provincial/territorial and municipal. In some cases, clubs are working with local municipal governments in their communities to improve LTC facilities. This resolution focuses on using financial resources as leverage at the Provincial/Territorial level to encourage application of the new LTC Service Standards in a local context in all LTC facilities. This funding line item and the accountability for using these funds can be found in new Aging with Dignity Bilateral Agreements (February 2024).

On release of the standards in early 2023, both Ministries (Health and Seniors) made a statement that outlined their vision. “Every senior in Canada deserves to live in dignity, safety, comfort, and respect, regardless of where they live. The Government of Canada is committed to meeting the needs of seniors, including helping to ensure they can access the safe, quality health care they need and deserve.” (Government of Canada, DuClos and Khera, 2023)

The federal ministers’ mandate letters for the Minister of Health and the Ministry of Seniors continue to include a commitment to work with provinces and territories to improve conditions in all LTC homes for seniors through programs that will lead to workforce stability, including a living wage and improvements to workplace conditions (staff to patient ratios, hours of work).

This resolution calls for increased advocacy for the Government of Canada to provide incentives for Provincial and Territorial governments and urges Provincial/Territorial Governments to find ways to work within the context of the HSO Standards which will enable both provincial and local governments to coordinate accreditation of LTC facilities. Each province and territory can develop their own strategies to implement/apply the standards within an accountability timeframe.

The Government of Canada can provide both funding and administrative incentives for Provinces and Territories to adhere to the National Health Standards (HSO 2023). The Federal government can also offer administration incentives like compliance to Recovery Cost Agreement letters from all For-Profit Long Term Care facilities (Long Term Care, Adult Residential Facilities/Nursing Homes, as well as Assisted Living facilities).

Tracking the funding from Health Canada in bilateral agreements has given CFUW a way to monitor where Federal Funding has been transferred to Provinces and Territories and the priorities that have been put in place.

The National LTC Study Group has looked at how to include Long Term Care under the Canada Health Act (CHA), as was urged by the adopted resolution *“Long-Term Care under the Canada Health Act –2020.”*

Presently most of the annual Canada Health Transfer funding goes into Primary Health Care (Physicians) and Acute Care (Hospitals) with a lump sum given to Provinces and Territories for “Essential Health Services”, with some portion to Long Term Care and Nursing Homes (part of the Canada Health Act (CHA)).

The following section outlines the progression of funds over the past seven years.

In 2017, the Government of Canada and all Provinces and Territories signed the “Common Principles of Shared Health Priorities” Agreement with an **\$11 Billion** commitment over ten years. Bilateral agreements with each Province and Territory were to target two areas: Home and Community Care and Mental Health and Substance Use. Each agreement stated an Action Plan specific to their respective populations, based on a per/capita formula.

After a five-year review in 2022, the Government of Canada announced a **\$196 Billion** commitment over 10 years of which \$42.6 B was NEW funding.

February 2023: Common Statements for these agreements have changed:

- a) Family Health Services
- b) Retention and Hiring of Health Workers and reducing Acute Care Backlogs
- c) Mental Health and Substance Use (A Pathway to Hope – 10-year roadmap)
- d) Modernizing Health Systems re data collection and information sharing between clients and Health Care Professionals.

Looking Forward: 2024 (Government of Canada 2024-01-19)

The Canadian Government announced a second bilateral agreement, **that is focused on the Health Care and Well Being of Seniors titled the “Age with Dignity” Agreement**, with the Provinces and Territories (February 2024). The agreement supports Canadians to age with dignity, close to home, with access to home care, or care in a safe LTC facility. This second bilateral agreement with each province and territory will be funded with the remaining \$4.8 Billion left in the \$11 Billion plus the \$3

Billion over 5 years for the Long-Term Care Budget, to apply to the National Standards of Long-Term Care and help support workforce stability.

- The following agreements have not been signed by all Provinces as of May 2024. This piece will be an important component for the implantation plan (Advocacy Toolbox) in the Fall of 2024
- The following website gives a detailed description of current signed agreements.
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/corporate/transparency/health-agreements/shared-health-priorities/aging-dignity-bilateral-agreements.html>

Implementation

All three levels of CFUW can provide **education programs** for members to be aware of and understand the need for the new Service Standards to be in place for all Long-Term Care Facilities which includes Public Long-Term Care, Private, Not-for-Profit, and Private-for-Profit facilities. Learn about the new LTC Service Standards (HSO 2023) and the policy and regulations that currently apply to Service Standards in LTC.

CFUW National can:

- Advocate with key national and federal entities, such as Canadian Health Coalition, Retired Teachers and Retired Nurses and any organization with an interest in improving service standards for LTC and the quality of care in LTC homes.
- Promote the strategy for providing incentives for each province/territory to adopt the new LTC Service Standards (HSO 2023) in their context and provide tools, such as template letters, for members on how to advocate in Provinces/Territories be accountable for applying the new LTC Service Standards.

Provincial Councils can:

- Create a campaign in the province/territory to promote, educate and advise their members on how their province/territory has/or can adopt and/or use the new LTC Service Standards through Aging with Dignity agreements,
- Provide tools including template letters to contact and write to MLA's, MPPs, MHAs, MNAs, and MPs to encourage each government entity to work on putting the new Service Standards in place.

Clubs can:

- Promote, educate, and advise their members on how their province/territory is adopting and/or using the standards in their province or territory and local community and provide tools including template letters to contact and write to MLA's and MPs to encourage each government entity to work putting standard in place.
- Work with local municipal governments to urge local communities' facilities to be aware of HSO Standards and adopt them in their community facilities.

CFUW members can

- Write personal letters to their local MP and MLA/ MPP/MHA/ MNA, to request funding and policies that strengthen equity for Long Term Care Residents through the adoption of the new LTC Service Standards (HSO 2023)

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