

OPINION

Lay off the drugs

Growing old in Ontario may be bad for your health. Forget about the golden years — if you live long enough and have to move into one of the province's nursing homes, you might be looking at the drugged-up years.

That's the disturbing message from a new Ontario Ministry of Health study into the overuse of medication in the province's nursing homes. And it poses a question the government and people of this province must answer: How will we do better for those who have given much to our society and now need a great deal from us in return? A more detailed and specific plan of action from Health Minister Deb Matthews would be a good place to start.

According to the new report, extremely high numbers of Ontario's nursing home residents are being given sedatives and antipsychotic drugs, often at the same time. Even more disconcerting is the news that the practice can be dangerous and result in severe, even fatal, consequences. And amazingly, the antipsychotic medications that are being used, including olanzapine, quetiapine and at least 10 others, are not approved by Health Canada for elderly people with dementia.

The report discovered 45 per cent of all Ontario nursing home residents aged 65 to 79 are being administered antipsychotic drugs. Moreover, 30 per cent of residents in that age group are receiving sedatives.

Answers will be hard to come by. But in a province where a growing percentage of the population is elderly, we have to start trying.

WEB POLL RESULTS (Go to www.theifp.ca)

Do you agree with the NDP that local MP Michael Chong should vote against the Fair Elections Act?
Yes (68%)
No (32%)

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Letters to the editor

Parenting starts in the home

Re: Wi-Fi filters in schools, Letters April 17.

Should not filters go to everyone, not just the select few?

Your name and place where you live comes up on every random search online.

If you want to protect your child get rid of the home computer.

Don't blame the school board because they gave the same access as everyone does.

Parenting starts, and ends, at home. Stop blaming the rest of the world because you're out there working in it and wanting someone else to parent it.

Nancy Wilson,
Halton Hills

Time to get tough

In light of the tragic death of an elderly Halton Hills resident in a car accident and the recent statistics that show the use of cellphones is now the leading cause of car accidents, I suggest we start a new organization.

We could call it GADD (Grandparents Against Distracted Drivers).

Wayne Densmore,
Georgetown

Don't litter

Georgetown and its surrounding farmland and close proximity to the Escarpment is truly a beautiful place to live. Which is why I find it appalling on my daily commute from work to find mass dumping and garbage on the various sideroads surrounding Georgetown.

Recently, I've seen six or seven garbage bags piled high in the ditch, multiple rolls of carpet on the side of the road, and mounds of industrial waste someone has thrown from the back of a pick-up truck. The frequency and amount of dumping seems to be getting worse as well. All of this in times of rapid climate change, global warming, and the social urgency for more environmental care.

It is mind-boggling to me that certain people can be this ignorant, reckless, and foolish. With all the community programs in place for garbage removal and disposal, not to mention all the companies available to remove

waste, it makes this act completely senseless and unnecessary.

Also, anywhere you drive your car these days, there is a garbage can at, or near, your destination waiting for your smaller garbage.

I would suggest to the Town of Halton Hills that they place more "No Dumping" signs around sideroads such as 10 Side Road or Ninth Line. Signs that clearly detail the maximum fines for being caught.

David Marshall,
Georgetown

Bench is returned

To the person or persons who returned the bench:

A heartfelt thank you for doing the right thing and returning the bench.

Truly thank you.

Elizabeth Hunter & family

Letters policy

Letters must include the author's name, address and daytime phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length. Publication is not guaranteed.

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