

Société Alzheimer Society

ONTARIO

July 10, 2019

Dr. Devlin and Members of the Premier's Council on Improving Healthcare and Ending Hallway Medicine,

On behalf of the Alzheimer Society of Ontario, I would like to congratulate you on the recent release of your second report, "A Healthy Ontario: Building a Sustainable Health Care System". The report sets out several clear, actionable steps to modernise our health-care system, and place patients at the centre of their care plan.

In particular, we were delighted to read your endorsement of extended hours for respite or additional access to support overnight for care partners supporting someone living with dementia. Care partners are increasingly reporting distress and burnout, and Ontario has the highest percentage of care partners reporting distress, anger, or depression in relation to their caregiving of all provinces with comparable data. Care partner burnout is a definite challenge to be addressed, as your report highlights.

There are a number of steps we can take to care for care partners. Increasing capacity for dementia-specific adult day programs and in-home respite supports is a clear need, with wait lists often stretching to six months. Wait times are exasperated by a lack of evening or weekend options. Funding access to adult day programs at flexible hours, including evenings and weekends, would add capacity where it is needed most.

Transportation, especially in rural and Northern communities, can also be a barrier to accessing respite programming. Funding transportation costs for care partners and people living with dementia would be an equalising factor, ensuring all Ontarians have access to the supports they need, regardless of where they live or their financial situation.

We hope you will consider these suggestions when drafting future reports. Please find additional recommendations in the attached position paper, "Building a Dementia Care System That Works", which outlines our vision for a minimum service standard for dementia care across all Ontario Health Teams.

The ongoing health system transformation has the potential to build a more patient-centred health-care system, and reduce the burden on people living with dementia, their care partners, and their families. We would be happy to meet with you to expand upon our suggestions for improving dementia care across Ontario.

Once again, my congratulations on the release and positive reception of your recent report.

Warm regards,



Cathy Barrick
Chief Executive Officer
Alzheimer Society of Ontario

ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF ONTARIO / SOCIÉTÉ ALZHEIMER DE L'ONTARIO

20 Eglinton Ave. West, 16th Floor, Toronto ON M4R 1K8 / 20, Ave Eglinton Ouest, 16 Étage, Toronto ON M4R 1K8
Tel/Tél: (416) 967-5900 • Fax/Télé: (416) 967-3826 • www.alzheimerontario.ca • staff@alzon.ca

Charitable Registration / Numéro D'Organisme De Charité # 11878 4842 RR00001