



Moving Forward on the Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission Final Report

AMO's Submission to the Ministry of Long-Term Care

July 6, 2021

AMO's Response to the Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission Final Report

Preamble

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) is a non-partisan, non-profit association representing municipal governments across the province. Municipal governments work through AMO to achieve shared goals and meet common challenges. As the frontline order of government closest to people, municipal governments are active players in Ontario's health system that understand the health needs of local communities.

Municipal governments operate 100 (16%) of the 626 LTC homes in Ontario that are mandated under the *Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007*. Municipal homes pride themselves on providing high quality services and safe environments for their residents. In support of that work, AMO [continues to advocate](#) for improvements for seniors and the LTC sector.

Context

AMO appreciates the efforts of the Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission to investigate how and why COVID-19 spread in LTC homes, what was done to prevent the spread, and the impact of key element of the existing system on the spread. AMO participated in the process and has provided the Commission with perspectives from municipally operated LTC homes impacted by COVID-19 through interim recommendations submitted on October 21st, 2020; a [meeting](#) with the Commission on October 26th, 2020; and a [final submission](#) on January 21st, 2021 which included 49 recommendations. AMO is submitting a response to the government about the Commission's Final Report and continuing to work with the Province to ensure improved quality of care, address successive waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, and mitigate against future pandemic outbreaks in Ontario's long-term care homes.

AMO welcomes the findings and recommendations by the Commissioners in their Final Report. It was thoughtful and well considered. The findings and conclusions resonated with AMO and reflected the experience of municipal homes. The Final Report must serve as a platform for discussion around the transformation of long-term care alongside other reports (e.g., Auditor General, Ombudsmen, and Patients' Ombudsmen) and continuing input from the public and stakeholders.

Recommendations

The following recommendations to the provincial government are proposed by AMO based on consultation with our Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission Working Group and Health Task Force:

1. The provincial government must formulate a comprehensive government response to the Commission's Final Report and an action plan in a timely manner, before the end of 2021.
2. The plan must be based on a people-centered vision of long-term care that provides the highest quality of accommodation and care services for residents in safe home environments that are not treated as institutions.
3. The plan must provide sufficient implementation detail with clear timelines.
4. The plan must clearly delineate responsibilities and outline accountabilities for the system across government, local Public Health Units, and home operators.
5. The plan should be co-developed with the long-term care and public health associations with further input from residents, families, staff, and other stakeholders as it is received by the government.
6. The government should appoint an independent External Reference Group to provide independent advice to guide implementation of the plan and measure progress.
7. Regular progress reports must be provided to the public.
8. Implementation of the plan must begin as soon as possible with evidence-based assessment and appropriate data collection for ongoing evaluation.
9. Pilots and prototypes could be used to assess feasibility and effectiveness of specific actions and provide learnings for broader implementation.
10. A whole of government approach is required with all needed resources brought to bear from:
 - a. Ministry of Long-Term Care
 - b. Ministry of Health
 - c. Chief Medical Officer of Health
 - d. Ontario Health Agency
 - e. Ministry of Labour, Skills Development and Training
 - f. others as needed and appropriate.
11. The government's plan must be fully costed and adequately funded so that there is no additional subsidy of municipal homes required using property tax dollars, as it is a health care service, and area of provincial responsibility.
12. AMO must be engaged throughout the process early and often at the AMO-Ontario Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) table and other forums.

13. The provincial government must work with AMO to identify and address gaps within the recommendations that require further examination.
14. The provincial government must consider how long-term care will be integrated into the broader health continuum and specifically Ontario Health Teams.
15. AMO must be included in broader health discussions with government.
16. The provincial government must engage the federal government on the development of national standards for long-term care, and if enacted, ensure that the capacity to meet any standards is fully funded.

Appendix A: AMO Working Group Members

1. **Monika Turner**, Chair of Working Group, Director of Policy, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
2. **Michael Jacek**, Senior Advisor, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), alternate Chair of Working Group
3. **Cathy Granger**, Director of Long-Term Care, Regional Municipality of Peel
4. **Sandra Hollingsworth**, Councillor Ward 1, City of Sault Ste. Marie
5. **Dr. Robert Kyle**, Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health, Regional Municipality of Durham, and Past Chair, Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA)
6. **Dean Lett**, Director, Long-Term Care, City of Ottawa
7. **Graydon Smith**, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), and Mayor, Town of Bracebridge
8. **Lisa Levin**, CEO, AdvantAge Ontario
9. **Dan O'Mara**, Mayor, Municipality of Temagami
10. **Kelly Pender**, Chief Administrative Officer, County of Frontenac
11. **Kevin Queen**, CAO & District Administrator, District of Kenora Home for the Aged
12. **Jane Sinclair**, General Manager, Health & Emergency Services, County of Simcoe, and Chair, AdvantAge Ontario
13. **Amber Crawford**, Policy Advisor, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (staff resource)

Appendix B: AMO Health Task Force

1. **Colin Best**, Councillor Ward 1, Town of Milton, Chair of AMO's Health Task Force
2. **Bernie MacLellan**, Councillor, County of Huron and Mayor, Municipality of Huron East
3. **Cathy Granger**, Director of Long-Term Care, Regional Municipality of Peel
4. **Dan McCormick**, CAO, Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board
5. **Donald Sanderson**, CEO, West Parry Sound Health Centre
6. **Doug Lawrance**, Mayor, Municipality of Sioux Lookout
7. **Graydon Smith**, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and Mayor, Town of Bracebridge
8. **Jane Sinclair**, General Manager Health and Emergency Services, County of Simcoe
9. **Jesse Helmer**, Councillor, City of London
10. **Joanne Vanderheyden**, Mayor, Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc
11. **Lisa Gonsalves**, General Manager, Paramedic & Seniors Services Branch, Regional Municipality of York
12. **Lisa Levin**, Executive Director, AdvantAge Ontario
13. **Loretta Ryan**, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies of Ontario (alPHa)
14. **Mabel Watt**, Manager, Policy Integration, Region of Halton
15. **Nancy Polsinelli**, Commissioner, Health Services, Regional Municipality of Peel
16. **Neal Roberts**, Chief of Middlesex-London Emergency Medical Services Authority and OAPC Board Member (Past President)
17. **Norm Gale**, City Manager, City of Thunder Bay
18. **Penny Lynn Lucas**, Councillor, Township of Ignace
19. **Peter Dundas**, OAPC Board Member (President) and Chief Paramedic Services, Regional Municipality of Peel
20. **Dr. Robert Kyle**, Commissioner and Medical Officer of Health, Regional Municipality of Durham
21. **Sandra Hollingsworth**, Councillor – Ward 1, City of Sault Ste. Marie

22. **Monika Turner**, Director of Policy, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
23. **Michael Jacek**, Senior Advisor, Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)