

Wednesday, March 21, 2018

Ontario Long Term Care Clinicians

### **RESPONSE FOR THE LONG TERM CARE INQUIRY**

The Ontario Long Term Care Clinicians expresses shock and sadness that eight innocent persons were murdered in a couple of Ontario's long term (LTC) care homes. The dedicated physicians who work in long term care can provide valuable insights to the system that provides care for our most vulnerable citizens.

Ontario Long Term Care Clinician is a not for profit organization that represents physicians who practice in Ontario long term care homes. Membership includes nurse practitioners and pharmacists. OLTCC is the largest organization in Canada that represents physicians in long term care. OLTCC formed from the Ontario Long Term Care Physicians (OLTCP), now a charitable organization that supports education and professional development in long term care. OLTCC works closely the Ontario Medical Association's Section for Long Term Care and Care of the Elderly.

The Vision of OLTCC is "all Ontarians in long term care will receive excellent care". OLTCC promotes education, advocacy and engagement. Advocacy for LTC residents is through dialogue with the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, and other stakeholders in LTC. The three-day annual conference is the largest conference for LTC physicians in Canada. A four-day accredited Medical Director Curriculum covers regulations, leadership, risk management and quality improvement.

OLTCC offers the following to the inquiry:

- Explain the role of the physician and Medical Director in LTC homes.
- Provide the physician's perspective of staffing and supervision in LTC.
- Address issues of nurse-physician communication and documentation.
- Give opinion on how resident safety can be improved.

The Ontario Long Term Care Homes Act requires all homes to have a Medical Director who is a physician. The Medical Director shall advise on matters of medical care and consult with

Director of Care and other health professionals. OLTC developed a Medical Director Curriculum that provides training in administration, the LTC Act and regulations, and quality improvement.

Physicians observe a crisis of nurse staffing in long term care homes. Registered Practical Nurses (RPN) are given greater responsibility with the reduction of Registered Nursing (RN) staff. Long term care does not appeal to new nursing graduates. Like the physicians, the value of skilled and dedicated service to long term care is not appreciated. Long term care is perceived as risky and over-regulated. Front-line providers need to be valued for their skills and professionalism.

Better efforts need to be done to assure that information that secure and accurate. This includes better communication strategies (e.g. SBAR which means situation, background, assessment and recommendations) and private electronic communication like Secure Conversations (PointClickCare) and Blackberry Messenger.

Homes should support the development, training and continuing education of the Medical Director, medical staff as well as all professionals providing resident care. Dr. Andrea Moser, former president of OLTC and former Chair of the OMA Section states, "it is not just numbers of staff but staff (and this covers the entire team – PSW, RPN, RN, SW, TR, PT, OT etc.....) with the right skills, judgement and attitudes. There should also be education for ongoing capacity building for staff in LTC homes – not just the mandatory training that is being covered in quick online modules with MCQ questions, but training where there is application of skills supporting variety of adult learning styles..."

The OLTC value statement follows. *"We believe a dedicated, collaborative, inter-professional team with physician guidance provides the highest quality, comprehensive, evidence-based medical care for long term care residents."* By whatever means is appropriate OLTC will "examine, challenge and add to" the offences committed by Elizabeth Wettlaufer. The greater contribution will be for "developing meaningful and viable recommendations on how to prevent similar tragedies in the future."



Fred Mather, MD  
President, OLTC