



IMPROVING HALLWAY MEDICINE THROUGH BETTER HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE SUPPORTS IN ONTARIO

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Executive Summary

Spinal Cord Injury Ontario is an ongoing, life-resource for people with spinal cord injuries, their friends, families and service providers that starts at the onset of injury and carries through acute care, rehab and then into the community. Our organization assists people in rebuilding their lives. We have been strengthening our expertise since 1945 when our organization was first started by returning WWII Veterans with spinal cord injuries. We provide community support services to people with spinal cord injuries and other physical disabilities across Ontario. From our beginnings, Spinal Cord Injury Ontario has been a leader in peer support, navigation, employment, and attendant services; as well as knowledge generation and advocacy – a time honoured legacy that continues today.

Spinal Cord Injury Ontario urges the Ontario Government to work with our organization on the following four critical initiatives:

- **Create and execute on a Personal Support Worker (PSW) recruitment and retention strategy**
- **Develop a province-wide medical supply coverage program**
- **Simplify the system by which Ontarians access mobility devices**
- **Build capacity for Ontarians with a disability to access primary care in their community**

We at SCIO recognize that Ontario's healthcare system is in need of substantial reform. Currently too many Ontarians use our hospital system and emergency units - crowding hospital hallways and health facilities across the continuum. When people can't access the proper health supports in the community, their quickest approach to getting timely care is to visit the closest, overcrowded emergency departments. This has been a dangerous and unsustainable trend that requires immediate attention. One of the most effective ways to solve this issue is to ensure our home and community services are adequately funded and properly coordinated.

Today less than 10% of Ontarians use over 80% of all our healthcare resources, costing the taxpayers billions of dollars unnecessarily. Many of these people have chronic health conditions and or have a permanent disability. As our province ages, this number is expected to increase rapidly imposing greater demands on both home and community care services. As Dr. Ruben Devlin et al. state in their January 31st, 2019 report titled: **Hallway Health Care, A System under Strain**

"The entire health care system is too complicated to navigate, people are waiting too long to receive care and too often are receiving care in the wrong place"

In conclusion, it is critical that the government design an effective and coordinated home and community care strategy that addresses the highest users of the system or run risks of an ineffective transformation.

Appendix A: - Critical Initiative Description

1. PSW Recruitment and Retention Strategy

In Ontario, health care providers continue to struggle when it comes to both attracting and retaining professional community support services such as personal support workers (PSW). The lack of PSWs in Ontario has created a chronic staffing challenge, especially in community settings, compromising quality of care for those who need it the most. As the demand for home and community support services grow, it is imperative that the industry has the skilled and professional workforce required to meet the increasing needs of a growing population. We urge the government of Ontario to invest in strategic initiatives to both effectively attract and retain PSWs in Ontario

2. A Province-Wide Medical Supply Coverage Program

While PSW Shortage in the community is a major problem, it is further compounded by a lack of wrap around supports like medical supplies. For instance, Canada, in comparison to other first world countries, has one of the worst incontinence reimbursement supports in the world. The government is spending over \$400 million in catheter reimbursements and yet, people are reusing catheters and spending more time in emergency departments on issues that can be solved at home with the availability of medical supplies. We urge the Government of Ontario to fund a province-wide medical supply coverage program, so people who depend on medical supplies have access to the quality care they require equitably.

3. Simplify the System by Which Ontarians Access Mobility Devices

Many high needs users of the healthcare system in Ontario rely on assistive devices to go about their daily lives. However, Ontario's Assistive Devices Program responsible for providing such assistance is fragmented and in need of repair. Currently, the majority of mobility devices are facilitated by one vendor that simply is not meeting the volume of needs for people with disabilities. We urge the Government of Ontario to investigate and fix this overtly bureaucratic and complex assistive devices program in our province.

4. Build Capacity for Ontarians with a Disability to Access Primary Care in their Community

Many people with disabilities can't access their family doctors in a timely manner. People are driving long distances to receive services by highly paid specialists in hospitals when a family doctor supported by specialists can solve problems both locally and in many cases, virtually. We urge the government of Ontario to work directly with us and our healthcare partners to build an effective primary care strategy that will reduce both duplication and role conflict that exists in our system and improve patient outcomes through person-centered care.

Appendix B: - Resources

A PSW Recruitment and Retention Strategy

- I. **Building Community-Based Capacity to Meet Ontario's Needs -**
<https://www.oailsp.ca/files/OAILSP%20Building%20Capacity%20Brief%20April%202017%20FINAL.PDF>
- II. **Learning from Patient First Roadmap -**
<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/lhin/roadmap.pdf>
- III. **PSWs are the backbone of Home care in Ontario -**
<https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/when-the-backbone-is-broken>
- IV. **Providing More Home Care for Me and You Report -**
<https://www.homecareontario.ca/docs/default-source/ohca-submissions/2018-pre-budget-submission-home-care-ontario.pdf?sfvrsn=24>
- V. **Personal Support Worker Registry -**
<https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2018/02/26/province-launches-new-personal-support-worker-registry.html>
- VI. **Addressing the PSW Shortage in Waterloo Wellington -**
file:///C:/Users/Mariam.Razi/Downloads/RPT_20180425_AddressinPSWShortageInWaterlooWellington_AODA_ENG.pdf.pdf
- VII. **Local Employment Planning -**
http://www.localemploymentplanning.ca/images/uploads/Health_Care_Report.pdf

A Province Wide Medical Supply Coverage Program

- VIII. **Intermittent Catheters: Towards An Inclusive Access Policy in Ontario -**
<https://sciontario.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Intermittent-Catheters-Towards-an-Inclusive-Access-Policy-in-Ontario-4-....pdf>
 - IX. **Spinal Cord Injury Response to Ontario Health Technology Assessment – Intermittent Catheters for Chronic Urinary Retention -** <https://sciontario.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SCIO-HQO-Submission-10-Oct-2018.pdf>
 - X. **Rick Hansen Institute CARE Committee Feedback on Intermittent Catheters -**
<https://sciontario.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SCIO-HQO-Response-RHI-Care-Committee-15-Oct-2018.pdf>
 - XI. **Response to HQO HTA on Intermittent Catheters for Chronic Urinary Retention -**
<https://sciontario.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SCIO-Coloplast-Response-to-HQO-HTA-15-OCT-2018.pdf>
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- XII. Krassioukov A, Cragg JJ, West C, Voss C, Krassioukov-Enns D. **The good, the bad and the ugly of catheterization practices among elite athletes with spinal cord injury: a global perspective.** *Spinal Cord.* 2015;53(1):78-82
- XIII. Hakansson MA. **Reuse versus single-use catheters for intermittent catheterization: what is safe and preferred? Review of current status.** *Spinal Cord.* 2014;52(7):511-516.
- XIV. Christison K, Walter M, Wyndaele JJM, et al. **Intermittent Catheterization: The Devil Is in the Details.** *Journal of neurotrauma.* 2018.
- XV. Clark JF, Mealing SJ, Scott DA, et al. **A cost-effectiveness analysis of long-term intermittent catheterization with hydrophilic and uncoated catheters.** *Spinal Cord.* 2016;54(1):73-77.

Access to Mobility Devices in Ontario

- XVI. **Public Goods Initiative: The Ontario Mobility Devices Sector, Third Party Review -** <https://sciontario.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/SCIO-PGI-Final-Report.pdf>
 - XVII. **Ontario's Assistive Devices Program -** http://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en18/v1_301en18.pdf
 - XVIII. **Policy Governing Support for Mobility Aid for People with Disabilities -** <https://cdpp.ca/sites/default/files/Mobility-Policy-Scan-281015.pdf>
 - XIX. **Needs for Mobility Devices Among Canadians with Disabilities -** <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2017008/article/54852-eng.htm>
 - XX. **Assistive Devices Coverage in Ontario -** https://ihpme.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/NAO-Rapid-Review-5_EN.pdf
 - XXI. **Advancing Access to Assistive Technologies -** <http://www.cadaonline.ca/pdf/CADA%20March%20of%20Dimes%20Advancing%20Access%20to%20Assistive%20Technologies%20Presentation.pdf>
 - XXII. **Assistive Devices: Proactive solutions for Ontario's Seniors and Persons with Disabilities -** <http://www.cadaonline.ca/pdf/CADA%20Brief%202018%20-%20Assistive%20Devices%20-%20Proactive%20Solutions%20for%20Ontarios%20Seniors%20and%20Persons%20with%20Disabilities%20April2018.pdf>
 - XXIII. **Assistive Devices: Regulation and Coverage in Canada -** https://ihpme.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/NAO-Rapid-Review-4_EN_new.pdf
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- XXIV. **Access to Assistive Technology in Canada** - https://agewell-nce.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/age-well_jurisdictional-scan_2017_June-30_FINAL.pdf

Improving Primary Care in Ontario

- XXV. **Policy Innovations in Primary Care Across Canada** - https://ihpme.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/NAO-Rapid-Review-1_EN.pdf
- XXVI. **Quality in Primary Care** - <https://www.hqontario.ca/Portals/0/Documents/pr/theme-report-quality-in-primary-care-en.pdf>
- XXVII. **Transitioning Care Coordination to Primary Care** - <http://www.afhto.ca/wp-content/uploads/AFHTO-position-on-care-coordination-and-CCACs.pdf>
- XXVIII. **Care Co-ordination in Primary Care** - https://www.allianceon.org/sites/default/files/documents/Position%20statement_care%20coordinaton%20in%20primary%20care.pdf
- XXIX. **Connecting the dots for patients** - <https://www.hqontario.ca/Portals/0/documents/system-performance/connecting-the-dots-report-en.pdf>
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