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February 8, 2023

## New National LTC Services Standards and Ontario's Ministry of LTC's Regulatory Review: Highlights for Residents

Dear Residents and Residents' Council Supporters,

OARC is committed to keeping residents well-informed about issues that affect them. At the same time, we rely on your feedback to improve our own work and approaches, and to enable us to bring your experiences forward at decision-making tables. We welcome your comments, suggestions and feelings about what you read, what you hear and what you see that affects your quality of life and overall wellbeing.

We encourage you to circulate this special bulletin with your fellow residents and team members and consider discussing its contents/themes at an upcoming Residents' Council and Quality meeting. You may also choose to attend a [Resident Forum](#) to hear perspectives from other residents living in LTC homes across Ontario. Let's keep the conversation going.

### [HSO and CSA Release New National Long-Term Care Services Standards](#)

In our [January OARC in Action newsletter](#) distributed last week, we highlighted the release of new National Long-Term Care (LTC) Services Standards from the Health Standards Organization (HSO) and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA).

To access the HSO Standards, download here: [English](#) | [French](#)

To access the CSA Standards, visit the [CSA store](#) and create a login to download for free.

**The HSO Standard document provides important context for the 'why' behind this work:** "Considering the existing crisis in LTC homes, and in response to the federal government's commitment in 2020 to improve the provision of LTC across Canada, the Standards Council of Canada (SCC), Health Standards Organization (HSO), and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA Group) agreed to work collaboratively on the development of **two new complementary national standards for LTC**. A commitment was made to **ensure the standards were shaped by the needs and voices of Canada's LTC home residents**, substitute decision makers, essential care partners, the workforce, local communities, and members of the public. **The national standard developed by HSO addresses the delivery**

of safe, reliable, and high-quality care, while the national standard developed by CSA Group addresses the design, operation, and infection prevention and control practices in LTC homes” (page 12).

OARC is proud to have been intimately involved in the consultative work that helped to shape and create the National LTC Services Standards and were pleased to see that residents from across the country were engaged every step of the way. We sincerely appreciate all the time, thought and tremendous effort that went into their development.

**As an important point of clarification, the newly released National LTC Service Standards are not law, and they are not replacing any Ontario legislation, such as the Fixing Long-Term Care Homes Act (FLTCA), 2021. Similar to our LTC legislation, these National Standards provide a framework for the provision of optimal care and quality of life in LTC Homes. The resident-centred spirit of the National Standards, and many important aspects contained within, are currently reflected in the Ontario LTC legislation that came into force last spring (FLTCA, 2021). OARC looks forward to engaging in future discussions to explore the alignment of the Standards with current Ontario legislation, including new opportunities that may exist to further integrate them, as we work together towards the same goal of making LTC the best place for people to live, work and visit.**

### Learning More about National Standards

To help get the word out about the new technical standards and to support your understanding, the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) is hosting a virtual information session for Residents, Families and Caregivers on February 16<sup>th</sup> from 1pm-2pm. Those interested are invited to register [here](#) and be sure to select February 16<sup>th</sup> from the list of session dates. To learn more, visit the CSA Group [website](#).

The OARC team will be sure to share any future opportunities to learn more about the HSO and CSA National Standards and how they will be considered and integrated moving forward, at both the national and provincial levels.

### Proposed Regulatory Amendments to Long-Term Care Home Legislation

The Ministry of Long-Term Care (MLTC) has commenced public consultation on proposed amendments to Ontario Regulation 246/22 (referred to as ‘the Regulation’) under the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021* (referred to as ‘the Act’). This is the law that governs every licensed long-term care (LTC) home in the province. The purpose of the proposed amendments is to revise the legislative framework, to be responsive to identified needs, and to enhance quality of living and care for Ontario residents in LTC homes.

On February 3, Erin Hannah, Assistant Deputy Minister, Long-Term Care Policy, released a [memo](#) which included an overview of the amendments and a description of the consultations and timelines. The memo reads:

“Since coming into force of this new governing framework in April 2022, the Ministry, licensees and key partners have made important strides to improve the quality of care provided to Ontario’s long-term care residents.

As we approach the one-year anniversary of this important milestone, the Ministry is taking the opportunity to propose refinements to the Regulation building on the long-term care sector’s lived experience and to address emerging priorities.”

The memo highlights key regulatory changes that have been proposed, including the following:

- Amending qualifications for some team member (staff) roles specified within the regulation to ensure requirements are proportionate with the responsibilities and accountabilities of the role and to eliminate barriers that restrict graduates from some education programs, qualified students or other professionals from entering the sector.
- Extending the transitional staffing qualifications provision by six months to enable the Ministry to explore innovative and flexible staffing solutions and alleviate chronic staffing supply challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Modernizing medication management and drug administration requirements to facilitate regulated health professionals to practice to the full scope of their practice.
- Bolstering the resident experience and safety by strengthening air conditioning requirements and clarifying falls prevention and management and skin and wound care procedures.

In recent weeks, OARC representatives, including Resident Leaders from both OARC’s Board of Directors and Resident Advisory (REAL) group and OARC team members, have been actively engaged in consultations with government and other sector stakeholders to guide this important work. Consultations to date have covered many of the topics listed above, from staffing to service delivery, with emphasis on the resident experience.

The collection of this critical stakeholder feedback is ongoing and will be considered by the Ministry to further inform the development of the proposed regulatory amendments. If approved, the Ministry has proposed that the amendments come into force on April 11, 2023.

For your interest and review, a summary of the proposed amendments is available on the [Ontario Regulatory Registry](#) (until March 5, 2023). At present, the amendments are

captured as high-level recommendations. Feedback can be provided directly through the website by scrolling to the bottom and clicking: “Comment on this proposal via email.”

## Closing Reflections

The OARC team welcomes your thoughts and ideas regarding both the National Standards and proposed LTC Regulatory Amendments for Ontario’s Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021, and we invite you to let us know how we can better support your understanding when it comes to topics that affect residents and quality of living in LTC Homes. We will review the standards in greater detail over the coming weeks and look forward to keeping the spirit of these standards alive through ongoing discussion, collaboration and advocacy. OARC has been invested in the work of CSA and HSO and will do whatever we can to promote a more fulsome understanding and support the implementation.

OARC remains committed to reflecting resident voice in all consultations and working groups with government and stakeholders. Looking ahead to the near future, we have meetings scheduled with Minister Calandra and his team to do just that. We also have a standing monthly meeting in our calendars with Minister Calandra’s Policy and Stakeholder Relations Advisor and Director of Policy. We have been invited by them to provide them with information OARC wishes them to hear that will be relayed throughout the Ministry. Communicating with our Ministry partners, reflecting your thoughts, feelings and realities is key to our effectiveness. As an organization, OARC’s focus has built partnerships that find ways to work creatively and strengthen the LTC system and improve the very places you call home. As we’ve said before, let’s keep the conversation going.

Sending our collective best,  
Your OARC team