

News Release – For Immediate Release

Office of the Seniors' Advocate

October 20, 2022

Seniors' Advocate Seeks Review of the Personal Care Home and Long Term Care Systems

On Thursday October 20, 2022 Newfoundland and Labrador's Seniors' Advocate, Susan Walsh, wrote the Minister of Health and Community Services to request immediate implementation of the 2019 recommendation in the Office of the Seniors' Advocate report titled **Long May Your Big Jib Draw: Setting Sail**, which states that "a significant review of the province's Personal Care Homes and Long Term Care Homes" be completed.

Issues related to the care of seniors in both of these Systems were noted in 2018/19 which resulted in the recommendation for a review of both of these Systems. As the Advocate currently conducts Engagement Sessions in the province issues related to the care of seniors in the Personal Care Home and Long Term Care System continue to be raised. Further, similar concerns related to the care and treatment of seniors in the hospital system are also prevalent.

The details shared by family members of the care and treatment of their loved ones in the health continuum including hospitals, Personal Care Homes and Long Term Care facilities are heart wrenching and fundamentally wrong. We can and must do better.

Susan Walsh, NL Seniors Advocate

Further, in her October 20, 2022 letter to the Minister of Health and Community Service, the Seniors' Advocate has noted that the need to review the Personal Care Home and Long Term Care Systems is even more critical today, and has therefore recommended that:

The Department contract an external expert in residential care for seniors to review both the Personal Care Home and Long Term Care homes/facilities and systems. This review should include an evaluation of each home/facility, from a quality of care, structure and oversight perspective. Further this review should then consider the draft standards the Department of Health and Community Services has developed for both of these Systems to determine: a) if they are adequate to meet the needs of seniors in both Systems, b) the required staffing ratios, and c) can these ratios be achieved within the current staff complement. Speaking to residents and their families should be part of this review.

I wish to be clear that there are many intersecting issues, in addition to staffing, that are creating the current significant concerns I am hearing exist in the hospital, Personal Care Home and Long Term Care Systems. There are staff that are delivering quality care in very demanding environments in some circumstances without adequate training requirements and with what appears to be significant staffing shortages that place additional pressure on the existing staff. Seniors deserve an external review completed by experts in the area of residential care and the requirements of care for seniors with complex needs. I will ensure that any review is comprehensive, with recommendations for real change that get implemented.

Susan Walsh, NL Seniors Advocate

-30-

Media contact

Sherri-Lee Owens

(709) 729-6603 1-833-729-6603 (toll free)

seniorsadvocate@seniorsadvocatenl.ca