

## Long-Term Care Sector Insights

### ***Bill 7 Implementation to Support Ontario's Plan to Stay Open: Health System Stability and Recovery***

The Ontario government has communicated its plan to implement several key strategies from the ***Plan to Stay Open: Health System Stability and Recovery***. This includes operationalizing the ***More Beds, Better Care Act, 2022 (the "Act", formerly Bill 7)***. As the remaining provisions will come into effect September 21, 2022, Family Councils Ontario has flagged a list of topics and recommendations based on feedback received from family caregivers and sector partners as well as recent trends in Long-Term Care homes across the province.

#### **Capacity**

- Strain on LTC homes that are already experiencing staff shortages and high turnover
- Waitlist backlog for non-acute and high-risk individuals in the community that require urgent placement

#### **Best Practice Considerations:**

- Ensuring LTC homes close to capacity and/or experiencing staffing shortages will not be required to accept numerous ALC transfers
- Guaranteeing assigned homes will have the appropriate staffing mix of traditional staff and allied professionals to meet care needs

#### **Outbreaks & Exposure**

- Safeguards for resident cohorting in the case of outbreaks to reduce exposure to COVID-19 and other transmittable viruses
- Maintaining IPAC protocols for staff, family caregivers, residents and volunteers

#### **Best Practice Considerations:**

- Proactive safe cohorting of residents and ALC patients' admissions who are COVID-19 negative and do not show any symptoms and/or isolate symptomatic new ALC patient admissions and residents that have tested positive
- Cohorting residents based on units or neighbourhoods will allow residents to continue to socialize with their peers while reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission between units.

- Where possible, ensure that all ALC transfers, staff, visitors and caregivers who enter LTC spaces are provided with new N95s and appropriate PPE reduce the overall risk of COVID-19 transmission
- Ongoing training and updating of IPAC procedures to ensure new and current staff are adequately equipped to enhance care and reduce outbreaks regardless of home size and staffing ratios.

### **Resident Assignment by Placement Coordinators**

- Medical history considerations for ALC patients that require more hours of direct care and mobility aids
- Accurate behavioural assessments for ALC patients
- Notice and preparation time afforded to ALC patients especially those placed in LTC homes not of their choosing up to 150 kilometres away
- Transportation proximity for paid and unpaid caregivers
- Ensuring individuals are not placed in LTC homes that were previously deemed unfit to meet their care needs

### **Best Practice Considerations:**

- Prioritizing the placement of ALC patients in homes that are able to provide appropriate level of in-hospital care, including rehabilitation and complex continuing care
- Implementing standardized practices that will prioritize the placement of ALC patients that request a culturally specific home as their top choice
- Involve patients/families in discussion tied to relocation transfer, outlining the reason (why) for the transfer, as well as all potential options including home care
- Ensuring staff are provided with the proper equipment, training and supports to reduce the frequency of physical injuries

### **Accountability & Enforcement**

- Ensuring LTC operators with outstanding non-compliance have taken the necessary steps to meet legislative standards and have provided proof of meeting rules and regulations

### **Best Practice Considerations:**

- Flagging LTC licensees that have not fulfilled plans of compliance or recent regulatory guidance and delaying ALC patient transfers

### **Inequitable Financial Implications**

- Increased pressure for ALC patients to accept placements to avoid daily hospital fine
- Exorbitant fines for low income ALC patients and their families

### **Best Practice Considerations:**

- **Provide clear information to ALC patient on how and when penalties will be collected given the refusal of an LTC home placement before November 20, 2022.**
- Providing ALC patients and their families with lists of programs that provide financial assistance for older adults, including tax clinics and grants allowing seniors to stay in their homes or cover costs associated with providing care

### **Psychosocial Impact**

- Social isolation, relocation stress and transfer trauma for residents and families
- Care plan disturbances for ALC patients who rely on designated family caregivers

### **Best Practice Considerations:**

- Provide patients and families with adequate notice before the date of the relocation
- Provide patients and families with a list of resources including the contact information for the MLTC Family & Support Line, Family Councils Organization and Residents Councils Organization
- Utilizing LTC Social Workers, Social Service Workers and allied professionals with similar skillsets to provide psychosocial support ALC patients, residents, family, and staff wellbeing throughout the transitions