

TOPIC: PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS (PSWs) IN LONG-TERM CARE

SAMPLE LETTER TO POLITICIANS

To:

Ministers Elliott (Health-Ontario), Fullerton (Long Term Care-Ontario), Hajdu (Health-Canada) and Schulte (Seniors-Canada)
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I am writing to request that all levels of government join forces to fix employment issues facing Personal Support Workers (PSWs) in long term care facilities in Ontario. As you are well aware, **PSWs are definitely essential workers**. The evidence of this is in every long-term care facility in the country. PSWs care for our vulnerable elderly population who need and deserve assistance. There is no question or debate on these two issues: (1) PSWs are invaluable and essential. (2) The elderly deserve our care and respect.

Instead, PSWs are overworked, underpaid, unvalued, not respected, ignored, forced to work many part-time jobs in many separate facilities, without reasonable benefits – all for the greed of the owners and shareholders of the for-profit facilities. Making PSWs work part-time over many different facilities means they rapidly transfer germs, particularly the deadly COVID-19, between facilities.

The fact that long-term care facilities are understaffed is evident in the fact that the elderly are only allowed a few hours of care each day. If they need more time (for a diaper change, assistance eating, mental health and depression, etc.), they just don't get it in a timely fashion and have to wait in pain and despair. I have first hand experience with this situation, watching my cousin deteriorate in the nursing home. This is intolerable and must stop, now!

Attention, planning, improved regulations and funding must be directed to this issue now! I urge all of you to educate yourselves on the deplorable conditions going on in long-term care facilities, educate yourselves on the difficult employment experience of PSWs, expend your personal energy and your compassion to address and resolve this situation, now!

Thank you for your efforts to rectify and improve the lives of these vulnerable people, both the elderly and the PSWs who care for them. I look forward to hearing back from you soon (by email, or the address below) on the progress you are making to improve this situation.

Sincerely,

[Your name and address]