

Minister's Year-End Message 2020

Dear Partners:

As we look forward to a new year, I want to reiterate our government's commitment to protecting the health and well-being of all Ontarians, and particularly our most vulnerable. There is no doubt the holidays will look different this year, but I am encouraged by the incredible resilience our long-term care sector has shown in 2020.

When the Ministry of Long-Term Care was created over a year ago, we could not have anticipated the impact COVID-19 would have on the world. I want to commend and thank all of you for your commitment, compassion and tireless work over the past several months. Your ongoing efforts and dedication will help ensure that homes remain safe and healthy as we continue our fight against the second wave of COVID-19.

As many of you may already be aware, Ontario launched the first phase of the COVID vaccine implementation plan on December 15, with University Health Network in Toronto and the Ottawa Hospital as our pilot vaccination sites. In the coming weeks and months, as Ontario receives more doses the number of vaccination sites will be expanded, and I strongly encourage all of you to prioritize getting vaccinated.

We remain committed to building a modernized, resident-centred long-term care system that provides the highest quality of care, when and where residents need it. We recognize the success of all our initiatives is contingent upon the sector having a strong, qualified and engaged workforce. That is why this month, we launched [A Better Place to Live; A Better Place to Work: Ontario's Long-Term Care Staffing Plan](#). Central to the plan is our historic commitment to increase the hours of direct care for residents to an average of four hours per day over four years. To achieve this standard, the plan focuses on the training, recruitment, and retention of a strong workforce, which means more jobs and better care for local communities across Ontario.

I would like to thank all of you who contributed to this ambitious undertaking and look forward to your ongoing support as the plan unfolds and we welcome more highly motivated and skilled workers to this important sector.

As 2020 comes to a close, it is time to look ahead with fortitude, building on the lessons this year has taught us. We will continue to work with you and across the health care sector to implement innovative ways to provide modernized care. I wish you and your loved ones the best of the holiday season and year to come.

Sincerely,



Dr. Merrilee Fullerton
Minister of Long-Term Care