

# THE LINDSAY ADVOCATE

KAWARTHA LAKES' FINEST MAGAZINE

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## Declaration to fix long-term care made by local group

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“We, residents from across Haliburton County and the City of Kawartha Lakes, and friends, gathered together virtually, declare that we are of consensus that to fix long-term care, we need to...” so begins the Haliburton–City of Kawartha Lakes Declaration to Fix Long–Term Care, passed unanimously by some 50 residents from communities across the area at a virtual town hall meeting last week.

Hosted by the recently formed Haliburton–City of Kawartha Lakes Long–Term Coalition, the meeting included a presentation by Cathy Parkes of Canadians 4 National Standards.

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“We have known there have been problems with the long-term care system for years. COVID-19 has really shed a tragic light on the crisis, the issues across our communities and across our province and throughout Canada,” noted Bonnie Roe of Haliburton, co-chair of the coalition, who welcomed the meetings’ participants.

At the meeting, participants confirmed their unanimous support for a list of measures they feel are needed to fix long-term care crisis in Ontario, including:

- putting long-term care under the Canada Health Act to ensure public funding and apply national standards;
- increasing staffing to ensure at least four hours per day of direct care per resident immediately, not in 2024; raising wages of front-line workers; improving workloads, working conditions, and conditions for care; increasing infection prevention and control and nurse practitioner expertise in care; and enhancing specialized (e.g. geriatric) expertise in LTC leadership
- reinstating thorough annual resident quality inspections, of all long-term care homes, with consistency in enforcement when inspections yield rule violations in homes. Including unannounced inspections;
- changing the culture of long-term care to being more attentive to the value of our elders, and increasingly resident and rights-based, including ensuring consistent implementation and safe expansion of the government of Ontario’s long-term care essential caregiver (visitor) guidelines;
- exploring new models of care including from other countries that will make the Long-Term Care feel more like home such as the Butterfly Model of Care and other income-inclusive models; and
- ending using private sector, for-profit companies for new nursing homes in

“The Haliburton-CKL Long Term-Care Coalition represents an important part of Ontario and hopefully all rural communities will follow their lead. We need to hear more from regions outside of major cities in Ontario, as long-term care affects the whole province. The awareness and dedication of this local Coalition will help boost awareness for much needed reform in long-term care,” stated Parkes in opening the meeting.

Natalie Mehra, executive director of the Ontario Health Coalition was also a guest speaker stated, “the percentage of long-term care COVID-19 deaths in Canada is the highest in the world.”

The purpose of the meeting was to bring local residents together to share stories and ideas to fix long-term care and build power together for change.

Ontario.

Mike Perry, whose late mother Mary was a resident of a nursing home in Lindsay, is the Kawartha Lakes co-chair of the coalition. Perry was thrilled that residents affirmed specific, concrete measures. “This is about how we as a society value and care for our elders,” he said in the media release. “We want local voices to be part of the solution province-wide and to make sure we support our front-line workers

while working to fixing things. With so many people coming together and on the same page, there really is room to keep working with some hope,” Perry said.

More information is available online at: [www.ltcneedsyou.ca](http://www.ltcneedsyou.ca); email: [hckllongtermcarecoalition@gmail.com](mailto:hckllongtermcarecoalition@gmail.com); or call Bonnie (705.286.2414) Haliburton or Mike (705.934.2704) Kawartha Lakes to get involved.

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