

to put together part-time jobs without benefits at several homes just to make ends meet. ... we need to do better for all PSWs across the system because it hurts staff and seniors in nursing homes."

But the Ontario Personal Support Workers Association said it was "very encouraged" by the announcement.

"The OPSWA is looking forward to continuing our work with the government to ensure all Personal Support Workers are encompassed in this promise," Miranda Ferrier, the association's president, said in a written statement.

Meanwhile, Ontario reported 95 new cases of COVID-19 on Thursday, along with one new death.

The number of resolved cases also continued to outpace new ones, with provincial data showing 159 more classified as recovered in the past 24 hours.

Ontario has recorded 39,809 total cases of the novel coronavirus, along with 2,783 deaths.

Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr. David Williams said he was encouraged by the recent trend, adding he believes daily case loads could fall below 50 as early as next week.

As the provincial tally continued its downward trajectory, however, a southwestern Ontario health unit reported a new cluster linked to a recent boat trip.

Chatham-Kent Public Health said it's identified 12 cases connected to the days-long excursion out of the region, which purportedly involved multiple households.

The public health unit said it is currently working on tracing contacts for the infected patients, but noted that the number is "very large."

"We are still in a pandemic, and the potential for rapid spread of COVID-19 is very real," regional medical health officer Dr. David Colby said in a statement. "Social circles are a maximum of 10 people for good reason; with everyone else we must physically distance."

This report by The Canadian Press was first published Aug. 6, 2020.

By Michelle McQuigge, The Canadian Press

HEADLINES NEWSLETTER

TOP STORIES, delivered to your inbox.