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MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT *for* DAVENPORT

MP Dzerowicz's Response to the Situation in Long-Term Care Homes

Davenport Neighbours and Friends,

This week, I received hundreds of notes from you expressing support for an open letter from the Toronto Star, calling for urgent action to help our vulnerable seniors in long-term care facilities here in Ontario. I fully support the five proposed recommendations.

The outbreaks in long-term care homes have been heartbreaking. They were in the first wave, and they have been once again the second wave—which is completely unacceptable. Too many vulnerable seniors have died needlessly, given the learnings and knowledge we had from the first wave, and so many more have not received the level of care they deserve as human beings. In many cases conditions and specific incidents have been absolutely appalling.

Our federal Liberal government is committed to doing everything necessary to support the provincial government, both in the short term and the long term. While healthcare and long-term care fall firmly under provincial jurisdiction, our federal government has done everything necessary to step up to support the provincial government from the start of the pandemic and ongoing.

Since the pandemic began, our federal government has:

- Deployed the Canadian Armed Forces to long-term care homes (LTCH) in Ontario and Quebec
- Provided \$39M in funding for direct assistance through the Canadian Red Cross
- Provided \$287M to Ontario alone to protect vulnerable populations, through the [Safe Restart Agreement](#)
- Helped provinces contain outbreaks in LTCH by assisting with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and contact tracing
- Sent 196,025 doses of COVID-19 vaccines to Ontario (as of January 7th) with the recommendation to prioritize long-term care workers and residents
- Sent nearly 4.5M rapid tests to Ontario

In the [Fall Economic Statement](#), we proposed the following new investments:

- **\$1 billion** to establish a Safe Long-term Care Fund to help provinces and territories protect people in long-term care
- We have committed to creating **national standards for long-term care, and have already started reaching out to provinces and territories**
- \$6.4 million over two years, starting in 2020-21, to the Canadian Foundation for Health Improvement to expand its LTC+ initiative, which allows long-term care facilities and seniors residences to register for coaching and seed funding to help address gaps

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- \$1 million to engage with third parties to help identify resources to conduct readiness assessments in long-term care facilities and facilitate training on infection prevention and control
- \$2.4 million over three years to expand Health Canada’s capacity to support these initiatives and undertake policy work related to commitments made in the Speech from the Throne

Our federal government will continue to do whatever is necessary to help provinces protect vulnerable seniors. I appreciate your recommendation for a federal ombudsperson to oversee the national standards on long-term care, and I will be an advocate for this.

In the longer term, federal and provincial governments must cooperate to fix any systemic issues. It is unacceptable that a private care home could accept emergency funding, fail to provide adequate care to its residents, and yet pay dividends to shareholders. I believe that the profit motive has no place in the care of our seniors.

Our seniors deserve to be treated better. They deserve to have a safe, affordable, and accessible place to live out their final years. I will do everything I can to ensure our federal government does everything necessary to protect our seniors, and I hope the provincial government will step up—and provide leadership and appropriate resources.

Thank you to everybody who sent me this letter and spoke up to say this is not right. I agree.

Very best,

Julie Dzerowicz
Member of Parliament
Davenport